

Growing In the Lord

2 Peter 3:18

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

To grow in the Lord means to deepen our relationship with Jesus.

To grow in the Lord means to develop Christlike behavior.

To grow in the Lord also means to go through stages of development from a babe in Christ to a mature Christian.

I.

Growing in the Lord is a process.

Philippians 1:6 (NLT) says, *“And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.”*

Growing in the Lord takes effort.

1 Timothy 4:7b-8 (TLB) says, *“Spend your time and energy in the exercise of keeping spiritually fit. ⁸ Bodily exercise is all right, but spiritual exercise is much more important and is a tonic for all you do. So exercise yourself spiritually, and practice being a better Christian because that will help you not only now in this life, but in the next life too.”*

The level of our growth in the Lord depends on our desire for growth.

Matthew 5:6 (CEB) says, *“Happy are people who are hungry and thirsty for righteousness, because they will be fed until they are full.”*

II.

It is possible to be saved for many years and not grow much.

Hebrews 5:12 (NLT) says, *“You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things about God’s word.^[a] You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food.”*

Our growth in the Lord can be measured by our behavior.

1 Corinthians 13:11 (ESV) says, *“When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways.”*

When growth has slowed in our lives, God may take us through a pruning process to get us growing again.

John 15:1-2 (NIV) says, *“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes^[a] so that it will be even more fruitful.”*

III.

The ultimate goal of growing in the Lord is to become like Jesus.

Luke 6:40 (NIV) says, *“The student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher.”*

To become like Jesus, we need to know what Jesus knows.

When we know what Jesus knows, we can do what Jesus did.

Matthew 10:1 (NIV) says, *“Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.”*

Let us be intentional about growing in the Lord.