

# COME GROW WITH ME

2 Peter 1:1-9

**INTRO:** Hey, give it up for KAITLYN JOHNSON, who actually read one of my text last week and responded to it! Haha

**JOKE:** On a more serious note, I don't know if you heard, or if you even watch the news, but the Chickamauga Police Dept had a really strange thing happen this past week. The department filled up with a swarm of flies! I'm talking a plague of biblical proportions! The FLIES were so bad on Friday, that they had to call in the SWAT team!

Turn your Bibles or turn them on to 2 Peter chapter 1. I have titled my sermon today, "COME GROW WITH ME!" Church GROWTH, both physical and spiritual, is an INTENTIONAL work of a HOLY GOD! On the day of Pentecost, there was an extraordinary move of God in the giving of the Holy Spirit which resulted in 3000 souls being added to the church that very day. Where God is at work, great results are recognized! And God desires to work in the lives of His people and church. God wants to do GREAT THINGS for you, and for us!

I want to talk to you about GROWTH today. I have learned from long experience in the ministry that physical growth WILL always follow spiritual growth. Now, you can have physical growth without spiritual growth, but at some point that usually comes crashing down. But lives and churches that are built on the knowledge of God and His Word, and built on a relationship with God, always experience the extraordinary kindness and favor of God. And we want that here at C1C. The breakdown in the process however, and what keeps most people from ever achieving great things for God is that, SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT only comes through practicing SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES, like time in the Word, prayer, fellowship, fasting, giving, witnessing and serving. Spiritual DISCIPLINES are necessary for Spiritual DEVELOPMENT.

Over the past nine years, here at C1C, we have witnessed God work in a lot of lives. Some of them have gone on to great things, in that, they are an integral part of the ministry of our faith family. Ultimately, that's what I want for all of you. I want you to connect with the church, and the God of this church, in such a way that you desire to play a role in the spiritual and physical growth of this church, as we work corporately together toward the GROWTH of the KINGDOM!

There are two truths that I want to share about GROWTH before I get into the sermon.

**1. God is COMMITTED to growth:** 1 Corinthians 3:6-7 *"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow."* God is a GROWTH expert!

Isaiah 60:21 *"They are the shoot I have planted, the work of my hands, for the display of my splendor."* God's children are meant to grow, for the purpose of showing/displaying God's splendor.

**2. We must accept the CHALLENGE of growth:** 2 Peter 3:18 *"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ..."*

2 Corinthians 10:15 *"Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow, our area of activity among you will greatly expand."*

2 Thessalonians 1:3 *"We ought always to thank God for you, brothers, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing."*

Growth comes from God! But growth only occurs where there is a DESIRE for it to take place.

**Philippians 2:12-13** "...Continue to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling [that's our part] for it is God who works in you [that's God's part] to will and to act according to his good purpose."

Now, let's read together from 2 Peter. This is Peter's second letter, and he's concerned that Christians have become complacent and spiritually stalled. False teachers have been spreading dangerous doctrine and persecution has become prevalent. Peter's purpose is to remind these Christ-followers that the gospel transforms lives, that discipleship involves discipline and that growth is intentional, not automatic. These words have never been more relative than they are today...

**2 Peter 1:1-2** "Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours: 2 Grace and peace be multiplied to you through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord."

Did you know that it's possible to grow in grace and peace? I've heard some Christians say, I just can't seem to find any peace of mind. YES YOU CAN! You do so through the knowledge of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. How many of you would like to have more grace and peace in your life? Would you be willing to read your Bible every day and search the treasure of scripture to make it so? That's the only place you'll find it.

There are three truths in vv 3-9 that I believe will help us grow abundantly as a church in grace, peace, Christian character, and ultimately physical growth beyond our wildest imagination. Notice...

**I) WE HAVE WHAT WE NEED:** **v 3-4** "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. 4 Through these He has given us His precious and magnificent promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, now that you have escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires."

**A) We Must Unleash God's Power:** **v 3** "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence." For us to be everything God wants and intends for us to be, we don't need any other book or blessing or seminar or experience, we just need to become intimately familiar with Jesus! **WE UNLEASH THE POWER OF GOD THROUGH THE KNOWLEDGE OF JESUS.** As we learn and gain knowledge of Jesus, our faith in Him grows. And as our Faith strengthens and builds, His power is unleashed in our lives.

Notice the past tense: "*has given us everything...*" We have all we need right now to be all that God ever wants us to be – the word "everything" in Greek, means everything!

**B) We Must Utilize God's Promises:** **v 4** "...He has given us His precious and magnificent promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, now that you have escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires."

## I) WE HAVE WHAT WE NEED: vv 3-4

**A) We Must Unleash God's Power:** v 3

**B) We Must Utilize God's Promises:** v 4 CONTINUED God's promises are great and they are precious. The word "great" is the superlative root word "megas," which literally means "exceedingly outstanding". The word "precious" means "prized or valuable". Putting these together we could say that God's promises are mega treasures!

Aren't you glad that God keeps all His promises? Psalm 145:13 *"The LORD is faithful to all his promises and loving toward all he has made."*

**ILLUS:** In the margin of many pages of D.L. Moody's Bible, he wrote the letters "T" and "P," meaning "Tried and Proved."

As we seek to GROW individually, and as a church, spiritually, and physically, it's essential that we realize, first of all, WE HAVE WHAT WE NEED and then it's crucial that...

## II) WE USE WHAT WE HAVE: vv 5-7

*"For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; 6 and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7 and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love."* You can see the progression here, I'm sure.

When we talk about cultivating our life in Christ, there are really three necessities to get you where you want to go...

**A) Dream:** We can call this "vision". In scripture we see God speaking to people a lot in dreams. God would often reveal His plan and purpose to prophets through dreams, who would then share God's message with His intended recipients. Today, the Spirit and Word of God leads His children. And where the promises of God gives us authority and instruction, we should reach for the stars!

**B) Desire:** We must make a decision that we want to get there.

**C) Disciplines:** Finally we must develop some practices that will get us there.

It's easy to dream. Dreaming doesn't demand anything. Desire is a little more difficult, but still almost everyone wants to grow. Our problem, is much like that of Peter, James, and John, our spirit is willing but our flesh is weak! We don't settle into the disciplines that it takes to really make a difference! And it's those disciplines that get us to that place of growth and victory. I mean we all can dream about going to the Olympics but it's only those who decide to go, and then incorporate some strict disciplines in their lives, that actually end up having a chance to go compete.

It's not enough to just have what we need; we must also use what we have. I don't want to take too much time, but look with me at one phrase in verse 5

**V 5** *"...make every effort..."* This phrase is extremely strong in the Greek text. It refers to eagerness, earnestness and zeal and has the idea of moving quickly, and trying as hard as possible. MAN, THIS IS WHERE I WANT YOU GUYS! I will often say in my church text to you all. "Make every effort to come to church this Sunday", and I always have this passage in mind. YOU NEED TO DEVELOP THIS DISCIPLINE! And I would be a sap of a pastor if I didn't want what's best for you. That's why I keep pushing! That's why I keep pastoring! Anything would be easier than this, and pay better!

## I) WE HAVE WHAT WE NEED: vv 3-4

A) We Must Unleash God's Power: v 3

B) We Must Utilize God's Promises: v 4

## II) WE USE WHAT WE HAVE: vv 5-7

A) Dream:

B) Desire:

C) Disciplines:

CONTINUED **ILLUS:** J. Vernon McGee in his unique style writes: "The Christian life is a very serious business. However, we have made it sort of an extra-curricular activity."

Let me read vv 5-9 together and we're finished...

**vv 5-9** *"For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; 6 and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7 and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. 8 For if you possess these qualities and continue to grow in them, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But whoever lacks these traits is nearsighted to the point of blindness, having forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins."*

**CONCLUSION:** Hey, I don't know about you, but I want to keep growing! I want to keep stretching, keep SEEING more, DESIRING more, and DOING more, for the GLORY OF GOD! And I want you to "COME GROW WITH ME"!