

Forgiven, Growing & Overcoming

Text: 1 John 2:12-14

Spiritual Status:

God's children are forgiven through grace, rooted in truth, and empowered to conquer.

John addresses three distinct groups within the church, each at a different stage of spiritual development. His purpose is to encourage them to grow beyond their current spiritual state.

1. Little children (1 John 2:12, 13c).

- John uses the term “little children” to refer to newly converted, spiritually young believers.
 - God desires that every new believer understand their new identity in Christ, which provides *assurance* and *confidence* in their relationship with Him (Eph. 1:7; 2 Cor. 5:17, 21).
 - Because of what Christ has done for us by shedding His blood, we are forgiven of our sins, our fellowship with God is restored, and we no longer need to live under a cloud of condemnation (Rom. 8:1; Heb. 8:12).
- John commends the young believers for knowing the Father.
 - The Holy Spirit confirms that we are children of God; however, we must actively seek a deeper understanding of God the Father to grow in strength and maturity (Rom. 8:15-16).
- Although everyone begins as a baby, both physically and spiritually, we must not remain a baby.
 - Remaining an infant indicates spiritual immaturity, while growth reflects spiritual health (Heb. 5:12-14).

2. Young men (1 John 2:13-14).

- Throughout scripture, young men were generally associated with strength and vigor (Prov. 20:29).

- John commends the young men for overcoming Satan, despite some ancient writers viewing them as more vulnerable to temptations like anger and sexual immorality.
- Their victory over Satan was made possible by what Christ has accomplished for them (1 John 4:4, 5:4).
 - The Word of God abiding in the young men is what gave them the strength to overcome the wicked one (Ps. 119:9).
 - Our ability to overcome the devil is tied to the Word of God and our union with Christ (Eph. 6:10).
 - The Word of God is the well from which we draw wisdom and strength for navigating life's challenges.

3. Fathers (1 John 2:13-14).

- Fathers are considered mature believers.
- Knowing God was essential to their development and remains vital for us today (Dan. 11:32b)
- Mature believers have come to know God, empowering them to persevere in overcoming the world (1 John 2:15-17).

Spiritual Progress:

It is God's plan for you to grow in your relationship with Him. Here are three ways to deepen your spiritual growth.

1. Embrace forgiveness.

- Christ has granted us forgiveness through His blood, and we have been declared righteous in God's sight (Rom. 3:24; Col. 1:14).
- Forgiveness reflects God's love and mercy (Ps. 103:10; Lam. 3:22).

2. Grow in your knowledge of God.

- Our knowledge of God is connected to the Word of God (John 1:1).
 - In other words, the only way to know God is to know His Word. If you do not know the Word, you will not know God (John 1:1).
 - The purpose of knowing the Word of God is application that leads to transformation (James 1:22-25).
 - Refuse to settle for stagnation or mediocrity in your relationship with the Lord (Phil. 3:12 ESV).

3. Choose to overcome Satan.

- God has already granted us victory over the devil (1 Cor. 15:57; Heb. 2:14; Col. 2:15).
- Maintaining victory in our lives requires submitting to God and resisting the devil (James 4:7).
- We resist Satan by submitting to God and refusing to give him any place in our lives (Eph. 4:27).