

# Growth Group Homework

For the week of March 15, 2015

*This week is the final meeting of our Winter Quarter. (Note: the Jordan groups are on a different schedule.) We'll take a two-week break and then the Spring Quarter will begin the week of April 5 and run through June 6.*

## QUICK REVIEW

Looking back over your notes, what did you find most helpful, challenging or interesting in this week's teaching?

## MY STORY

1. All of us can look back in life and point to some ways that we have changed. Our preferences, goals, attitudes, or even thought patterns often are "changed" with maturity. Pick out one thing in your life that has been changed and or caused you to grow and answer the question: "Was there something specific that caused this change?" or "Why was the change necessary?"

2. Looking back at the "4 lies about spiritual growth" which one would you most likely get trapped in?

## DIGGING DEEPER

1. It takes a regular commitment to put ourselves in a place where God can grow us. What do the following verses tell us about our role and God's role in the process of spiritual transformation?

Isaiah 64:8

1 Corinthians 3:2-9

Philippians 3:12-16

2. We heard this week that spiritual growth doesn't happen by accident. Yet at times we may feel like we don't have what it takes to grow and succeed spiritually or really know what steps to take to continue to grow. How would you explain to someone else with similar concerns how 2 Peter 1:3-9 addresses these concerns?

As you read the passage above you saw that Peter gave some very intentional steps that anyone following Jesus can take to continue to grow and live out their faith. As you look at that list again are there any that you've specifically worked on in the past or been challenged to put into action? Is there one you think you need to be more intentional at putting into action moving forward?

3. Even though we can see the upside to growth, that doesn't mean it's always easy. The process of maturing can be hard work. Paul often used the analogy of athletic competition to help Christians understand their part in growing to maturity. How do the following verses increase or affirm your understanding of what it takes to develop a spiritually mature perspective?

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

2 Timothy 2:4-5

Hebrews 12:1-2

## **TAKING IT HOME**

Is there anything from this week's sermon or study that you need to remember or apply?

## **COMMUNION OPTION**

Communion is an important way we remember all that God has done for us through the sacrifice of his Son on the cross. As we remember Jesus' sacrifice, communion also becomes a great time to express our gratitude for all that he's done for us. This week you may conclude Growth Group by taking communion together. To prepare for this, take a moment to read Psalm 103:8-14 and 1 Corinthians 11:23-26, reflecting on the significance of Christ's forgiveness of our sins.

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Prayer Requests:

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## DIGGING DEEPER

1. It takes a regular commitment to put ourselves in a place where God can grow us. What do the following verses tell us about our role and God's role in the process of spiritual transformation?

Isaiah 64:8

<sup>8</sup> Yet you, Lord, are our Father.

We are the clay, you are the potter;  
we are all the work of your hand. [NIV]

1 Corinthians 3:2-9

<sup>2</sup> I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready.<sup>3</sup> You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans?<sup>4</sup> For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not mere human beings?

<sup>5</sup> What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. <sup>6</sup> I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. <sup>7</sup> So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. <sup>8</sup> The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. <sup>9</sup> For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building. [NIV]

### Philippians 3:12-16

<sup>12</sup> Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. <sup>13</sup> Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, <sup>14</sup> I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

#### *Following Paul's Example*

<sup>15</sup> All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. <sup>16</sup> Only let us live up to what we have already attained. [NIV]

2. We heard this week that spiritual growth doesn't happen by accident. Yet at times we may feel like we don't have what it takes to grow and succeed spiritually or really know what steps to take to continue to grow. How would you explain to someone else with similar concerns how 2 Peter 1:3-9 addresses these concerns?

### 2 Peter 1:3-9

#### *Confirming One's Calling and Election*

<sup>3</sup> His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. <sup>4</sup> Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

<sup>5</sup> For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; <sup>6</sup> and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; <sup>7</sup> and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. <sup>8</sup> For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup> But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins. [NIV]

As you read the passage above you saw that Peter gave some very intentional steps that anyone following Jesus can take to continue to grow and live out their faith. As you look at that list again are there any that you've specifically worked on in the past or been challenged to put into action? Is there one you think you need to be more intentional at putting into action moving forward?

3. Even though we can see the upside to growth, that doesn't mean it's always easy. The process of maturing can be hard work. Paul often used the analogy of athletic competition to help Christians understand their part in growing to maturity. How do the following verses increase or affirm your understanding of what it takes to develop a spiritually mature perspective?

### 1 Corinthians 9:24-27

#### *The Need for Self-Discipline*

<sup>24</sup> Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. <sup>25</sup> Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. <sup>26</sup> Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. <sup>27</sup> No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize. [NIV]

## 2 Timothy 2:4-5

<sup>4</sup> No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in civilian affairs, but rather tries to please his commanding officer. <sup>5</sup> Similarly, anyone who competes as an athlete does not receive the victor's crown except by competing according to the rules. *[NIV]*

## Hebrews 12:1-2

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, <sup>2</sup> fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. *[NIV]*

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