

## I. Know the Plan - 2 Peter 3:16-18: Arrogant Skills

Ignorant of the details, he fails to understand that if he is born again, this spiritual birth demands a spiritual life.

Whenever a baby is born, he has an innate desire for milk. He cannot ask for it nor can he describe it. He doesn't even understand why he wants it. But he searches for it and, when he finds it, he knows it, and it satisfies his hunger.

Such is also true of the new believer who experiences the spiritual birth at salvation. He has a desire for knowledge. He doesn't know exactly where to go to find it but when he finds it, he knows it, and it satisfies his spiritual hunger.

This idea is expressed by Peter in:

**1 Peter 2:2** - Like newborn babies desire the unadulterated milk of the word [accurate teaching of the Bible] in order that you may grow up as a result of your salvation.

A new believer must enter the classroom of the local church and begin to nurture his soul on the milk of the Word—fundamental doctrines which we have examined in the '89 Basics.

Just as science, math (e.g., calculus), law, business, law enforcement, medicine, the military, engineering have their unique vocabularies, such is also true for theology.

It is a piece of arrogance to criticize a pastor for using technical words. In effect, such a critic is proclaiming himself ignorant and that he wishes to remain so.

If a pastor can preach only on the basis of his parishioners' current level of understanding, then he can never teach them anything.

If he prepares his lessons so as to never go beyond the intelligence of his congregation's least informed person, then no one in the entire church will ever grow spiritually.

A hunger for the Word causes the positive believer to look on things which he does not understand as a challenge to intensify his study, not as an excuse to quit and then criticize the pastor for being "too academic."

For the believer, human IQ is no handicap. The filling of the Holy Spirit takes up the slack.

$$F/HS + HuIQ = SpIQ + GAP = PSDs/CWL$$

What distracts a believer from using these assets to achieve reachable goals is arrogance.

As one can become skillful in using his spiritual assets, so also one can become skillful in using cosmic assets.

Arrogance is one of the major complexes which is energized by the old sin nature. Here is the thought process of the reversionist who is skillful in using arrogant assets:

He usually begins by becoming self-righteously indignant about some real or imagined wrong done to him. This usually results in a personal crusade. This does not necessarily mean that he joins a special interest group. He can take up a one-man crusade whose special interest is self and self alone. In this he always justifies self. Self-justification is the first skill developed in the arrogance complex of sins.

If the believer feels he is justified in his attitudes, opinions, and actions then he develops the mind-set that he is right while everyone else is wrong. This is divorcement from reality and results in self-deception. Self-deception is the second skill developed from the arrogance complex of sins.

Once self-deception occurs the believer becomes overly preoccupied with self and this causes self-absorption. Self-absorption results in the attitude that one's own thoughts, activities, and interests are more important than anyone else's.

From this rationale comes the development of what is called human self-esteem. Most of what is taught today as self-esteem is nothing more than teaching children that they need no correction, they are never wrong, and their choices are always best. Nothing could be more arrogant. When these children grow up, they enter adult life as sociopaths. They do not associate themselves with society and its laws. They believe that punishment for wrongdoing is an injustice since they believe nothing, they do could possibly be wrong. The end result of such self-centeredness is the inability to show any sensitivity for the interests of others.

The hostility which accompanies this mental attitude is expressed by our Lord in:

**Mark 7:21** - Brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and the children will rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death.

**Mark 7:22** - deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, evil, slander, arrogance, and foolishness.

What overrides all this is submission to the command of our verse: “*But keep on growing.*”

The environment in which this growth is to occur is stated next in a prepositional phrase: *en* + the locative of sphere from the noun: *charis* - “*in the sphere of grace*” Our verse now reads: “*Keep on growing in the sphere of grace.*”

Let’s pause here and take a look at the Doctrine of Grace as it pertains to the spiritual growth of the believer.