

# New Way of Living

STUDIES IN GOD'S WORD  
TO STIMULATE GROWTH

## 8 How to Grow

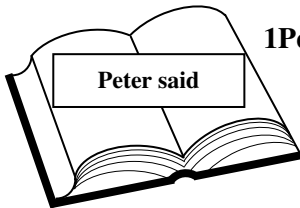


## Bible Studies

### Introduction

In many instances, someone who has given their life to Jesus Christ wonders what happens next and if adequate follow-up is not given frustration may become a factor.

In the case of a natural birth a new born child needs the essentials of life to survive and relies on others for it. It is also the case with those experiencing the spiritual birth. You may be mature in every natural way, but spiritually you need the nurturing of those of spiritual maturity to bring the spiritual necessities to growth. But being of natural maturity, you have the responsibility to want the nurturing of those qualified to give it.



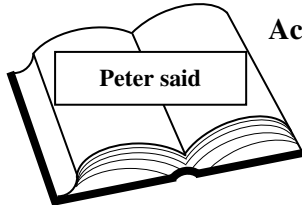
**1Pet 2:1** Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,  
**:2** As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:  
**:3** If so be ye have tasted that the Lord *is* gracious.

1. **You are:** You are to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ:  
**2Peter 3:18** But grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him *be* glory both now and forever. Amen.
2. **You are:** Being born of God and a believer in Jesus Christ to over-come the world and keep God's commandments:  
**1John 5:1** Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.  
**:2** By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.  
**:3** For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.  
**:4** For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith.  
**:5** Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?
3. **You are:** To become fruitful for Jesus, knowing that you have not chosen Him but He has chosen you:  
**John 15:16** Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

## The Purpose of This Study

- In this study we will attempt to impart to you a vision for your life.
- A life in which you live victorious, serving God and the Lord Jesus.
- A life that is progressive, fruitful, righteous and acceptable to God.

We will share Biblical principles with you that will help you know God better, appreciate the Lord Jesus and encourage growth, understanding and knowledge that you may want to be productive and fruitful serving the Lord.



**Acts 2:38** Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

**:42** And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

### Growing:

Growing in Jesus Christ involves continuing in both hearing and doing steadfastly all you hear of the apostles' doctrine.

## Ten Principles to Experience

There are ten principles to share essential to your spiritual health and growth. Peter gives seven in the verses above (Acts 2:38, 42), which we will now consider followed by the other three:

### 1. Repent:

To repent is to have a change of mind and direction. It involves turning to God sorry for our sin expressing a genuine desire for God's forgiveness, but it is more than that. It involves conversion. That is a conversion of our thoughts, beliefs, ways and persuasions that we may in every area be in tune with God's thoughts. God spoke His thoughts on this matter through the prophet Isaiah:

**Isa 55:6** Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

**:7** Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

**:8** For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

**:9** For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Repentance involves putting aside our dead works. A dead work is anything we do, not inspired of the Holy Spirit and is essential to exercising of faith toward God in our pursuit of perfection:

**Heb 6:1** Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,

### Living works?

A living work is any work or action inspired by the Holy Spirit and carried out by you in an act of service.

### 2. Be Baptized:

In this instance the Scriptures are commanding water baptism. It is the outward act publically declaring your commitment to Christ and determination to walk righteously before God in righteousness.

(We have a separate study for you on water baptism)

### 3. Receive the Gift of the Holy Spirit:

The baptism of the Holy Spirit is a second experience to that of salvation, but may be experienced in conjunction with regeneration. You are born of the Spirit (regenerated), but God wants you filled with His Spirit for a life of power and service.

(We have a separate study for you on the baptism of the Holy Spirit)

### 4. Continue in the Apostles' Doctrine:

Note the words: "They continued steadfastly." Being born again, baptized in water and filled with the Holy Spirit, God desires you to continue in your Christian walk exposed to teaching and instruction that is expressed as the apostles' doctrine.

**The Privilege Accompanying Receiving the Apostles Doctrine:  
It is the teaching of God's Word that exposes the purposes of God to you, that you may then be included in their fulfillment.**

The "apostles' doctrine" embraces the entire Word of God and appropriates the Word in the context of the New Covenant.

### 5. Continue in Fellowship:

One of the signs (evidence) of a genuine conversion to Christ is your desire for continuing in fellowship, with God's family.

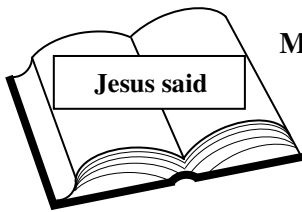
- Develop a love for God's family (Pray asking God to give it you).
- Decide your priorities in the context of the will of God for your life. Be wise; know where you should be at all times.
- Desire to gather whenever something is on.
- Watch out for the "thief" (John 10:10). There are those who desire to steal your heart away from where God has planted you. You must decide where the Lord wants you and assemble there.
- Let it be a pleasure to assemble. Never allow the enemy to make you ashamed of being numbered with His people.
- Always come with the attitude to give of yourself and expecting to receive of the Lord.

Recognize the eternal value in your assembling with the church family. A family in which you are going to find:

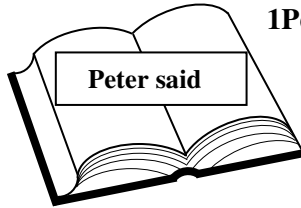
- Instruction in the Scriptures that brings knowledge and wisdom.
- Guidance. You may need the counsel of your minister from time to time, but maturity means in life circumstances you are guided into action by the Holy Spirit. Then it is a case of sharing with those over you in the Lord your experiences.
- Encouragement.
- Opportunity.
- Friendship.
- Acceptance.
- Adjustment.

### **What is the Church?**

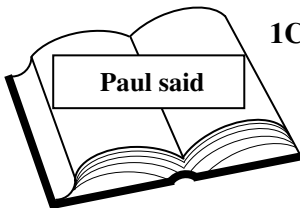
**The church is the gathering together of God's family, a people of all walks and races to share the life and presence of Jesus Christ.**



**Matt 16:18 I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.**



**1Pet 2:4 To whom coming, *as unto* a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, *and* precious,  
:5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.**



**1Cor 12:18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.  
:19 And if they were all one member, where *were* the body?  
:20 But now *are they* many members, yet but one body.**

Jesus is building His church by taking people like yourself and setting them into His church as members of His spiritual body that they may serve the Father as priests offering up spiritual sacrifices.

## **Growing**

**Growing comes out of development and commitment to the family in which God has placed you.**

## **6. Continue in breaking Bread:**

The principle of breaking of bread is twofold in its application:

- The Communion Service, where God's family assemble together, take of the bread and the cup in remembrance of Jesus Christ and our salvation won for us through Calvary.
- As we would today ask someone home for "dinner" or "supper" for the purpose of fellowship, so did God's people in Bible days; they called it "breaking bread."

Be willing to accept the invitation of Christian's you fellowship with to fellowship around the natural table in their home or at a picnic. Then when possible and your able to do likewise, invite others to your home, but in doing so, remember we are all part of one body and we are to have equal respect for all and never form clicks of fellowship which are divisionary.

The Bible calls this "hospitality." Paul encourages us: "To be given to hospitality (Rom 12:13). Peter said: **1Peter 4:9 Use hospitality one to another without grudging.**

## **7. Continue in Prayers:**

Prayer is your communication system with the Lord. Prayer is personal, relational and private, though there is also the place of corporate prayer in services or in the context of your family. Build your prayer relationship with God by applying yourself to it, making it a habit.

- Prayer is: You, in conversation with God. There is a place for going aside, but prayer may be entered into within the heart anywhere, at anytime, no matter what you may physically be involved in or who's around you.
- Be thankful to God for His salvation, His gifts, promises and blessings.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to use you in service to God; to save others i.e. Your friends, relatives and neighbours. To bless your church fellowship; to bless those in leadership that they may fulfill the Lord's purpose.

**Growing:**

**Growing, is you continuing consistently every day in the truth of each of the seven principles as a life experience taken from Acts 2:38 and 42.**

Further to the seven principles considered we will now consider the further three principles of importance to growth and relationship with the Lord. For the purpose of clarity they are numbered in sequence with the first seven and numbered – 8, 9, and 10.

**8. Principle of Our Ownership:**

Paul writing to the Corinthians speaks of the Lord's ownership of us, body soul and spirit:

**1Cor 6:15 Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make *them* the members of a harlot? God forbid.**

**:16 What? know ye not that he which is joined to a harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.**

**:17 But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit.**

**:18 Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.**

**19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?**

**:20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.**

Jesus Christ, dying on Calvary for our sin was the price paid for our salvation, but in paying the price, God became owner of us. In the legal sense, possession of your soul occurred the moment you received Christ as your Saviour. But in the practical sense God wishes to receive ownership of you by you, voluntarily offering yourself totally to Him as a willing sacrifice. This is the message of verses 19-20.

Jesus acknowledged the ownership of God of His disciples'. But in doing so acknowledged the Father had given them to Him and His care. In the garden immediately prior to His crucifixion, Jesus, knowing what lay ahead prays for His disciples:

**John 17:9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.**

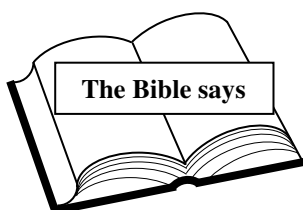
**:10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.**

**:11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we *are*.**

Jesus is our Lord, and now exercises His Lordship over our lives through the person and ministry of the Holy Spirit. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans and in harmony with what he said to the Corinthians, encourages us in the realization of the Lordship of Christ to present ourselves bodily to God as a living sacrifice:

**Rom 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.**

**:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.**

**9. It is Essential to Have Vision:**

**Prov 29:18 Where *there is* no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy *is* he.**

The Amplified Bible interprets this verse: **Where there is no vision (no redemptive revelation of God), the people perish: . . . .**

Every believer must develop a vision that is in harmony with God's vision of redemption and ultimate possession of the new heaven and earth (Rev 21-22 chapters) that is formed in harmony with Scripture and developed through the hearing of the preaching and teaching of the Word of God.

### Three Areas in Which to Have Vision

#### 1) In Christ and His Church:

- Seek to know the eternal purpose of God in Christ and His church.
- Believe and look for your church fellowship to see God's purpose manifested in all its members, including yourself.

#### 2) For Your Own Life:

The Lord has a distinct purpose for your life and a personal calling to a ministry within the fellowship that can only develop by you being there.

#### 3) Have a vision for your neighbours, friends and relatives to be saved and become part of the fellowship and what God is doing. Be wise, but prepared to share the Word and your testimony.

### There are Four Areas in which to build Peoples Confidence

- In God and His Son Jesus Christ.
- In God's Word and the Holy Spirit.
- In your church and the leadership.
- In other members of the church family and fellowship.

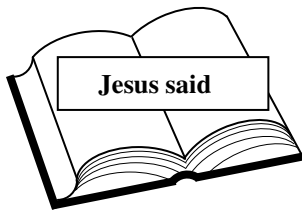
Paul received (developed) a vision for his life, and in the evening of his life, was able to say: **Acts 26:19 . . . I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision:**

### Growing:

**Growing, is the result of obedience to the vision that has come to you through hearing and understanding the Word and actively involving yourself in its fulfillment.**

## 10. Serve God:

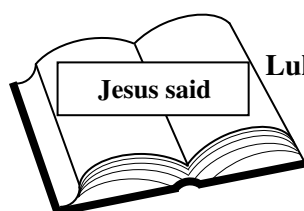
Be prepared to serve God unselfishly by making yourself available to God and the leadership.



**Luke 19:13 . . . . Occupy till I come.** Occupy means: to busy yourself in what is your duty (responsibility), using what you have to trade, with the purpose of increasing what you have.

In the context of your spiritual life it means: Gladly share the Gospel and the salvation you have received with others that you may bring them to Christ and be added to you and the fellowship.

**Ecc 9:10** Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do *it* with thy might; for *there is* no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.



**Luke 17:10 . . . .** When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

**The Christian life is an Active Life**

- The Christian life is an active life, be wise, make sure what you are involving yourself in, is what God would have you to do. Set a high, but attainable standard of quality in your work for God. If you say you will do something, do it. When you start something, finish it. Be available to be given another responsibility.
- Don't be distracted from your task by discouragement, obstacles or opposition. Constantly look to the Holy Spirit to lead you; give you wisdom, encouragement and strength. And remember! Don't turn down an opportunity to serve God, you may not get a second chance.

**Growing:**

**Growing, is serving God consistently and joyfully with a commitment to your task and doing it with the intention of pleasing the Holy Spirit and those He has placed over you.**



**Points to Consider:**

1. God desires you to grow; it is a process that transforms you into the image of Christ.
2. Growth involves your continuance in hearing the Word and progressively experiencing the promises of God.
3. It is essential you recognize the difference between a living and a dead work and what is acceptable to God.
4. You must be prepared to expose yourself to the teaching of the Word of God, to appreciate the purposes of God.
5. It is your privilege to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit that He may bring you into a life of fruitfulness and fulfillment. In doing so He asks your submission and obedience.
6. Commitment to the family of God is essential to growth. You therefore need a church which is home to you in which the Lord has planted you.
7. Prayer is your communication system between you and God; it takes time and perseverance to develop.
8. As you grow in grace and the knowledge of the Word of God (particularly concerning your Saviour, Jesus Christ), you should be aware of the forming of a vision in three areas:
  - Of Christ and His church.
  - For your own life.
  - For others.
9. A necessary aspect of your growth is you occupying yourself in the service of God, till Christ returns. Therefore it is up to you to develop a love for doing helpful and constructive service to the Lord and involving yourself as there is opportunity.

*This Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.*

*Joshua 1:8*