



# Blackfoot Church of Christ

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## THE CHRISTIAN'S GROWTH IN THE LORD

By Richie Thetford

Once an individual puts on Christ in baptism, they should be determined to please God in all aspects of their life. But before one can begin to grow, one must first possess an attitude that says; "I want to grow as a Christian in order to be pleasing to God." We are going to be discussing several areas in which a Christian is to grow in the Lord, but before one can grow, one must have a good attitude, WANTING to do God's will in all things. We all must understand that it is not so much what a person knows or is able to do or possess, but rather the question is what kind of person am I. Perhaps all of us have witnessed only too often an ugly spirit or attitude that has brought great harm. A bad attitude can spoil almost any situation. On the other hand, a good attitude can enhance, or make right almost any adverse condition that may exist. Therefore, in order for a Christian to grow in the Lord, one must first have a good attitude, wanting to be a faithful child of God in ALL things.

### **In What Are We to Grow?**

The apostle Peter writes that Christians are to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ..." (2 Peter 3:18). Many Christians are not grounded in Christ mainly because they simply have not gained knowledge of our Lord. There is only one way in which we can gain knowledge and that is through study (Romans 10:17; 2 Timothy 2:15). If Christians would devote time to study and meditation of God's Word, then they will be able to grow so as to be pleasing to God. We are also instructed in 2 Thessalonians 1:3 and 2 Corinthians 10:15 to grow in faith. The more faith

that we have the stronger our love and devotion to God is. A Christian must strive to grow in knowledge and faith.

### **How Can We Grow?**

Before we can grow in order to be pleasing to God, we must FIRST put away worldliness. We must truly be transformed from our old ways to a life of service and devotion to Christ (Romans 12:1-2). Wickedness, guile, hypocrisies, envies, evil speakings, etc. must be done away with (1 Peter 2:1). We cannot begin to grow while holding on to worldly appetites! We can only grow when we are determined (right attitude) to learn of God. We must “desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby” (1 Peter 2:2). The Christian that desires to please God wants to know everything they possibly can about what God expects of them (1 Corinthians 3:2; Hebrews 5:13-14). It is through the knowledge of His Word that we also learn to speak the truth concerning His Word. The apostle Paul writes; “but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head--Christ” (Ephesians 4:15-16). The more we know then the more confidence we gain in teaching others the TRUTH of His Word.

### **Unto What Shall We Grow?**

Every Christian should desire to grow in the Lord in order to obtain salvation. Although we will never be perfect, we can certainly strive to be perfect (Matthew 5:48). Eternal salvation will only be realized by those individuals who are devoted to serving and obeying God. The Christian knows that their body is a holy temple. Paul writes “in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit” (Ephesians 3:21-22). Therefore Christians know that they will treat their body in a way which is pleasing to God. The body (the temple), grows into subjection to God’s will as the Christian with a good attitude understands that their body is the temple and that the body and the spirit is God’s. “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). To glorify God in our body we must grow to understand that we cannot do anything to our body that would be displeasing to God (Matthew 5:16).

## **Why Should We Grow?**

We must possess an attitude of growth in the Lord because it is commanded (2 Peter 3:18). Our growth in faith and love causes thanksgiving. Paul wrote: "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other" (2 Thessalonians 1:3). When we grow in the Lord we become strong. The more we learn, the more we are able to receive the solid food of the gospel of Christ (1 Corinthians 3:2). May we all possess an attitude that says "I want to be pleasing to God in all things." I want to encourage all of us to constantly examine ourselves to ensure that we are doing all things according to the will of God (2 Corinthians 13:5). If so, then we are continuing to grow in the Lord.

## **Atonement Provided and Obtained**

by Joe Price swordtips #1722

In mercy and truth atonement is provided for iniquity; And by the fear of the Lord one departs from evil. (Proverbs 16:6, NKJV)

One would be hard-pressed to find a more concise description of God's part and man's part in salvation "by grace...through faith" (unless it is this quote from Ephesians 2:8-9). God provides atonement for our sins out of the abundance of His mercy, revealing it by His word of truth. As the apostle Paul noted, "But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Tit. 3:4-5). God kind love and generous gift of mercy saves us. Yet, without the faith that comes from "the fear of the Lord," one will not depart from evil to be saved. As Peter said, "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him" (Acts 10:34-35). Without God's mercy we could not be saved. Without God's truth we would not know we were lost in sin, and we could not have faith to fear Him and work that righteousness that He accepts. Truly, in God's salvation "Mercy and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed" (Psa. 85:10). God's mercy is offered to you. His truth commands you to believe and do His will. If you will fear the Lord and obey His gospel in faith, you will receive atonement for your sins (read Acts 2:36-41).

## **Prayer Requests & Announcements**

- David Porter is traveling to the New York on Business
- Brenda Empey plans to return home today from Boise
- Scott Boucher (Sparks NV) cancer treatment
- Keep April in your prayers as she deals with health issues
- The Christians in the Philippines

## **Worship Assignments**

### **Today**

**Song Leader** – Tom Mitchell

**Lord's Table** – Ray Mitchell

### **Wednesday**

**Song Leader** – Tom Mitchell

**Invitation** – David Porter

Blackfoot Church of Christ  
370 North Shilling Ave.  
Blackfoot, Idaho 83221

### **Meeting Times:**

Sunday Morning Classes 10:00AM  
Sunday Morning Worship 11:00AM  
Wednesday Evening 7:30PM



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