



## ***Oh Just Grow Up!***

### **3 Growth Goals For Every Believer & Church**

#### *Icebreaker:*

Are you more like the optimist who stays up till midnight on New Year's Eve to welcome the new year in? Or the pessimist who stays up till midnight on New Year's Eve to make sure the old year leaves?

#### *The Study:*

Following Christ should never be a static thing. We ought always be growing in our faith. But *how* should we be growing? As the saying goes, "If we aim at nothing, we'll hit it."

This study looks at three universal "growth goals" which every Christian, and every church, should have. Wherever you're looking to improve your life, make sure these three are always in view.



#### ***Growth Goal #1: Christlikeness***

1. Before God even set out to create the world, he determined one thing in advance. What was it? Read Ephesians 1:4. (Don't get hung up on issues like predestination right now.)

2. What has God predestined for us? Read Romans 8:29. (Again, sidestep the matter of predestination itself. Focus instead on what God wants to do in our lives.)

3. When Jesus has finished training us, what will we be like? Read Luke 6:40.

4. Unlike things like losing weight, which can be tangibly measured, growing in Christlikeness is admittedly a difficult thing to gauge. But three things are almost always true for those who make progress.

- They have a Spirit-led awareness of where their weaknesses are.
  
- They have a Spirit-led awareness of what to do to overcome them (call it "actions steps" or a "strategy" or a "training program").
  
- They always find a group of trusted friends to share their moral journey with.

For each of these, ask: *Why is this important?* And: *Why is this hard to do?*

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The following is confidential. Do this on your own. Be ruthless. Be honest. Share it only with your "triad" – your group of trusted friends (and if you don't have this, then find one!)

Where am I weak right now? What will hurt/ruin/slaughter me if I don't nip it in the bud?

What do I believe Jesus wants me to do about it?

## ***Growth Goal #2: Knowledge***

In our teaching, we identified three levels of knowledge which Jesus demonstrated when Satan tried to tempt him (cf. Matt.4:1-11).

Level One: We should learn to think biblically.

a. Thinking biblically is having a knowledge of the words. It's knowing your way around the Bible. How did Jesus show this?

b. How would I assess my ability to think biblically?

A Bible?! What's that? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 I'm as good as Jesus!

c. What do I need to do to grow in this?

Level Two: We should learn to think theologically.

a. Thinking theologically is knowing what the words of Scripture mean, and how they all fit together. It's being able to discern the truth and unity of the Bible. How did Jesus show this?

b. How would I assess my ability to think theologically?

Very Poor 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Very Strong

c. What do I need to do to grow in this?

Level Three: We should learn to think transformationally.

a. Thinking transformationally is knowing that God gives me his truth not to just fill me with knowledge, but to help me learn to live and love like Christ. It's knowing that "knowledge puffs us but love builds up." How did Jesus show this?

b. What do I need to do to grow in this?

## ***Growth Goal #3: Fruitfulness***

Being "fruitful" means many things in Scripture. We defined it this way in our teaching:

*A fruitful life is one where a person uses whatever God gives them to grow his kingdom of goodness on the earth.*

5. Read Colossians 3:23.

"Whatever" means *whatever*. No matter how old you are, how smart you are, no matter your health or wealth or station in life, single or married, no matter your color or race, male or female – *God can use you to grow his goodness on the earth, if you offer yourself to him.*

Respond to this verse – and this paragraph – in a sentence or two:

6. Read Acts 20:24. To Paul, what do you think the difference would be between a fruitful life and a fruitless life?

7. Read Ephesians 2:10. Write out 2 or 3 things that you believe God might be preparing for you to do, to grow his kingdom of God on the earth in the coming year.

b. What do I need to do to grow in this?

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