



## CHAPTER 6 How Can I Keep Growing?

### Section 1

If you have completed the rest of the study guide to this point, no doubt you have sensed God growing you spiritually along the way. But where do you go from here? A study guide like this is merely supposed to get you started in the right direction. What you do next is equally as important as what you have done in pursuit of spiritual growth so far. Just like with physical training and exercise, God has given us what you might think of as spiritual exercises to make us strong and keep us spiritually healthy (see 1 Timothy 4:8). In this last chapter you will learn about different practices you can incorporate into the rhythm of your life, which will help you continue to grow as a Christian.

#### We Grow Spiritually through Bible Reading

1. In 1 Peter 2:2, how should we desire to understand the Word (the Bible)? What does this analogy imply about our need to understand the Bible to stay spiritually healthy?
2. In Hebrews 4:12, what does the author say the Word is like? What does it do inside us as we take it in?
3. If the things the above verses say about the Bible are true, how should we use the Bible to sift through our emotions and process decisions we need to make?

## Section 2

### We Grow Spiritually through Prayer

Prayer is simply talking to God. The primary thing Jesus saves people for is to have a real and personal relationship with God (1 Peter 3:18). It is difficult to have a relationship with someone that you never talk with. Whereas in Bible reading God talks to us, in prayer we get to talk to God. And talking to God in prayer produces many beautiful results in our lives.

Prayer should be done in Jesus' name (John 16:26). Why? Because Jesus' death for our sins and the forgiveness we have received through faith in Him is what opened the door of relationship and communication with God for us. We come to God in open communication only because Jesus has made it possible for us to do so.

Here is a small sample of what the Bible says prayer can be used for in our lives, just taken from the books of Luke and Acts alone:

1. Prayer can relieve depression and stress (Luke 18:1).
2. Prayer is a source of strength in temptation (Luke 22:40).
3. Prayer is a means of coping with physical pain (Luke 22:44).
4. Prayer is a means of asking God for guidance in decisions we need to make (Acts 1:24).
5. Prayer is a means of being filled with the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:15).
6. Prayer is a means through which God sometimes grants miraculous healing of physical ailments (Acts 9:40).
7. Prayer is a means through which God sometimes speaks to His people in prophetic visions, dreams, and messages (Acts 11:4-6).
8. Prayer is a way to acknowledge the calling of God on church leadership (Acts 14:23).
9. Prayer is a form of worship (Acts 16:25).
10. Prayer is a means of coping with emotional burdens and concerns shared between you and other people (Act 20:36).

### Section 3

#### We Grow Spiritually through Confession and Repentance

1. According to James 5:16, should Christians confess sin? To whom should they confess? What does James say will happen if Christians confess their sins to one another and pray for one another? What trusted Christian friend who loves you can you talk to about struggles you are having with sin and temptation? If married, how can you practice confession to your spouse? What pastor or good Christian leader can you talk to about struggles with particular areas of sin?

Every Christian needs people who know them best and love them most, whom they can confess sin and receive prayer.

#### We Grow Spiritually in Christian Community

1. In Hebrews 10:24, what are we told to consider?
  
2. In verse 25, what are we told not to forsake?
  
3. How frequently does verse 25 say we should gather together?
  
4. According to Ephesians 4:16, when Christians play the part God has designed them to play in each other's lives, what does it cause to happen?

## Section 4

### We Grow Spiritually through Focusing on Grace

1. In 2 Peter 3:18, what are we told to grow in?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Similarly, in Romans 2:4, what does Paul say leads us to repentance?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Knowing that God's love for you never changes, even on your worst day, does it make you want to sin against Him more, or honor Him with your life?

The grace of God is unmerited favor. You can never sin yourself out of God's love. The unfailing nature of His grace and love is what inspires us to get up again when we fall, and press on seeking to honor Him afresh. Keeping focused on God's grace every day is a key to living in victory over temptation.

## Section 5

### We Grow Spiritually through the Influence of Good Leaders

1. How does Paul refer to godly leaders in Philippians 3:17? What does it say we should do as we observe the lifestyle of godly leaders?
2. In Hebrews 13:17, what does the author say we must do regarding leaders?
3. What reasons does the author give as to why we should follow his command?

### We Grow Spiritually through Joining in the Rescue Mission of Jesus

1. In Matthew 5:16, how does Jesus say we should live, and what does He say will be the result?
2. In 1 Peter 3:15, what are we told to always be ready to do?

### IMPACT POINTS

Write down the insights from this chapter that most impacted you and discuss them with your small group.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Write down any questions you have about the content of this chapter, or additional questions you thought of as you went through it. Discuss these questions in your small group.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### GOING DEEPER

These are some resources you can purchase on your own to learn more about God's identity:

- Effective Prayer Life by Chuck Smith
- Love: The More Excellent Way by Chuck Smith
- The Pursuit of God by A.W. Tozer