

“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, ROOTED and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.”

Colossians 2:7-8

The four pains that lead to God's pleasure, and ours!

1) A _____ for Jesus Christ

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind” *Luke 10:27*

A passion for Christ comes as a result of seeing clearly who he is and what he has accomplished on our behalf. And Spiritual passion ignites the _____ that lead to spiritual maturity. When we draw near to Jesus he will gladly draw near to us and set our hearts on fire.

To me, to live is Christ and to die is _____.
Philippians 1:21

2) A bright vision of _____

A man can keep his spiritual passion only if he possesses a clear vision of heaven's _____. This has been proven time and again in the history of Christendom; the men and women whose minds were captured by heaven's glory were not seduced by earthly pleasures and pursuits.

“...they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.”
Hebrews 11:16

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your _____ on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ~ Colossians 3:1

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3) A commitment to _____

“If you love me, you will obey what I command.”

Jesus in John 14:15

”This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not _____...” ~ 1 John 5:3

Spiritual maturity will only be a reality for those Christians who hear and heed God's Word. There is no other way. The personal challenge we are given is to *“find out what _____ the Lord”* and live it! ~ *Ephesians 5:10*

The tragedy of life is not so much what men suffer,
but rather what they miss.

Thomas Carlyle

4) A band of _____

It's important that we recognize the vital role that other Christians play in our spiritual _____. We must be open and allow the many voices within the body of Christ to speak into our lives, and we must see the wisdom of being in the fellowship of *“A Band of Brothers”*.

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: If one _____ down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!

Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly _____.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Christian growth happens best in the context of at least a few close relationships. When small groups of people meet together with *“some regularity”* for the purpose of growing in their understanding of how to live the Christian life, the probability of their *“being rooted and built up”* in Christ _____!