

"Are You Serious About Spiritual Growth?"

by Lynn Parker

"...And Dear God, Please Help Me To Grow..."

Those words, often uttered in prayer, make up a proper request. We all should desire to be stronger spiritually (2 Peter 3:18). We should indeed long for growth (1 Peter 2:1ff). Let us examine this prayer request, as well as our attitude and efforts toward spiritual growth.

What would you think of a man who prayed, "God, please help me not to lose my job," and then that same man slept in and was late to work every day? I've heard both men and women who say they want to be stronger spiritually. I've heard some say they want to know the Bible better. I've heard some folks piously sing, "More, More About Jesus..." And then I've seen the very same souls skip Bible classes on Sunday and Wednesday. Any wonder why there's no growth????

When one's attendance at worship assemblies is "hit and miss" then that person will exhibit spiritual stagnation. When a tree in the orchard does not grow, we give it extra attention. When a Christian doesn't grow, we try to give some extra attention as concerned brethren. After all, we have an obligation to build up each other. "So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby **we may edify one another**" (Rom . 14:19).

Your brethren cannot help you grow if you do not engage in really challenging, serious Bible study. Some brothers and sisters have been in the church for 10 years or more and never yet made 10 pages of study notes. Folks, casual reading of the Bible is not Bible study.

We cannot edify you if you're not in the assembly of the saints on a regular basis. If students at public school attended like some of my brethren attend the worship assembly, they'd be charged with truancy!

We cannot help you grow if you persist in saying, "This is not a convenient time" or employing similar excuses. Everyone is busy. Everyone has more to do than week to get it done. Still, if heaven is really important to you, you will make time to sit down and study. We have the teachers. We have a strong desire to see you grow. We can come to your house and spend an hour a week in diligent study with you. We are ready. Still, we cannot help you grow if you never make an effort or lift a finger. We will make the time—will you?

You cannot grow to be like Christ if you still wallow in sinful company and activities. One brother went to "Hooters" restaurant for years (not a place known for wholesome company but rather known for its party-like atmosphere and scantily-clad waitresses).

After his “conversion” (?), he continued the same practice. Need I say that he continues to this day to be lukewarm and useless in the kingdom? One family in the church (the father was a deacon in the congregation) regularly rented “R” rated, trashy movies for “family entertainment.” It should not surprise anyone that families are not growing to be more like the Savior when they dine on immorality. If you are serious about growth, clean up your life, throw out the debris, and keep company with spiritually strong folks who will help you go to heaven.

It’s impossible for you to grow if you won’t do the things that make for growth. Enough with wasted months and years. No more excuses. Are you ready to grow? Do you hunger for spiritual nourishment? It’s here for you. We love you. We will help. God has provided the plan to make growth a reality. All that’s lacking is you. Don’t ask God to help you grow if you won’t do your part. Are you willing? Let’s grow!