



Growing Well

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HOW CAN WE LEARN AND GROW IN CHRIST?

The POINT >

Our faith develops as we grow in Christ and live out His mission.

> LUKE 2:41-52

⁴¹Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. ⁴²And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. ⁴³And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, ⁴⁴but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, ⁴⁵and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. ⁴⁶After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸And when his parents saw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, "Son, why have

you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress." ⁴⁹And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" ⁵⁰And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. ⁵¹And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.

⁵²And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

FACT:

Manasseh was only twelve years old when he became king of Judah. He ruled in Jerusalem for fifty-five years (2 Kings 21:1).¹



LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // JESUS

Jesus modeled for us what growth looks like on this side of eternity—increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and with people.

Imagine yourself as a twelve-year-old. For some of us, that was several years ago, but for others, it may be now. Typical twelve-year-olds are still growing physically, and definitely still growing emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually. They often enjoy things like Netflix, Instagram, games on their phone, hanging out with friends, sports, or hobbies. Have you ever wondered what it might have been like to be friends with Jesus as a twelve-year-old? What was He like? What were His hobbies? What would the life of a perfect, sinless twelve-year-old even look like?

In the passage today, we get the only glimpse of Jesus as a growing child when he was twelve years old. While the passage doesn't offer a lot of information on what He was like as a child, it reveals Jesus' heart and passion for His Father. Even when He was young, Jesus knew that He must be in His Father's house, learning and growing spiritually in an understanding of God and His ways.

LUKE 2:41-46

1 What would it look like for you to prioritize and take initiative to learn about the Father?

2 What would it look like for you to be an active learner as you take part in activities to learn about the Father?



*It's important to realize that God desires for us to grow—intellectually and spiritually.
#BSFLStudents
HowtoLiveWell*

LUKE 2:47-48

3 What might it look like if someone is only focused on gaining knowledge but not understanding?

4 Why should we strive for understanding and not just knowledge about the things of God?

5 What is the difference between Jesus' perspective and the perspective of His parents?

LUKE 2:49-52

6 Why might Jesus have been surprised by His parents' response, and what does this tell us about His perspective?

7 Imagine yourself in Mary and Joseph's shoes. How would you have reacted to Jesus being in the temple?

8 How is our mission similar to Jesus' mission?



LIVE IT OUT

LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // JESUS

Jesus modeled for us what growth looks like on this side of eternity—increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and with people.

There's a big difference between a seventh grade student and a junior in high school. One is getting settled into middle school, and the other might be ready to drive a car. We, as student ministry leaders, get a front row seat to watch them grow. That is what this passage does for us in Jesus' life. We get a glimpse into what Jesus' life looked like as a twelve-year-old boy. And it's incredible. While teaching this session, remember that you have students at various stages in their growth journey; it's essential to reiterate the importance of growth in their lives.



> CHRIST

9 What can we learn and apply from Jesus' pursuit of learning and godly understanding?

10 Like Jesus, how is our relationship with the Father essential in fulfilling our purpose and mission?

GOD

JESUS

HOLY SPIRIT

BIBLE

SALVATION

CREATION

CHURCH

PEOPLE

FAMILY

COMMUNITY
& WORLD



> COMMUNITY

11 If we prioritize learning and growing in Christ like Jesus did, how could this influence those around us?



12 In what ways might our life look different if we adopted the priorities Jesus modeled in this passage?

> CULTURE

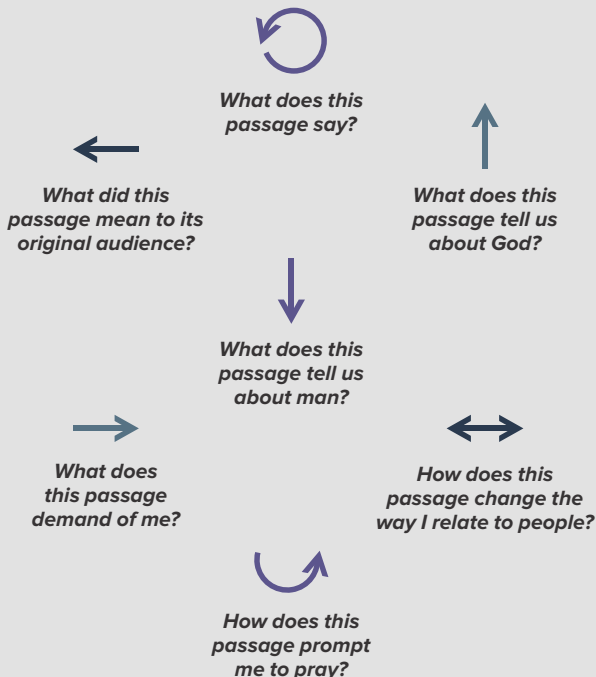
13 How are Mary and Joseph's actions and perspectives like those in our culture today?

14 How are Jesus' actions and perspective counter-cultural or different from those in our culture?

DAILY DEVOTIONS



The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



Day One **2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17**

In his second letter to Timothy, Paul instructs Timothy to value Scripture in his continuation of learning. He offers several important details that inform our understanding of Scripture and its purpose in our lives. First, Paul says, “All Scripture is inspired by God” (v. 16, CSB), which communicates that as we read Scripture, we are reading the actual words of God. He adds that all Scripture is profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, and training in righteousness. Scripture is profitable for helping us to attain a more righteous life.

Lastly, the passage informs us that understanding Scripture is essential to become “complete, equipped for every good work” (v. 17, CSB). According to Paul, if we strive to grow and learn well, we must continue to learn from Scripture, God’s Word breathed out to us.

➤ **Why is it important to understand that all Scripture is inspired by God?**

➤ **What advice do Paul’s words to Timothy give us for growing and living well?**

Day Two

JEREMIAH 9:23-24



The prophet Jeremiah proclaimed the Lord's words and wisdom by saying we should examine our source of pride and goals for success. Jeremiah said that we should not boast or find a sense of pride in our own wisdom, power, or riches. If anyone has the right to boast or to be proud of anything, it should be that he or she understands and knows the Lord. Therefore, our own wisdom, power, and wealth are poor goals for life. A successful life is not based on personal abilities, authority, or finances but on an understanding of who God is and knowing Him relationally.

When our view of success shifts from self-centered to God-centered, things of this world become less valuable and enticing. Instead of living for the pursuit of selfish pleasures and gains, we shift to pursuing Christ, His perspective, His ways, and His purposes.

- **How would your life look different if you took pride in pursuing and understanding God instead of self-centered things?**
- **What can you do to make it a priority to know and understand God?**

Day Three

2 PETER 3:17-18

Peter warns us to take care so that we aren't deceived and led away by things of this world. The world can be tempting and worldly ways enticing, but we should use caution so that we don't become unstable, wavering from our pursuit of God and the likeness of Christ.

Peter also explains how we can become stable. In verse 18, he says to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord for His glory. Therefore, we must continue to learn and grow spiritually and to grow in grace and knowledge. We must first know the Lord and His ways before we can think or act in a Christlike manner. We also must consider His glory, remembering that our lives, our purpose, and our mission is not ultimately about our own success and comfort but for His glory.

- **How do we keep from falling away from God and falling into temptation, according to this passage?**
- **Why should our spiritual growth be a daily priority?**

Day Four

ROMANS 12:1-2

In this passage, Paul gives two strong commands. First, he urges us to present our bodies as a living sacrifice by dying daily to self so that we might live for Christ. Next, he insists that we not conform to this world but be transformed by the renewing of our minds. We are born belonging to this world and we naturally gravitate toward worldly ways of thinking and acting, further conforming us to worldly ways. To live for God in a manner of Christlikeness, we must be transformed. However, this cannot happen naturally. We must cooperate with the Spirit by renewing our mind through biblical learning, knowledge, and understanding.

Why is this important? Paul says by doing this, we will know God's will and be able to discern what is truly good.

› **What would it look like in your daily life to become a living sacrifice?**

› **Since we are born into sin, how can Christ transform our hearts and change what we desire?**

Day Five

1 PETER 2:1-3



“Grow up into your salvation” (v. 2, CSB). This wording can be confusing since we know salvation is a gift from God because of the blood of Jesus, not our own doing and growing. So, why does Peter instruct us to put away sinful thoughts and actions and long for “the pure milk of the word” (v. 2, CSB), so that we can grow up into salvation?

It's important to remember that salvation has three parts: justification, sanctification, and glorification. While justification is completely through the work of Christ, and glorification is complete restoration after death, sanctification involves the work of the Holy Spirit in us and with us to continually learn and grow spiritually as we strive to become more like Christ. While forgiveness comes once and for all time through justification, sanctification is the ongoing process of growing in Christlikeness. When Peter tells us to grow up into salvation, he is talking about the ongoing process of sanctification.

› **What are ways you can grow in your faith?**

› **What can happen if we stop growing in our faith?**