

Never Stop Growing

But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

2Peter 3:18

Physical growth and spiritual growth are two different things. For human stature genetics seem to play a much larger part than nutrition. Proper nutrition is necessary for the proper development of the human body, but the height of an individual seems to be determined by heredity. Diet and exercise have a bearing on one's overall condition, but as the scriptures say, *Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?* Somewhere in the second decade of life, a person will usually reach the peak of their physical height. However, on the spiritual side, a person does play a part in how long and how much they can grow.

This last verse in Peter's second epistle admonishes the readers to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It's obvious from this admonition that believers play a part in their spiritual growth. Willpower alone is not what makes a person grow spiritually, but the will can determine to take advantage of what God has provided for spiritual growth. The nutrition of His Word is available. Peter says that we should *desire the sincere milk of the Word that we may grow thereby*. In this context, *desire* indicates a thirst that causes us to go beyond just casually skimming over its pages; rather, we should consume it and allow its truths to saturate our minds and souls so that we might absorb every ounce of it for our nourishment. The Word is not only to be harbored in our minds, but it is also to be obeyed and put into action so that we receive its full benefit. As the fish and bread were multiplied to feed the five thousand, so God's Word is never depleted and can feed us for the rest of our lives. God has also given us exceeding and precious promises to help us escape the corruption of this world and enhance our spirituality. Being sensitive to the Holy Spirit who indwells us will greatly assist our growth. Allowing our steps to be directed by Him will take us into situations that the Lord has designed for our good and His glory while being aware of the people whom the Lord has to cross our paths knowing that they all have lessons to teach and temper us. If we walk with wise men, we will be wise, but our spiritual life will be destroyed if we are the companion of fools. Daily, there are lessons to learn that help the old nature to diminish and allow the new nature to be nourished. Recognizing when we are grieving the Holy Spirit will help us to repent and avoid the things that are detrimental to our growth. Also learning to realize when we are working and relying on the flesh can help us to be more aware to shift our dependence fully on the Spirit of the Living God. The Spirit will also remind us when our pride rises to usurp God's position in our life. Pride will interrupt an intimate relationship with our Heavenly Father which will cause a spiritual decline. Spending time in the prayer closet will help us to grow past superficial and pretentious communication with God. Having no one to impress, we can have an unhindered and uninterrupted time in His presence.

Today is an opportunity to apply the truths that we have learned from the Lord, and it is also another opportunity to learn more from Him. By allowing our inward man to be renewed every day, we can continue to grow spiritually until our race is finished.

J. Ekis