

Dig Deeper Devotional



Still Growing: The Beautiful Work of Becoming Like Christ

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for loving me enough to save me and for loving me too much to leave me unchanged. Forgive me for the times I become satisfied with spiritual complacency or discouraged by slow progress. Remind me that genuine growth is often quiet, gradual, and unseen until its fruit begins to appear. Today, give me a renewed desire to know You more deeply. Shape my thoughts through Your Word, strengthen my faith through prayer, and cultivate within me a heart that longs to become more like Christ with each passing day. May my life bring glory to You.

In the name of Jesus, Amen.

Scripture Foundation

NIV – Second Epistle of Peter 3:18

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and forever! Amen."

KJV – 2 Peter 3:18

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

Teaching & Insight

Few childhood memories are as simple—or as meaningful—as standing against a doorway while someone measured your height. A pencil would make a small mark with a name and date beside it. Then came the inevitable comparison. *"Look how much you've grown!"*

Growth was expected. In fact, parents became concerned when growth stopped. Healthy children naturally develop over time. Although the changes may be imperceptible from one day to the next, the cumulative difference becomes unmistakable after months and years.

The same principle applies to the Christian life. When God saves a person through faith in Jesus Christ, He does not merely forgive sin; He begins a lifelong work of transformation. Salvation is not the finish line. It is the beginning of an entirely new life.

The video from Mondays with Mark outlines three remarkable stages of God's redemptive work.

The first is **justification**—the moment God declares the believer righteous through the finished work of Jesus Christ. We contribute nothing to this miracle except our need for grace. Christ accomplishes everything through His death and resurrection.

The second is **sanctification** - This is where every believer lives today. Sanctification is the gracious process through which God shapes His children into the likeness of His Son. Unlike justification, which occurs in a moment, sanctification unfolds throughout an entire lifetime. It is neither instant nor effortless. It requires surrender, obedience, repentance, and continual dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

Then comes the believer's glorious hope. **Glorification**. One day, every follower of Christ will stand before Him, freed forever from sin, weakness, and death. What God began through justification and continued through sanctification will reach perfect completion in His presence.

That future promise gives meaning to today's spiritual growth. Yet an important question remains: **How do we know whether we are growing?**

Growth cannot be measured merely by church attendance, ministry involvement, financial generosity, or religious activity. Those practices may accompany maturity, yet they do not define it. Spiritual growth reaches far deeper than outward performance.

Instead, growth becomes visible as Christ increasingly transforms the inner person.

The Mondays with Mark teaching identify several practical habits God frequently uses to cultivate spiritual maturity:

- intentional Bible study rather than casual reading,
- consistent worship,
- continual prayer,
- memorizing Scripture,
- learning through trustworthy Christian teachers,
- wisely guarding the content we consume,
- surrounding ourselves with believers who encourage spiritual growth.

None of these practices earns God's acceptance. Instead, they position our hearts where His transforming grace can work most effectively.

Consider a flourishing garden. Sunlight does not hit the ground and force growth alone. Water, while essential for life, does not make a seed. Healthy soil does not bear fruit alone. Together, these elements combine to make for a fine growing garden. Spiritually speaking, your life is a reflection of God's garden design. Who is your gardener?

Perhaps the most encouraging truth is this: Healthy growth is often slow. Often there are seasons when there is strong fruit and other seasons that are less than fruitful. With one exception from Genesis, never in history has anything in nature automatically appeared mature. You are no exception to this rule when you were born physically or spiritually. God has never hurried His craftsmanship.

Philippians 1:6 offers extraordinary confidence:

"He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

Our responsibility is faithfulness and God assumes responsibility for transformation. Each instance of our transformation becomes another quiet mark upon the doorway of faith, bearing witness that God's children are, indeed, still growing.

DEED / ACTION

Evaluate your spiritual growth this week with intentional honesty and ask yourself:

- In what area have I grown most during the past year?
- Where do I still need God's transforming work?

Choose one habit to deepen:

- Bible study
- Prayer
- Worship
- Scripture memorization
- Christian fellowship

Commit to practicing it consistently for the next seven days. Share your growth goal with a trusted Christian friend who will encourage and pray for you. Growth flourishes within community.

Pause & Reflect

- If someone compared my spiritual life today with five years ago, what evidence of growth would they see?
- Which spiritual discipline has become neglected?
- Am I measuring success by activity, or by becoming more like Christ?

Hebrew Insight

קָדַשׁ (*Qādash*) — "To make holy, consecrate, set apart"

This foundational Hebrew word expresses God's work of setting His people apart for Himself. Holiness is not merely separation from sin; it is wholehearted devotion to God's purposes.

Sanctification is God's ongoing work of shaping His people into lives that reflect His holiness.

Greek Insight

ἁγιασμός (*Hagiasmos*) — "Sanctification, holiness, the process of becoming holy"

Throughout the New Testament, *hagiasmos* describes the continuing work of God's Spirit in believers after salvation. It is progressive rather than instantaneous, emphasizing lifelong transformation into the image of Christ.

God is not merely changing what believers do.

He is changing who they become.

Final Charge

God never intended salvation to be the end of your story - It is the beginning of a lifelong transformation.

Keep growing. Keep trusting. Keep following. The Master Gardener has never abandoned the work of His hands.

Closing Prayer

Father,

Thank You for Your patience with me and thank You that You continue Your work within my heart. Strengthen my desire to pursue You daily. Give me discipline to study Your Word, faithfulness in prayer, joy in worship, and humility to receive Your correction. When growth seems slow, remind me that You are never idle. Continue shaping my heart until the character of Christ becomes increasingly evident in every thought, every conversation, and every decision.

May all glory belong to You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Sources

- The Holy Bible
- Strong's Concordance
- Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon
- Thayer's Greek Lexicon
- Mondays with Mark