

GROW 7 - Growing as a Jesus Follower

How does God expect me to use my time, talents & treasure?

1. How did reading your Bible and Praying go last week? What questions do you have? What did God reveal to you about Himself or your life?
2. What Challenges did you face in your walk with God?
3. Last week, who did you encourage and share your faith with?

• **FAITH - What Pleases God?** Read Heb. 11:6

- What is the difference between “do things to earn God’s favor” and “doing things because you trust God?” Read Hosea 6:6
- Have you struggled with this in the past? Why or why not?

SPIRITUAL HABITS - Read 1 Tim. 4:7 - What does God call us to do?

*The goal of the Christian life is not to become a better you but to become more and more like Jesus. To do that, we **DEPEND** on Christ’s work in our lives and then **DISCIPLINE** ourselves to grow in His transforming work. Spiritual habits don’t make us right with God; only Jesus can, but as we trust Jesus with our lives, we put them in place to help us experience His life-transforming work. We’ve already spent some time understanding prayer and Bible study. Here are a few other practices that can be developed into good spiritual habits.*

- **FASTING**—Fasting is giving up something you hunger for, for a season, to draw closer to God. It is a voluntary discipline left to the discretion of each believer. The purpose of fasting is to redirect our attention and time away from meal planning and preparation, allowing us to focus on our relationship with God.
 - **When and why to fast? Jesus did not command fasting, but he did expect his followers to fast: Matthew 6:16 “And _____ you fast”**
 - In times of severe stress, it is wise to humble yourself before God in a time of prayer and fasting (Psalm 35:13; Ezra 8:21).
 - Read Acts 13:2-3; 14:23 - Fasting will aid in _____ God’s will during such times.

- **Examples of when to fast** - mourning the death of a loved one, a major health issue, battling a troubling sin, a difficult family relationship, a major life decision, seeking to draw closer to God, etc.
 - **How should we fast?** Although Jesus gave specific instructions on how to pray, He did not provide any instructions on how to fast, except that we should not show off our spirituality or boast about our fasting (Matt 6:1,18).
 - We also know from Scripture that fasting is always done in conjunction with prayer. (Daniel 9:3; Luke 2:37; Joel 1:14; Ezra 8:23; Acts 13:3)
 - Fasting can be done _____ or with others (Acts 12:2-3).
 - **DISCUSSION: What other things are there that we can or should “fast” from?**
- **STEWARDSHIP - What is stewardship? Managing the resources God provides... utilizing them for His glory!**
 - What resources has God given you?
 - Do you own anything? (Read John 3:27 and 1 Tim. 6:17-19)
 - **Stewardship of our Time**
 - Does God require me to be time-conscious? Why? (Read Ps. 90:12)
 - Why should I live every day for God’s Glory, like it’s my last? (Read Eph. 5:15-17 and James 4:13-15)
 - **Stewardship of our Talent**
 - Why did God give me certain skills & abilities? (Read 1 Cor. 12:4-11)
 - How am I serving God now in a way that uses a special skill or ability (at home, church, organization, or community)?

Continue to go through the Growth Process because, in 301, we will explore how God has gifted you and discover how you can use them for His glory!

• Stewardship of our Treasure

- Does God want me to work, earn, provide for my family with, and save money? (Read Prov. 6:6-11; 14:24; and 1 Tim. 5:8)
- Why is it wrong to love money? (Read Prov. 23:4-5; Eccl. 5:10; Heb. 13:5)
- Why can't God honor compromise with money? (Read Luke 16:10-13)
- Who is the example of how we should give? (Read 2 Cor. 8:9)
- What does God teach about giving to ministry? Why is this fun? (Read Acts 20:35, Proverbs 3:9-10 and 2 Cor. 9:6-11)
- 2 Cor. 8-9 teaches us that we give Voluntarily, Cheerfully, Proportionally, and Sacrificially. Should my giving be a percentage of my income? How much should I give? (Read 1 Cor. 16:1-2)

NEXT STEPS

1. Research about other spiritual disciplines such as solitude, meditation, service, etc. Some good online resources include desiringgod.org, biblegateway.com and blueletterbible.org As you learn about ways to grow spiritually, make the commitment to practice these principles regularly. Remember, the Holy Spirit is working in us to accomplish life change.
2. Please take advantage of your free access to RightNow Media, a database for thousands of bible studies and inspirational videos. Ask for login access at princetownchurch.com/rightnow-media
3. Consider obeying the Biblical command to be baptized. We love to celebrate baptisms! It's your opportunity to show what Christ has done for you. For more information on the process, please go to princetownchurch.com/baptism. Once you complete the online form, someone will contact you to make the necessary arrangements.
4. Let us know that you have completed 101 – Life Change. Please complete the checklist on the last page. Then, arrange the next step in our Growth Process: 201 – Sharing Your Faith. We are so excited to see you grow in your relationship with God!

LIFE CHANGE 7 - Growing as a Jesus follower

- Fasting will aid in ***Understanding*** God's will during such times.
- Fasting can be done ***TOGETHER*** or with others (Acts 12:2-3).