

# Supernaturally Empowered Effort

Do we grow in Christ by working at it, or by God working in us?

- It's both, in fact, it's specifically both together
- Or, to put it another way, ***the main way we grow in Christlikeness is through supernaturally empowered effort***

We grow in Christlikeness through supernaturally empowered effort

- Colossians 1:28-29; Philippians 2:12-13; 2 Timothy 2:7; Galatians 5:22-23; 2 Peter 1:3-8
- Even though the fruit of the Spirit won't develop without the Holy Spirit, Peter implies that it also won't happen if we don't make an effort to pursue it

Three ways we get off course

- 1: Thinking that we grow in Christlikeness by mere human effort
  - John 15:4; Galatians 5:16; Matthew 26:41
- 2: Thinking that we grow in Christlikeness by grace without effort
  - Like we saw clearly in 2 Peter 1, God requires us to make an effort to try to grow, and the clear logical implication is that said effort makes a difference in whether or not we grow
- 3: Thinking that we grow in Christlikeness through fate-like grace
  - Fate-like grace is the idea that says that practically speaking you shouldn't really focus on putting effort in, because the grace itself will automatically cause you to put the effort in
    - 1 Corinthians 15:10; 1 Peter 4:10
  - The idea of "I'm just going to pray for grace to change but I'm not going to put much effort in because my efforts can't really change anything" is an unbiblical idea and it ignores clear biblical instruction

Our sanctification is God's work, but He wants us to be involved

- Philippians 1:6
- When I say that it's God's work, I don't mean it's all His effort not ours, I mean it's His project not ours
  - He began it; He'll finish it; He takes final responsibility for it
- Sanctification is His project, nor ours, but He has chosen to do it with our involvement because He wants that. He doesn't need that, but He delights in it.
- It would go a lot quicker and smoother if He would do it all Himself. But there's something more important to Him than it going quickly and smoothly
- Our involvement including the imperfections we bring and the setbacks we cause, make it so His glory is more clearly shown. Not only that, but our involvement in His work is a type fellowship with Him that draws us closer to Him
  - Both of those things are very important to Him, more important to Him that our sanctification going quickly and smoothly is
- The other great thing about our sanctification being His project that He merely involves us in, is that even if we get tired and stop participating, He does not
  - He keeps working in us even if we've thrown in the towel and just want to give up
  - As Paul told Timothy, even if we are faithless, He remains faithful

Conclusion

- By grow in Christ by God working in us and by our working at it. But more specifically, we grow by both of those things happening together
- We need both of these in balance
- God is truly patient with our growth
  - You becoming conformed to the image of Christ is God's project, not yours, and your involvement is going to make it take longer, and cause setbacks, but God's not worried or angry or disappointed about any that and He still wants you to be involved
    - That's because there's things He cares about more, namely is glorying being shown, and His relationship with you