



Sunday School Lesson
Middle School Department
January 10, 2021

Join us live for Sunday School Lesson
Teleconference call #: 1(425)436-6319
Pass Code: 7131798
Sunday Morning @ 9:45 am

I RESOLVE TO GROW



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TO GROW**



Lesson Aim

Our relationship with God should not stop at our conversion experience; we need to grow on into perfection. New Year's is a great time to recommit to daily devotions, and this lesson explores how consistent daily devotions help us grow in our relationship with God.

Scriptures

Psalm 61:8; I Corinthians 15:31

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Scriptures

Psalm 61:8

So will I sing praise unto thy name for ever, that I may daily perform my VOWS.

1 Corinthians 15:31

I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.

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The Training Process

Read Psalm 61:8.

If you've ever spoken to people who do weight training, they will tell you the key is lifting weights on a regular basis. Lifting weights is not done casually; weightlifters have a very intentional routine.

No matter how much someone can lift, the whole point of weight training is to prepare the body to lift more.

Let's say someone can lift 150 pounds. What is the likelihood this person could do that when lifting weights for the first time? It's very improbable. Why? It takes hours of training, day in and day out, to develop the muscle strength to lift that amount.

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The Training Process(cont.)

Perhaps when lifting weights for the first time, this person could only lift the 45-pound bar.

Maybe after the first month, this person was only up to sixty pounds.

With diligence and training over a period of time, this person developed the muscle to lift 150 pounds.

How is that possible? As someone continually lifts weights, the muscles do not stay the same size. The constant stress of lifting (along with proper rest and nutrition) causes the muscles to grow.

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Born to Grow

When we first experience the new birth, we could rightfully be considered babies in our relationship with Jesus. In fact, in I Corinthians 3, Paul referred to some in the Corinthian church as “babes in Christ.”

However, a baby is not intended to stay a baby forever. A natural growth process should take place.

If you met someone who was fifteen years old and was still the same size and maturity level of an infant, you would probably think something was wrong. Indeed, something would be wrong because healthy babies eventually grow.

The same is true in our walk with God. If we are at the same spiritual maturity level as when we were first born again, something is wrong.

It takes ten years to have a ten-year walk with God, but some people look back after ten years and realize they just had a one-year walk with God ten times.

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Intentional Growth

Although a baby may grow physically just by eating and sleeping, the maturity of the baby depends largely on the parents helping the baby develop in these areas. At some point, though, to continue to mature, children must begin to take accountability for their own growth as well.

Consider again the weight trainer we discussed earlier. Although able to lift 150 pounds today, if this person took a year off from weight training, do you think this person would still be able to lift that amount?

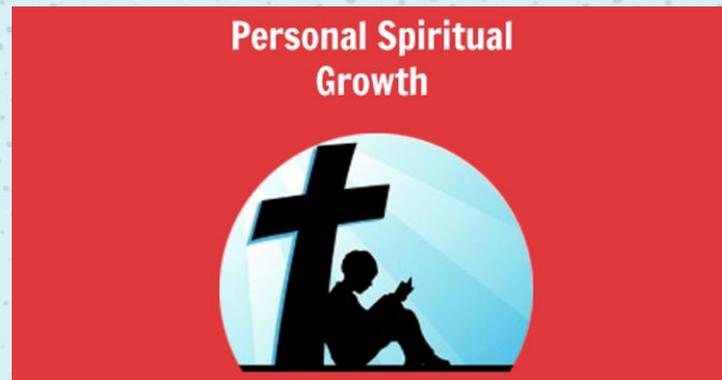
Similarly, a child may be doing very well in school, but what if that child decided to take a year off from academics? Would that child still be considered successful?

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Intentional Growth (cont.)

In our walk with God, we may think simply showing up for church during the week is enough for us to grow. Yes, we will grow to some degree, but **to reach our full potential in God, we must be more intentional about our spiritual development.**



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Developing Spiritual Disciplines to Grow

Much of our spiritual development is simply putting the right things in place in our lives to help us grow.

To be spiritually healthy, we cannot take a break from spiritual growth between midweek service and Sunday service. If we don't have a plan, we will find our lives cluttered by time wasters that fill all the empty space in our calendar.

To grow and have a healthy walk with Jesus, we must plan for daily time to connect with Him.



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It Starts with Dying

Read I Corinthians 15:31.

Is a daily devotional plan easy? Absolutely not—we are carnal beings, and our flesh likes to be in control.

A daily devotional plan, by definition, is routine, and routines are not always exciting. We must approach our spiritual development with a made-up mind. Even when we don't feel like doing it, we must insist on making our devotions a priority.

Dying daily simply means telling our flesh no. The more we are committed to this, the easier it becomes.

As we die daily, we can add the key items that make a devotional plan beneficial to us.

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The Components of a Devotional Plan

Three keys to a solid devotional plan are

1. a prayer guide,
2. a Bible reading plan, and
3. a devotional guide.

You can either develop these yourself or use existing resources but having these items in place will help you to be consistent.

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Prayer Guide

In your prayer time, have you ever noticed you repeat yourself over and over because you cannot think of anything else to pray?

A prayer guide can help you focus your prayer by providing prayer topics.

Many different types of prayer guides are available through the Pentecostal Publishing House (pentecostalpublishing.com) and World Network of Prayer (wnop.org). You can also write your own prayer list.

The most important thing is to **find a prayer guide that works for you**. The goal is to have a guide or focus strategy to help you spend meaningful time talking to and listening to God.

Of course, in your prayer time, be open to the leading of the Spirit and seek to pray in the Holy Ghost, but this does not have to happen every time for your prayer time to matter. Consistency in prayer is the most important thing.

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Bible Reading Plan

In addition to prayer, spending time in the Bible every day is important.

A variety of Bible reading plans are available. Although the “read your Bible in a year” plans are popular, simply getting in the Word every day is most important.

The UPCI has the BREAD (Bible Reading Enriches Any Day) program available at the Pentecostal Publishing House. Additionally, **most Bible apps have reading plans.**

The most important thing is to find a plan that works for you.

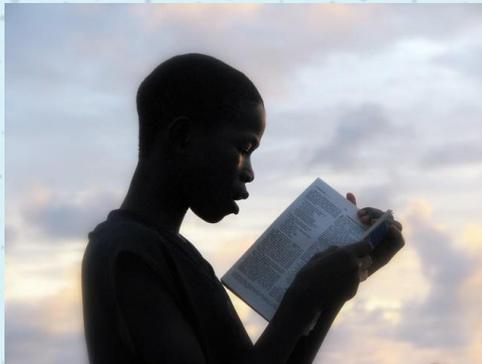
As you read the Bible, look up any words you don't know. You can also look at a Bible atlas to find places being discussed. Talk with your parents, a teacher, or the pastor about questions you have from your reading.

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Bible Reading Plan (cont.)

While reading, focus on how what you are reading applies to your life. Open your spirit to what God is trying to tell you from His Word. Don't just read the words on the pages to get through them, but ask, "Jesus, how does this show me who You are? What are You trying to show me today about how I can serve You?"



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Devotional Guide

A **devotional guide** is a collection of short articles that provide you daily inspiration from the Word of God.

A devotional guide can help you focus your mind and spirit on positive things and give structure to your efforts to connect with God.

The UPCI Youth Ministries and Pentecostal Publishing House have devotionals available. The most important thing is to find one that works well for you and helps you intentionally focus on growing close to God.

As the saying goes, “If you fail to plan, you plan to fail” Many of us recognize the need to pray more and read the Bible more, but we do not have a plan to improve in this area, so it falls by the wayside. What would a solid devotional plan look like for you? When and where would you do it?

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A Little Extra . . .

Have you ever had a close friend move away? Perhaps you were the friend who moved. Either way, are you as close to that person as you were before the move? Even if you are intentional about staying in touch, odds are you do not communicate as often as you once did. This is normal. This does not mean you care about that friend any less; distance just makes it difficult.

Our walk with God is similar. He intends for us to spend time with Him every day. The more time we spend with Him, the closer we grow to Him. It is very easy to fill our day with different things. Perhaps we only pray when we are going through something or something happens that reminds us to pray.

Make it a priority in our life to spend time every single day in the presence of God. In His presence is where your greatest spiritual growth will take place.

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