

- A. To simply say that growth is important is a tremendous understatement.
  - 1. **2 Pet. 3:18**
  - 2. **Heb. 5:12-14**
  - 3. **Gal. 5:7** is addressed to Christians
- B. There is need for proper growth *spiritually, numerically* **Eph. 5:23, 29**
  - 1. God certainly does the adding (**Ac. 2:47**)
  - 2. Plenty of room to grow: KY - 1 @ 90 = a N.T. Christian; MO – 1 @ 165; IL – 1 @ 550
- C. Find the keys to growth & future development in an obvious place – **Ac. 2:41-47** (*key concepts “F...”*)

Discuss.

**I. FORGIVENESS, vs 41 (38)**

- A. Forgiveness is key to having “space to grow”. c. **Col. 3:13 (Eph. 4:32)**
- B. **Psa. 51:12, 13**

**II. FAITHFULNESS, vs. 42**

- A. Involves Doctrine, **1 Tim. 1:10,11** (2 Cor. 8:4)
- B. Involves Fellowship, *koinonia* = joint participation, communion, a gift jointly contributed, association
- C. Involves Breaking of Bread, **1 Cor. 11:28**
- D. Involves Prayers, **Ac. 4:24-31**

**III. FEAR (reverence), vs. 43**

- A. Moses, **Ex. 3:(6) (Ex. 19-20[:20])**
- B. Those who properly fear God desire to learn His Divine will for their lives so they can obey Him!
  - 1. **1 Sam. 12:14** Rebelliously, Israel demanded a king; God said their deliverance was to fear/obey Him.
  - 2. **Neh. 5:9** told those who had abused their own brethren (high interest in famine, slavery)—fear God!!!
  - 3. Corinthians were directed **2 Cor. 7:1** *cleanse themselves from all filthiness...perfecting holiness in fear*

**IV. FAMILY (fraternity), vs. 44**

- A. (A. Barnes) regarded selves as a family, having common needs, common property, common interest.
- B. Look at **Rom. 12:10, 15**
  - 1. be kindly affectionate to one another with *brotherly love*
  - 2. laughing & crying together

**V. FEELING, vs. 45**

- A. **Jas. 2:**
- B. Feel with (empathize with) others who
  - 1. are in need
  - 2. are searching for Truth, **Jn. 8:32**

**VI. FELLOWSHIP, vs. 46**

- A. *Joint participation*
- B. **1 Cor. 5:11**

**VII. FAVOR, vs. 47**

- A. Does a person (elder, preacher, member) have to be mean-spirited or harsh to be sound?
- B. *Speak the truth in love* (**Eph. 4:15**) & **1 Cor. 13**
  - 1. Glad to see someone out inviting others to learn more about Christ, & live for Him.
  - 2. *favor* = gracious, thank-worthy, acceptable, benefit, pleasant

Concl.

- A. Absolutely, the 1<sup>st</sup> priority of individual or church growth = sowing the seed, the word of God
- B. The heart of the hearer is obviously of tremendous significance.
- C. The heart of the sower is often overlooked, but also vital in the process. *Is your heart right with God?*

