



Topic: Growing in Christ

Lesson Plan:

Purpose:

There is only one way to grow in godliness. That is God's way.

Bible Lesson and text:

Matthew 7:24 - 28; Wise and foolish builders. John 15; The vine and the branches. 1 Samuel 1 to 3; the life of Samuel.

Focus:

Children are designed to grow and to know the Lord. God has given us the grace to grow purely. God places people in our lives as spiritual moms and dads to help us mature.

Scripture:

Proverbs 4:23 "Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life."
(NKJ)

Lie Buster:

I AM A HEART GUARD. (Or use an identity from the list on study sheet.)

Teaching Styles:

Depends on which lesson; use visuals and real objects that can be hands on as you teach. For Samuel, a baby doll adds effect. Be dramatic.

Object Lesson: 1. Help!!! I Have Been Robbed

Point:

Valuable things left exposed or unlocked will get stolen. This is taking place during the teaching time. It is simultaneously being taught within the other ministry.



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Props:

A jar, envelope or wallet of money.

Directions:

- A. Have a jar of money: Speak: I have a jar filled with money. Wow! How much money do you think this is? What could we buy with this money? Who would like this much money? (Get excited!) It is valuable. Why is it valuable? What if I left this beside the road. What would happen to it. So we need to guard it.
- B. Set the jar of money in a safe place, so we can watch it. We are good guards. (Continue with a new part of the class. Meanwhile, when an opportunity arises that the children are involved in something, have the jar of money disappear. Either you or your helper, must quickly hide it. Wait to see which child notices the jar is missing.)
- C. Teacher speaks: What!!!! The money is gone! What could have happened to it? (Let the class respond. Listen to what they say.) Those were good possibilities, but truthfully, I was foolish and didn't guard the money. Look how quickly a thief can sneak in and rob. How could we have prevented the money from being "stolen"? (Let children respond.) Those are good answers. We must hold tight, keep locked up, hide out of sight what is so valuable and is wanted by the thief, the devil.

Concluding Points:

Our heart is valuable to us and God. It must be guarded. Our relationship with God is to be guarded. Just like the money jar was the goal of the thief to steal; the gifts, faith, vision and the destiny God put in us is the goal of the enemy to steal from us. The only way the enemy can stop God's plan is to stop God's children from growing up. We have much in us that will bring much fruitfulness to this world, but only if the enemy doesn't steal the truth from us. Obedience to those in authority over us is a very sure way to stay on guard.



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Object Lesson: 2. DRY AND THIRSTY; A GROWTH SPURT or GROWTH STUNT

Point:

To contrast what healthy growth and stunted growth results in. How feeding the wrong things can be just as harmful. Only feeding occasionally will retard, delay or stop destiny. Relate this physically and then spiritually.

1. Use a child or baby. What happens if we stop eating? Show pictures of contrasts. What happens when we feed a baby? Do we feed the baby milk forever? (Baby food?) What if we fed the baby hamster food or coffee, candy?
2. Does a baby only need food to grow. What else does a baby need? Children may answer.
 - A. Love: Everything given and done for the baby is because the parents should love their baby. They want the baby to grow and not stay little forever.
 - B. Security, acceptance and belonging (Family, friends, and Body of Christ).
 - C. Value and vision. This is our reason for life and the goal that he is moving toward. Life is bigger than just me.
3. What happens when we feed our spirit man and renew our mind? We need fresh times with our God and fresh revelation in His Word. We receive all the above; love, security, acceptance, belonging, value and vision from Our Father.
4. Sometimes in our body or our thinking we don't "feel" like hearing the Word of God, going to church, praying, singing praise to Jesus, but our spirit man is always ready to have times for the things of God.
5. Children often don't "feel" like exercising, taking a bath, eating broccoli and carrots, going to school, brushing their teeth, but as they do they grow in health and are also a pleasure to be with.



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6. Use one of the children as an example: Joshua what would it be like if your mom or dad decided not to grow up? If they stayed in five forever?
 - A. Talk about all the things that would not have happened, if they stayed immature: His mom would never have gotten her driver's license, graduated from school, went to college, became a nurse, met Joshua's dad, got married, Joshua and his sisters would not have been born, Sammy and Joshua would not be best friends, the lady with the a broken wrist would not have been healed because Joshua would never have been born to pray for her, the next door neighbor boys would not be coming to church because Joshua would not have been here to invite them. This could go on and on. You could use another child as an example. We must grow up in God. The world needs the Joshua's to fulfill their destiny.

Object Lesson: 3. GOD IS TRUSTING US

Props:

Need two people: the teacher and a thief, teachers purse.

Directions:

1. Speak: This purse has all my money, credit cards, pictures of my children, my keys, my lipstick, etc. This is very valuable to me. Why is it valuable? What if I left this beside the road. What would happen to it. So I need to guard it.
2. Today I am asking (pick a child) to guard my purse while I am teaching. Maybe you could put it under your chair. That looks like a safe place. I trust you to keep my purse safe.
3. Before the child receives the purse: (The thief comes sneaking around, eyeing up the teacher's purse.) He goes over to take it from the teacher. The teacher, stops him and tells him to go. He backs away. (THE TEACHER CONTINUES TEACHING WHILE THE THIEF PLOTS TO STEAL THE PURSE.)



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4. The child takes the purse. The thief comes back and goes to the child guarding the purse and whispers in their ear, that he will give the child five dollars if the child gives up the purse. (The child should say no, but you never know with children.) The thief backs off for a more opportune time.
5. (The teacher is still continuing the lesson. The thief is crouching down to come up with a new plan.) Next the thief approaches the child guarding the purse and tells them how sick they look. He whispers that they have a fever, their face is very white, their eyes are all red; Oh, my goodness, you are going to throw up.... teacher..... quick get a trash can or take this child to the bathroom.... Hurry everyone do something..... before there is vomit all over the place.....(in the commotion the thief steadily moves toward the purse. He reaches for it but a child or teacher will see him.)
6. Teacher call the thief up front: You.... liar..... you are trying to get a child to think they are sick, and all the time, you were just waiting to rob my purse.....You had better get out of her now. I am going to call the ushers to remove you once and for all.....
7. The teacher is pushing him toward the door (expect the children to want to help throw him out.) Just as the thief gets near the door.....
8. The thief says: Hey, I smell smoke,.....who smells smoke? You do; so do !! It's a fire!!!!.....Quick!!! All child must leave. NOW!!!! Run, every body.....FIRE!!! FIRE!!!! Teacher, are you going to let you class burn?
9. Teacher: Boys and girls, it's the liar at work again. He is so determined to steal my purse he doesn't want to stop for anything. But now he is out of here..... The only smoke and fire he's going to see is the lake of fire that is reserved for all the thieves and liars.....

Concluding Points:

Our heart is valuable to us and God. It must be guarded. God trusts us to keep the bad away. Just like the teacher trusted (child) to guard her purse. God helps us to recognize the tricks of the devil to rob from us. God gives us others who can help us to fight back and keep us growing in God. Remember God trusts us. He knows we want to grow and guard the treasures inside of us just like the treasures inside of my purse are guarded by me or someone I ask to protect what is valuable to me.



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Object Lesson: 4. Take up the Slack and Give the Devil a smack

Point:

If we get lazy and casual we become a playground for the enemy. Godly growth stops and we begin to grow in the ways of the world. We can look good on the outside, but be empty and powerless.

Props:

Rope

1. Have a child try to push through the rope. Can he do it? No.
2. This time the two with the rope start calling each other names. They complain that one is not pulling as hard,..... the other has all the work.....

One says: I am so pulling hard.

Two says: I could have my baby sister pull better than you do.....

One says: Well if you don't like the way I do this maybe you should get someone else.....

The child who is trying to push through walks up and shakes the rope. Now it is easy to get through. They let the rope relax. The child walks through.

3. Question or teaching: What was the reason the child got through the rope?
 - A. They lost their focus. They complained and criticized instead of edified. They focused on the weakness and not the strengths. They believed lies about each other not what God says about them.



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4. What are some other things that can cause us to become slack and let up the tension?
The enemy comes with lies, lusts, bad tv, too much tv or games, boredom, wrong friends, disobedience, strife, arguing etc. This allows the enemy to come right in and try to rule our life.
5. What is the cure? Remember how the first time the two held the rope tight? They were in unity and had a common purpose.
6. Obedience to God and His word will keep us safe. We can't get lazy and forget about God. Class can you name some things that are like the tension in the rope to keep us protected from letting ungodly things through? Examples:praying, being quiet to hear what God speaks as we talk to Him, going to church, listening to Christian tapes, reading the Bible, worship and praise or choosing to spend time with other Christians.
7. Obedience is like holding the rope and vision is like the tension in the rope. As long as we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, we obey and give the devil a bad day.

Object Lesson: 5. What Goes in Must Come Out

Point:

An open door is an invitation, to what? Every time a door opens something comes in or goes out. What stays or leaves will determine what grows in us; godliness or worldliness; good or evil. When evil comes in will need more space to keep growing and will scream for it's own way! Give me more! Are we opening to Jesus or the devil?

1. Examples:
 - A. Can use a classroom door with a delivery boy knocking to deliver good or evil things.
 - B. Can make cards with doors on them.
2. On the back of each door card or for the delivery boy's box, have an example of something that wants to come in our life; use both godly, and ungodly examples. Plus use some things that are neutral.
3. Anything can become ungodly depending what place it takes in our life or what it is taking the place of. For one person it may be sin, for another has no effect. Depends



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where we are in our growth as a child of God. Even a relationship with a person: As we grow in Christ, old things we did with friends have to change. Used to go fishing every Sunday morning with Bob, or would watch Saturday morning cartoons. As we grow, those things will keep us tied to the past. Won't grow but go backward. They would keep pulling us back.

Luke 12:48 "But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked." (NIV)

4. Children can take turns answering the door; (the delivery boy can call out: Package for: Mary: Next knock: Package for: Andy.) Or if you use door cards the children can take turns picking one and turning it over to read or look at the picture on the back. Each child must make a decision to close the door and send it back or open wide and receive.

Object Lesson: 6. Pick Me- Pick Me- Says the Tree

Point:

We can grow up, yet still be immature. The person without the character of Christ in them will never be as the blessed man or the tree of Psalms 1.

1. Have pictures of two trees: one weak and fruitless, one tall and fruit laden. Both trees are 20 years old. Talk about the conditions that bring fruitfulness and barrenness.
2. Ask children which kind of tree is pleasing to God? Which kind of tree is a blessing to people? Which tree has grown to be what God intended it to be? Which tree would you pick?
 - A. Jesus cursed a fig tree that did grow figs. Do you know what happened to the tree?
3. Use the same analogy as the child who stays five and never grows up.



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- A. Here is apple tree that has grown from a little apple seed. But every year the goats come and eat all the branches off. Each year the tree tries to grow, but goats just eat it back again. This tree never grew strong and tall. This tree never got to have birds nest in it. Never got to grow apples. Never got to have it's apples become: cider, jelly, fruit roll ups. It never got to give shade to the boys and girls who play in the yard; never got to have a tree house built in it for the children to play and dream in; never got to have more trees grow from seeds for the apples it never grew; never got to be old and cut down to be sweet smelling fire wood in the fireplace. It never got to show it's final blaze of glory as the fire from it lite up the room and made the family warm.
4. Growth also includes protection from enemies. All the could have been if the tree was protected from the goats. We must guard!

Object Lesson: 7. No More Messes in This Girl's House

Point:

We are responsible to keep our own house clean. Can't blame anyone else if we have a messy, dirty house or bedroom. To grow we need to have healthy boundaries. Set up some godly rules for our lives of what we can and can't allow.

Props:

Pictures from a magazine of a messy room and a clean room OR a doll house and put clutter in it, muddy shoes, food wrappers, etc.

1. Messy Picture: Teaching: Oh, my.....Look at this mess. What happened? Is this how your mom would want her house to look? Is this how you would want your room to look? If we would never clean mice, rats, roaches would come to live along with the mess. Would I go and clean your house or bedroom every week? No. We have to take care of what belongs to us. That is part of growing up like Jesus. Sometimes others will help



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when there is a need to see how good it can be when we have our room in order.
But..... we have to keep it that way.

2. Messy House: Teaching same as above. Allow the children to help clean up the doll house. Ask them how it looks cleaned? How do they feel with the house clean? How do you think Jesus feels when we do what is right? He wants us to obey and grow.
3. Which picture would you rather live in, visit in or sleep at? Which one would you rather have Jesus stay in? Which picture does our heart or mind look more like today? Is there any thing any of you have been thinking or doing that you know Jesus does not want you to do?
4. Ministry Time: Pray with the children to have clean pure thoughts and hearts.
5. Say there are no more messes coming into my house (me.) They're good and right things for me and that is what I will think and do. I am pure and clean in my heart and mind. I am growing in Jesus.

Object Lesson: 8. Life's Not Fair So Forget It

Point:

Sometimes things happen that we have no control of and we have hindrances that we have to deal with and overcome to continue to mature. God is in control and has enabled us to deal, heal and move forward. But, we must be the one to work out our own salvation. Get rid of the "junk" that might not belong to us.

1. Before class bring the following and spread them around the room: some trash, dirty clothes, old homework papers, toys, dirty dishes, broken chair, turn chairs around etc. The children should not know the room is messed up.
2. The teacher comes in surprised. Ok, what happened here? (It is confusing. We don't know how to move like we did last week.) Did one of you children come in and do this? Well,.....(starts to teach the class like usual, but the teacher gets distracted by something..... talks about that dirt that is smeared all over...)
3. (The children should also be distracted.) Teacher: (dramatically) I quit, this is so bad! I can't teach in this mess. Whoever did this is going to pay. Maybe, I'll go throw my trash



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all over their yard, or maybe I'll throw eggs all over their car and write on their windshield with soap. (Sits down on the chair and just looks at the children.) Of course, the children will be very surprised by the teachers behavior.

4. (After a moment, the teacher rises up.) Repents before God and the class. Forgive me. I forgive the person who did this. I am not going to let this stop what God has planned for me or for our destiny in this church. (Our decisions do affect others.)
5. Ask the class what would they do? Listen to their responses and use them to further illustrate the object lesson. What did they think what the teacher was going to quit. Were they glad she did not quit? We all need to make decisions every day to do what is right in the midst of things that are not right or fair.
6. Clean up the room and tell them that this was a part of the lesson. You came in and messed up the room to teach a point. What did you learn from this?
7. When we quit we quit growing. The more of the "stuff" that is not a part of this class, the less space there is for good things. Spiritually the more "stuff" that is of the world, the less place there is for God to be fully Lord and for us to know and grow in Him.
8. **Ministry Time:** Can have the class repeat the Godly Identities or ask if there is any thing the Holy Spirit has revealed to show how they have things like that in their life that make them want to just quit because it is too hard. Would anyone like prayer to overcome something that is messed up; something that is not fair? God is just and rewards the righteous; I am righteous in Christ; God is my helper; God has given people who will help me; I am not a quitter, I am a finisher; I arise to every challenge; I overcome evil with good; My obedience blesses others; I obey and give God glory today.

Activation:

Lie Busters to repeat if you have not said any from other lessons.

For younger children: They like to take turns and pick cards with these written on. They hand it to the teacher or helper and the whole class repeat what us read to them.



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(Have the children repeat these out loud.)

I AM DILIGENT TO PROTECT MY HEART, LIKE A PALACE GUARD.

I WILL NOT LET ANY EVIL COME NEAR ME.

I HAVE THE KEY (Diligence) TO THE LOCK OF MY HEART.

ONLY GODLY THINGS, WORDS, THOUGHTS WILL BE GRANTED ENTRANCE.

I PUT THE WORD FIRST PLACE IN MY LIFE.

GOD PUTS ME FIRST PLACE IN HIS LIFE.

I AM STANDING GUARD.

I KEEP THE GOOD IN AND THE BAD OUT.

SKIT: Halt! Who Goes There?

Setting:

A palace guard is standing watch over the king in the palace. The scene is really what takes place when the enemy tries to come and overtake the palace (our heart.)

Characters:

Person one: The enemy, who has many disguises. Each time the enemy is driven away, he comes back in a new disguise with hidden weapons.

Person two: The palace guard. Dressed in a guard uniform. Carries a gun and fly swatter.

GUARD:

(marches in military fashion, enters putting the polishing touches on his weapon.)

Ok, that should finish it up. (Puts rag in his pocket and marches back and forth with his gun on his shoulder.) One, two, three, four.... one, two, three, four. I am ready to man my post. My weapon is real clean. I am ready for anything, big or small. (Reaches in his coat and pulls out the fly swatter.) Even got my fly swatter for the little bugs.(With a look of surprise.) Hey, what was that? I heard something. Halt! Who goes there? (Looks in the direction of the sound.)



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ENEMY:

(Enters dressed in an animal costume or has an animal puppet on his hand.)
Makes animal sounds and rubs up against the guard. Purrs, licks his hand or does whatever the animal would do.

GUARD:

Oh, it's just a (animal.) You scared me for a moment. I thought you were an intruder.

ENEMY:

(In a sweet convincing voice) Who me? Why I wouldn't hurt a flea. I was just in the neighborhood and thought I drop by to make the King feel happy. I always make people happy.

GUARD:

How nice of you. I suppose a furry (animal) like you could do no harm.

ENEMY:

Never! Once a friend of man always a friend of man. So which way to the palace door?

GUARD:

(Pets the animal) Why, you are the nicest (animal).....(feels the weapon, which is hidden under the part he is petting.) Hey, (pulls out the weapon) what is this?

ENEMY:

(He is trying to pull away.) Oh, nothing. (Snarling and getting mean.)

GUARD:

(pulls out a grenade) Why you were going to try to blow up the palace.



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ENEMY:

Every hear of a wolf in sheep's clothing. Well I'm a wolf in (animal) clothing.
(Sneering and nasty tone.) I'm the one who comes to steal, kill and destroy.....(sinister
laugh)

GUARD:

Not for long. In the name of Jesus, I tell you to get out of here right now. Go!

ENEMY:

The name of Jesus..... Oh, I hate that name. I'm out of here.

GUARD:

(straightens up and starts marching back and forth.) Well the nerve of some (animal.)
That's the last time I trust a (animal) I never met before.
(Marches back and forth a few times. Maybe singing a song: "I'm in the Lord's army" or
Jesus.....Or "Move over devil"

ENEMY:

(enters as a Red riding hood looking girl, wearing a hood or scarf and carrying a basket
of candy.) Singing: "over the river and through the woods to grandmother's house I
go....."

GUARD:

Halt who goes there? Identify yourself!

ENEMY:

It's only little sweet me.....Granny's girl, Sally.

GUARD:

And what is in the basket? What is your destination? I am not letting anything past this
way, that is not godly, right and true.



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ENEMY:

I'm off to see Granny with all this candy. Here, try some, I give candy away to everyone. It's free. Every thing I have is free. Try some.....

GUARD:

I think I smell a snake. Free, (takes the basket from her hand.) Let me inspect that basket. (Rummages around and finds a note that says: reads the note out loud) The one who gets this basket will have to pay a \$10,000 fine for receiving stolen property. The police are following close behind to arrest the person who possesses it.

ENEMY:

Come on, just let me go hide in the palace. The police will pass by and we can both share the candy.

GUARD:

(puts his gun across his chest and points at the enemy.) Granny's girl Sally.....What a liar! I will let no thief into the palace. But I'll tell you what I will do.

ENEMY:

Yea,..... what?

GUARD:

I'm going to arrest you myself. (Wraps rope or handcuffs on wrists) In the name of Jesus I bind you and command you to go straight to the dry places...(sets the basket of candy off to the side.)

ENEMY:

Oh, not the dry places.....anywhere but the dry places.....no.....it's so dry.....(enemy leaves)



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ENEMY:

(The voice of Greed: the enemy is behind the puppet stage or stands motionless with his back to the class) Look at all the candy in the basket..... No one is looking..... You should grab a handful..... Wonder how much money you can get if you sold the candy in the basket?

GUARD:

(Responds to each temptation the enemy speaks. Then picks up a handful of candy.)

GUARD:

Yea, I wonder? No one is looking. I bet I could sell this at the playground and get enough to buy the new computer game (or name something your children covet)

ENEMY:

Yea the new game, you could invite all your friends over and show off...

GUARD:

Show off.....(looks toward the palace) My King! My palace! I almost let the enemy come inside. (Drops the candy back in the basket.)

ENEMY:

No..... Don't stop.....just think of the game.....the friends.....

GUARD:

Halt! I know who you are!

ENEMY:

No.....No.....

GUARD:

It's greed. I recognize you. (Keels down) I submit to my God, I resist you greed. I am a generous giver. Freely I have received, freely I give. Get out of here greed, in the name



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of Jesus. King Jesus forgive me. I repent. I almost left that dirty greed sneak past. Thank You, for saving me.

ENEMY:

(runs away)

GUARD:

(Takes the basket and puts it outside the class door.) This guarding is more serious than I thought. Around every corner seems to be a thief just waiting for a place to sneak into the palace of my King.

Closing Point from the teacher:

- The enemy only has one weapon, deceit. He uses it over and over again.
- He will come in many disguises, but his plan is always the same: to steal, kill and destroy.
- We must guard our heart with all diligence.
- The enemy can not takes us unaware if we stay on guard.
- The Holy Spirit is given to us to help us discern evil and good; truth and lies.
- The Bible says the Lord is our rear guard and that God goes before us. We just keep our eyes forward on Him.

Ministry Time:

Purpose:

To help children who have left their down their guard. Sin has come in. Now is the time to confess, repent and receive forgiveness.

- You can do this as an altar call, individually, or as a group ministry. Pray as you have the children bow their heads, and ask if they want to take up their guard? Repent for areas where they have been weak and fallen back, compromised, watched, read, played, spoke in ungodly ways. Name sin: repent, ask for forgiveness, ask the children



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to forgive anyone who has been a part of that sin, receive the Lord's forgiveness, cleansing, filling and empowerment to overcome.

- Identity declarations: These are to drive away lies. When false identity has robbed the children of who they are in Christ it is very difficult to see and believe they are not as they appear, but of a higher call.
- Have the children repeat: I am an overcomer; I am empowered to succeed; I am more than a conqueror; I am well able to be all that God has planned for me; I am keeping my heart pure; I am a heart guard; I am highly favored of God; I am pleasing to God; I expect to see the Lord today; I choose to think God thoughts; I choose to speak words of life; I choose to live God's way; I am loved and blessed of God today; I am loved and blessed of God tomorrow; I am hungering and thirsting for all of God; I am growing in godliness; I will be all that God has planned for me; Jesus is the Lord of my life and I serve Him with all of my heart.



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STUDY NOTES

1. TO GROW WE NEED TO FEED. WHAT IS PUT IN IS WHAT WILL COME OUT.

A. Naturally, Physically, Emotionally

- 1) Babies get loved, nurtured, trained and fed. How long do we wear diapers or want our bottles warmed? Trust and security develop to aid growth.
- 2) Children want to do it all. School, training, responsibilities, mistakes, discipline, repetition, advancement, curiosity; learning obedience, submission, respect, patience etc. are part of growth, which is character development.

2. GROWTH IS PREDETERMINED TO BE FRUITFUL AND COME TO MATURITY

- A. Everything can be in place for growth but without the conception and birth of the child there will be no fulfillment of the dream.
- B. You must be born again. The new birth is the start, but the difference in the spirit is that at birth the umbilical cord is not cut. We must stay attached to grow. See John 15.

3. SPIRITUALLY THE SAME PROCESS APPLIES. OUR SPIRIT AND SOUL COME INTO AGREEMENT WITH GOD. THEN THE WORD OF GOD IS EFFECTIVE AND GIVES THE PROMISES.

- A. Food for my spirit by reading and hearing God's Word.

Matthew 4:4 "But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" (NKJ) (This is answer A on the Study Sheet.)



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B. Instruction on how to abide in the Him as He abides in me

John 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." (NKJ) (This is answer B on the Study Sheet.)

C. The Word of God is wisdom for me

Colossians 3:16 "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (NKJ) (This is answer C on the Study Sheet.)

D. The Word is Spirit and Life (written and spoken word; logos and rhema)

John 6:63 "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life." (NKJ) This is answer D on the Study Sheet.)

E. The Word is our success plan

Joshua 1:8 "Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful." (NIV) (This is answer E on the Study Sheet.)

4. TO GROW WE NEED TO GUARD OUR HEART

A. Guard what we have.

B. Guard what may come in. Set up boundaries.

C. Be diligent in our preparation as we make Him our habitation.



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- 1) I come to my God continually, accepted in His love, already called by my Daddy. God is expecting me to come for in His presence, I am changed. I grow; thus I want to know Him more. In His presence demons flee.

2 Timothy 2:15, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (NKJ)

- 2) When we are diligent we keep at something. We don't quit. We stay focused and keep our focus first before all other things. We work and have fruit from our labors.

D. Be diligent in our pursuit of God. Don't let up the tension.

Proverbs 4:20-23 "My son, give attention to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; keep them in the midst of your heart; For they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh. Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life." (NKJ) (Emphasis added)

- 1) The word keep has many meanings. Some are to watch, guard as from danger, to keep secret, to keep closed.
- 2) Diligence also means to guard or watch, with the example of a man, post or prison. It also is explained by the example as to hedge about as with thorns.

E. My own interruption of keeping our heart with all diligence is this:

- 1) Our heart is God's home, His holy temple.
- 2) Jesus is the King. Our heart is His palace.
- 3) We are to be like a palace guard. Or like the secret service men who protect our president.



Topic: Growing in Christ

- A. At all cost, even that of our life, we are to protect the life of the King: the life being the gifts, talents, anointing, destiny, truth etc. of God Almighty in us.
- B. We will do damage to any thing or enemy who would try to intrude into the palace of our King, Jesus. So to, we do vengeance against anything that would hinder the purpose of God in us.

5. TO GROW IN GOD WE MUST WORSHIP HIM AND ONLY HIM

- A. WORSHIP KEEPS US LOOKING TO GOD.
- B. OUR HEARTS STAY SOFT AND OPEN.
- C. THUS WE STAY THANKFUL.
- D. WE JOY IN OUR GOD NO MATTER WHAT IS HAPPENING.
- E. KNEELING IS A HUMBLE POSTURE (heart position) OF SURRENDER AND TRUST IN GOD.

Psalms 95:6-8 "Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care. Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did at Meribah, as you did that day at Massah in the desert," (NIV)

John 4:23 "Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks." (NIV)

6. TO GROW, EVERY PURSUIT COMES FROM OUR LOVE AND OBEDIENCE TO GOD. OBEDIENCE CAUSES US TO SEE JESUS AND WHAT THE FATHER IS DOING. WE WILL KNOW HIM AS HE IS.

John 14:21 "Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him." (NIV)



Topic: Growing in Christ

- A. Knowing causes Growing. Growing is a result of relationship. Relationship is a process, as is growing. Love is the key. (The greatest of these is love.) Without the connection of love, all the works and “to do’s” only produce a sterile Christianity. Illegitimate fruit will be the result.

Matthew 7:22-23 “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (KJV)

- B. Power is a result of growing from infancy to sonship as we believe and receive. In His Name, we will cast out devils..... Maturity brings the release of authority. Miracles flow through those who know..... and are known by Him. His Name.....is Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace, Healer, Redeemer, Savior, Lord.....

- 1) Daniel 11:32 “..... but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.” (NKJ)
- 2) John 1:12 “But as many as received him, to them gave he **power** to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” (KJV) (Emphasis added)

- C. Growing is Work. Ever felt stage fright? Yet you went on, for the “show must go on,” even when in fear. We “grow on” while in the process God brings us to the fullness of Christ as we come against opposition; things we don’t want or think we can do.

Philippians 2:12-13, “Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” (KJV)

- D. Growing is changing. The old ways and things we carry will not fit through the narrow gate. Must lay it all down to enter. We are not of this world, but his Kingdom.



Topic: Growing in Christ

Matthew 7:13-14 "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it." (NIV)

John 14:6 "Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (NIV)

Matthew 7:21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven." (NIV)

7. GOD HAS GIVEN US EVERYTHING THAT PERTAINS TO LIFE AND GODLINESS. WE HAVE A FULL INHERITANCE.

- A. Growth is required to be released to function in our full inheritance.
- B. God's won't entrust babies with greater levels of truth, anointing, giftings, authority, people or wealth until they are proven.

Galatians 4:1-2 "What I am saying is that as long as the heir is a child, he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate. He is subject to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father." (NIV)

Hebrews 5:12-14 "In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil." (NIV)

Luke 16:10-13 "He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much. "Therefore if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? "And if you have not been faithful in



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what is another man's, who will give you what is your own? "No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon." (NKJ)



Topic: Growing in Christ

6. Circle the days you speak these identity (ID) Statements.

M T W T F SAT SUN

7. FEED ME THE WORD: Read the verses and write the letter that matches the verse.

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| ___ Colossians 3:16 | A. Reading and hearing God's Word is food for my spirit. |
| ___ Matthew 4:4 | B. I abide in Him as He abides in me. |
| ___ John 6:63 | C. The Word of God is wisdom for me. |
| ___ John 15:5 | D. The Word is Spirit and Life. |
| ___ Joshua 1:8 | E. The Word is our success plan. |

Identity Statements

I AM DILIGENT TO PROTECT MY HEART, LIKE A PALACE GUARD.

I WILL NOT LET ANY EVIL COME NEAR ME.

I HAVE THE KEY (Diligence) TO THE LOCK OF MY HEART.

ONLY GODLY THINGS, WORDS, THOUGHTS, ENTERTAINMENT, FRIENDS ETC. WILL BE GRANTED ENTRANCE.

I PUT THE WORD FIRST PLACE IN MY LIFE.

GOD PUTS ME FIRST PLACE IN HIS LIFE.

I AM GROWING IN GODLINESS.



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I WORSHIP GOD WITH ALL MY HEART, SOUL AND STRENGTH.
I LOVE GOD AND HE LOVES ME.