

## Spiritual Life

One of the most challenging (if not the most challenging) obstacles humans face is not mere survival- lower species accomplish as much, but that of coming to a competent working comprehension of *spiritual* things. Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, struggled with the *spiritual* concept of being “*born again*” in John 3:1-6. Likewise Paul wrote to the Corinthian brethren, in part at least, because they, too, had difficulty understanding *spiritual* concepts, cf. 1Cor.3:1. Indeed, it is difficult for those whose whole existence is dominated by *physical life* to understand *spiritual life*- it’s *beginning* (birth), it’s *progress* (growth), and certainly the fact that it, unlike its *physical* counterpart, has no *end* (death). To aid our understanding, God made *spiritual life* in many ways comparable to *physical life*- a point Paul utilized to assist those same Corinthians in 1Cor.15:35-49.

The point of these things is simple: If we want to understand *spiritual life*, we can look to *physical life* for assistance. Therefore, for a few moments, let us consider some essentials of *physical life* that we can perhaps better understand *spiritual life*.

### Spiritual Life’s correlation to Physical Life:

1. Begins at *conception* when seed is *implanted*; so it is with *spiritual life*, Jas.1:15-18;
2. Requires *gestation*; as does *spiritual life*, Jas.1:19-21;
3. *Birth* comes next; as so in *spiritual life*, 1Pet.1:23;
4. *Growth* must take place, or *physical life* will perish; again, *spiritual life* is the same, Matt.13:20-21; cf. 2Pet.1:5-11; 3:18;
5. *Maturity* is reached (at least on some levels) when *reproduction* takes place; consider carefully the *spiritual life* implications here also, cf. Matt.13:23;
6. It is only in/at/with *death* that *spiritual life* does not exactly follow the pattern of *physical life*, Heb.9:27; John 11:25-26.

Since most here today have been *born again* to *spiritual life*, let’s spend our remaining time considering what it takes to *grow* and *mature spiritually*. Again, we can learn from the *physical* what is required:

- A. *Spiritual Nutrition*- *milk* and then *meat*, 1Pet.2:2-3; Heb.5:13-14 (though others can/should assist, your *nutrition* is your responsibility);
- B. *Spiritual Desire*- *growth* and *maturity* must be the goal, Heb.6:1 (though others can/should assist, your *motivation* is your responsibility)
- C. *Freedom from spiritual disease*- must *lay aside/put away sin*, 1Pet.2:1; Eph.4:22-23,25-31; (though others can/should assist, your *holiness* is your responsibility)
- D. *Spiritual Exercise*- *put on Christ* and *add to initial faith*, Eph.4:24,32; 6:10-17 (though others can/should assist, your *spiritual exercising* or *lack thereof* is your responsibility)

E. ***Spiritual Rest***- we must learn to *trust* rather than *worry* (to consumption!) about the things that *consume* the world, Matt.13:22; 6:19-34.

F. ***Spiritual Reproduction***- is this not the pattern not only of *physical* but *spiritual life*? Gen.1:28a; Acts 8:1-4; 2Tim.2:2? Is not this a sign of *maturity* both *physically* and *spiritually*, John 15:8? (though others can/should assist, no one can *spiritual reproduce* for you!)

**Conclusions:**

- The same *elements* that are necessary for *physical health, growth, and reproduction* have correlating *spiritual equivalents*.
- Though others can/should help and assist your *spiritual birth, growth, and maturity*, you are ultimately responsible for these things yourself, 2Cor.5:10.