

How can I grow my faith? Three keys for Spiritual Maturity

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[0 : 00] Let's turn to the Word of God now, talking about spiritual maturity, talking about how to grow. And we're going to go to Ephesians 4, which we'll get to shortly.

Here's a question for you. Spiritual maturity. How can I get there? How can I become a strong Christian? How can I grow my faith?

Paul gives us here, I put to you three keys for spiritual maturity. Paul shows us, number one, he says, grow up. Grow up into Christ.

And we see that from verse 14 there, Ephesians 4, 14, in part it reads, that we henceforth be no more children. That we henceforth be no more children.

Verse 15, it reads, but speaking the truth in love may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.

[0 : 57] God wants us to be saved, to be born again. And then he wants us to grow. Now we were talking to someone on Saturday about being born again, and he was telling me that he was born again when he was sprinkled as a little baby in the Catholic Church.

And I had to tell him, no, that's not what the Bible says. It's not what the Bible says. We're born again by faith in Christ. When we believe on Christ, then we're saved. And that's how we're born again.

So firstly we've got to be born again, and then he wants us to grow. And some people, sadly, they stay in spiritual babyhood. God says, be no more children.

Stop being children. Don't be childish. God wants us to grow, everyone to grow. And when we have a little baby in our arms, they're beautiful bundles of joy, aren't they? But we don't want that infant to stay in the nappies.

We would be sad to see that baby stop growing, wouldn't we? And developmental delay is something that can happen, sadly. Very difficult for families when that does happen.

[2 : 02] Developmental delay. And that can happen spiritually too. A developmental delay. In God's family. We're meant to grow. We're meant to be increasing, growing.

That's God's design for us. And as believers, we need to learn to grow up, to mature in Christ. So how do we grow?

To grow spiritually, we need to feed the inner man. We need spiritual food, the Word of God. It's what feeds us and sustains us.

And we need to mature our faith and build up our spiritual muscles to start to walk, to learn, to get stronger. As Peter relates in 1 Peter 2, there's things that we are to drop off and lay aside.

And there's a new desire that God gives unto us. We see that in 1 Peter 2 from verse 1. And it reads, Wherefore, laying aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisies and envies and all evil speakings, lay those things aside, he says.

[3 : 10] And as newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word. This pure milk of the Word that you may grow thereby. How are we going to grow?

Desire the Word. Like a little baby. It lets you know it's hungry, doesn't it? We want to have that same heart cry, don't we? That desire for the Word. As it were, milk to a baby.

As it were, meat to a man. This Word that we want to have, this sincere milk, this pure milk. Unadulterated, pure. The real Word, the Word of Truth.

And we need that. We need a nutritious diet. I know some of you look like you have a nutritious diet. Some of you maybe not so nutritious. Me included. But we want to have a nutritious feed of the Word of God, don't we?

That's the nutrition that we need. We must have God's blessed truth, the Word of God. It's like that food to our soul. And here's a little quote about truth. It says, It is better to be divided by the truth

than united by error.

[4 : 12] Truth sometimes divides, doesn't it? Better to be divided if it be by the truth. Better to speak the truth that hurts and then heals than falsehood that comforts and then kills.

Speak the truth even if it hurts because it's going to heal. It's better to be hated for telling the truth than loved for telling a lie. It is better to stand alone with the truth than to be wrong with the multitude.

A lot of truth there, isn't there? Literally truth. Take a look at Psalm 1, which talks about growing. Psalm 1, we're familiar with it, no doubt. We could read the whole thing, but just the first three verses it reads.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord. And in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in his season.

[5 : 21] His leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. Like a tree planted by the rivers.

That's the picture there, isn't it? And we see the flourishing there. We see the leaves green. We see the fruit that's coming forth. Why does this man grow? Because he's planted and he's delighting in the word.

He wants it. It's his delight day and night. And there's rivers of water here. You don't have to stay dry and stunted. Sadly, some Christians, they're not planted.

They're not drawing forth that nutrition, that nourishment. They're not bringing forth the fruit. It matters where you're planted. The blessed one is a blessed delight in the word.

Be like the blessed one here. Brother, sister, to be like this blessed man, this blessed one, and then you will grow and you'll bear fruit. You'll flourish like a healthy tree.

[6 : 20] God wants you to grow. Amen. As you meditate on these words of life, we can grow. We can grow up. As we feed on God's truth, we can be green and fruit-bearing believers.

Secondly, Paul gives to the Ephesians another key. So firstly, grow up. Be like this tree. Get that nutrition. The word, like a baby wants it.

Desire it. Delight in it. Meditate on it. Grow up. Number one. Secondly, God calls us to wise up. Wise up.

It reads there, Be no more tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the slight of man, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait.

As if they're kind of going to ambush you there. Lying in wait to deceive. Paul's saying here that there's some opposing forces. God wants you to grow, but there's opposing forces for you that believe.

[7 : 24] There's these powers, and they're against you. There's contrary winds that threaten to blow us off course. These winds blowing us around like a ship tossed about on stormy seas.

Brothers and sisters, we have to wise up. Wise up. We can all be caught off guard. We can be conned. I can relate to that as I've related to you.

I've been conned. We need to have our wits about us, and get ready to face some things. Some slight of man. Some cunning craftiness. Some lying in wait to deceive.

Get ready for that, brother, sister. In the Christian walk, you're going to face contrary forces. Paul urged the Corinthians also about some dangers that they faced.

The Corinthian church had a growing up problem as well. We see that in 1 Corinthians. 1 Corinthians 3, from verse 1. Paul says, And I, brethren, could not speak unto you, as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

[8 : 31] I have fed you with milk and not with meat, for hitherto you were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. So these Corinthians, look at them. They're like they're still on baby food.

They're still on baby food. He says, I can't feed you, me. You're not ready for it. You're still in your nappies, as it were. And then we read verse 3.

For ye are yet carnal. For whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal and walk as men? Look at these Corinthians.

They're acting like little brats, squabbling and acting up, like a little child pulling faces. Paul was chiding the Corinthians here for acting like babies.

It's like they hadn't graduated from the milk to the meat yet. Why? Because they are carnal, not spiritual. In other words, they're full of their own fleshly and selfish ways.

[9 : 30] We can get like that, can't we? Where there's still the old man, the fleshly ways, the selfish ways, the carnal man. Paul's telling them, stop being babies in Christ. Stop it.

Stop the envying, the strife, the division. Grow up. Wise up. And the Ephesians needed to wise up about these various winds of doctrine.

As we read about these various winds of doctrine that they were carried around by. And these deceivers that wanted to take them away from the truth of God's word.

The Corinthians too, they needed to stop being big spiritual babies, to put their big boy pants on, to leave behind their nappies and their dummies. You know, some Christians are like that.

You know, as a preacher, I see them all the time. They're still in their spiritual babyhood. They've not moved from the milk to the meat yet. Friends, it's a problem, isn't it? When we get our growth stunted as a believer, we need to let go of the flesh, of fleshly division and strife, of fleshly ways, of the babyhood stage, and to grow.

[10 : 37] How can we grow? How can we grow? Again, it's the scriptures that we need. It's the word. It's the word that we need. And in the real world, where the rubber hits the road, it's the word of God that we need.

And it's real. The word of God is real. This is not just words on paper. This is God's word, his love letter to you. And he gives it to us for where the rubber hits the road. Why?

Because we're meant to be doers of the word. Not just hearing it, but applying it. Putting the word of God into action in our daily lives, in our practical living, in our relationships. For example, here, in the relationships, where you're relating with others in real life.

Receive the word, and let it walk in your shoes. It's telling here of the scriptures again. And the word also tells us that the word of God is able to make us wise.

Make us wise unto salvation. Paul says to the Ephesians here, stop acting like children, toss to and fro, carry it around, carry it about with every wind of doctrine.

[11 : 39] Rather have that growing in knowledge and sound doctrine, to be no more children. Think about young children for a minute, and what young children can be like. I put to you that they carried along with fads.

I know when I was a youngster, what was it? Those silly turtles. The ninja turtles. That was the, what a stupid idea that was. Now, kids get caught up in all these crazy fads, don't they?

Whatever it is that's on the cornflake packets, or whatever they're pushing through the adverts of the day. Kids can get carried along with all kinds of fads. Oh, mum, dad, I've got to have the latest, I've got to have this toy or that toy.

And there's some new interest that takes their attention. And some Christians are just like that too. They just get caught up in some teachings that change like the wind. They carried about whatever the top 100 CCMR, whatever the top 10 at Coorong.

They carried about with every changing wind of teaching of one kind of another. And they're turned this way and that. They're tossed to and fro, back and forth, easily carried along. It's easy to get carried along by a fad, isn't it?

[12 : 51] I know my younger sisters, they used to light the Bay City Rollers. And I thought, that's just totally wacky. You know, they had these crazy ideas, didn't they?

You might have, you might be a bit more younger than me and have thoughts of other fads that have come and gone. And it's crazy stuff, isn't it? But Christians can be carried around like that, like with these fads, whatever it be.

There's all sorts of crazy fads out there on, on the YouTube now, with people spewing up in the spirit, or whatever they call it, and just crazy demonic deliverance. It's all this hoo-ha and this razzmatazz, just whatever the latest bandwagon is.

And Christians fall for this stuff. They're tossed to and fro, every wind of doctrine, whatever it is that the latest prosperity preachers going on about. And it's all a load of garbage, most of it.

Yeah. And so kids can be carried along with fads. Kids can also be conned. It talks about the slights of men. Think of children.

[13 : 54] They can easily be conned by the slights of men, by cunning craftiness, easily filled and taken in. For example, some children, maybe even some adults, get taken in by tall stories about big fat men in red suits.

And other myths. You know, I've got to tell you, that's a lie. Sorry children, but Santa Claus is a lie. All right. That's a slight of men. That's cunning craftiness. Sorry to burst your bubble this morning if I've done that for you.

But honestly, there's these con artists, aren't they? Slight of men, cunning craftiness. It's like some gullible, gormless Christians. Isn't it? They're conned, they're tricked by deceivers, fakes, snake oil salesmen, polished performers, cunning and crafty, slick, smooth talkers.

And dare I say, they're even apostles of Christ. I've seen that. I think I've got some Facebook friends that he calls himself an apostle. And you think, what? Crazy. And I've challenged them. You know, apostles of Christ. That's what they were called in 2 Corinthians 11. Ministers of righteousness. They put their name, apostle such and such or whatever it be or prophet so and so. [15:06] And they're bragging on about this. And the Bible talks about such a time. It talks about such a people. It says, for such a false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

It goes on, verse 15, 2 Corinthians 11, 15. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers, talking about the devil, also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness. Whose ends shall be according to their works.

So, we're warned here. Hey, look out. Look out for these people. They're sharks. They're scammers. For people like this, they look the part, but really they're fakes.

They're fakes. All right? Wiser. There's people out there who want to lead you into error. Like I say, we've been scammed lately and we're still looking for a container and we've seen some other scams.

We've seen, apparently there's one place down the bottom of York Peninsula in some remote place and they're supposedly selling a container and I saw a picture of it and I've been corresponding with them.

[16:06] and I've said, I'll come down and have a look at it. I'll drive down to the bottom of York Peninsula to have a look at this container and they say, oh, you've got to give us 50% deposit first and they will make an appointment for you.

So, people, they're out there. These are wicked people. They're just robbing people blind and there's people like that spiritually too, isn't there? That they want to lead us into error, trick us in false teaching, selling us some sensual, sensational experience.

Well, I've had an experience so it must be right. They gauged the truth by then. I've had an experience. You can't deny my experience because the experience is above the Word of God. No, it's the other way around. The Word of God is above your experience. It's the Word of God that tells you whether your experience is right or not. Too bad if it's just a cheap imitation, isn't it? Not the real thing.

Many Christians are well and truly conned. Their Jesus is a substitute for the real one and they've been sold a lemon. Many churches are conned with the latest shallow spiritual craze.

[17:08] What's fashionable? What's popular? Well, everybody else is doing it. Everybody else loves this music, this entertainment, this market driven. It's more relevant. It's cool.

And the people are falling for this. The ministers are people pleasers and they're politically correct. So they don't offend anybody with the truth.

Oh, we can't say that. It might offend someone. And that's the modern so-called Christianity. Honestly, today, accepting what God rejects. Gay ministers. I know that they're still playing on the local Christian radio.

There's performers who think there's nothing wrong with the LGB. And they're Christian. Oh, they're Christian. They're singing a Christian song. Uh-uh. Wrong. They're not of God.

And people are falling for it in churches, even witchcraft and mind control. There's a lot of stuff that you think, well, that's on the edge. That's beyond biblical. That's something else. So what about you?

[18:08] Are you being conned? We can all get conned. Are you settling for this half-baked mish-mash that's dished up as Christianity today? By and large, we've always got to be discerning and alert.

Yeah. Rather be one of the remnant. Be one of the few, if it be few. Be a lover of the truth, old-fashioned truth, if it be old-fashioned. And there's truth that's new too.

But we've got to be careful. Is it biblical? That's what matters. And in these days of mounting deception, we need to be equipped to know what is the word, to be equipped with the word of truth. Do we still want historic, orthodox, sound doctrine? Now, just because it's old, it's old doesn't mean it's always right too. Because the early church had lots of heresies and lots of apostatizing and lots of getting off track.

Even the early church had some of that too. What matters, it's not whether it's the early church. It's like this man I was talking to, saying, well, the Catholic church is 2,000 years old.

[19 : 11] So it must be the right one because it's the oldest. Not necessarily. Not necessarily. Honestly. You know, oh, the church fathers taught this.

Well, the church fathers had some strange ideas too. They weren't always right. Well, the Protestant Reformation taught this. Well, there's still some things about that that's not quite biblical either.

So it's got to be sound doctrine that we must have. Not this tickling of ears and this rocking of cradles. But rather the truth. The truth that will save hell-bound sinners and spur the sleeping Christians to action, to awake.

Many are conned and they don't even know it. That's the worst thing, isn't it? You're conned and you don't even know it. Many Christians, they wonder why our church doesn't mess with the ecumenical movement.

Many see nothing wrong with joining with what has truly been termed the world's deadliest cult, the Catholics, in joint activities. I'm sorry if you're a Catholic sympathiser but honestly, you need to be informed it's dangerous territory, it's thin ice.

[20 : 17] It's estimated that more than a fifth of Pentecostal charismatics are Catholics. They're Mary worshipping Catholics conned by a compromised, counterfeit, watered down gospel, sucked in.

You know, we can all be subject to such things. We've all got to be careful about the shifting sands of current opinion, of popular false doctrine, the apostate world church, rather have the immovable rock of the scripture.

We must go to the scripture. Our business is to proclaim God's truth without fear or favour, even if we look down on for that. And we see the sorry state of the church, and it's in independent Baptist circles too, the sorry state of the church in many quarters.

Many Christians are being conned, they're not being alerted, they're not being awakened to see the distinction between truth and error. So children can be easily caught up with, carried along with fads, they can be easily conned.

Another thing about children is that they can be caught in a trap. It talks about, of these ones, in Ephesians, it talks about whereby they lie in wait to deceive. It's like these people that want to persuade people with delusion, with deception.

[21 : 33] And it's the devil's plan, isn't it? We can be caught in their spell. And this delusion, it's deliberate, it's planned. There's one woman who had been a generous donor to one supposed faith healer, and she happens to be parked at the back of one of the crusades, at the back of the stadium.

And as she was parked there, she watched this large truck back up to the service door, and a crew unloaded 30 or 40 wheelchairs. And the supervisor said, put them around the stage.

They brought in the wheelchairs to make it look like there was healing going on. It's not to say God cannot heal, but there's some sharks out there. There's some con artists out there, people.

And the Bible talks about in 2 Peter 2, it says that there were false teachers, false prophets among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies.

And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of, and through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you.

[22 : 40] It's a merchandising thing in some circles. There's damnable, destructive heresies. We've got to be careful. We've always got to be very on the alert, because we can all be conned.

Don't be a victim, a sucker. For their lies. We see 1 Corinthians 14, and this is like some Christians here. You know, a grown man with a dummy in his mouth.

That's a picture of what's happening in church circles today. And Paul reprimands the Corinthians. He says, Brethren, 1 Corinthians 14, 20, Brethren, be not children.

In understanding, in malice be ye children. So, you know, keep calm like children are generally calm, but in understanding be man. Paul's telling them, Hey, grow up. Don't get caught in the spider web. Don't fall for error. See it for what it is and renounce it. Paul's telling the Corinthians, Be a man.

[23 : 40] In understanding, be a man. Grow up. Be mature. Be biblical. Be spirit-led. Be spiritual, not carnal. And we're urged here to wise up, to be no more children.

Be on the lookout then for being carried along with fads, new fad ideas, fashionable things, whatever it be. Generally, watch out. Could be error. Be alert to those who will try to con you. They're slick tricksters, convincing smooth talkers. You know, the big popular tele-evangelists. Not all of them, but some could be conning you.

And watch out also for those that will catch you in a trap, bringing in devilish delusions to deceive and fool you. Even in Paul's day, in Acts 20, he talked about wolves coming in, not sparing the flock, coming into the church.

These were church people coming in. These were teachers in the church, even in Acts, chapter 20, talking about savage wolves. Wolves in sheep's clothing, look out for them.

[24 : 39] There's many flaky preachers with empty words. And with this feel-good, positive, taught kind of gospel, that's scarcely a gospel at all. And many churches today will scarcely mention the blood, the cross, repentance, holiness, dying to yourself, and all the other meaty elements of Christianity.

So friends, I urge you, number one, grow up. Secondly, wise up. thirdly, join up. Join up. We see that in Ephesians 4 where Paul's talking to the Ephesians.

He says, from verse 15, talks about Christ being the head from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplier, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

So he's saying there, grow up, stop being babies, wise up, be understanding, watch out for deception, have some wisdom. And he's saying, thirdly, join up. Join up. He's talking about the body of Christ.

He's saying there's a growing there. We grow when we're together, don't we? When we get together, we can encourage one another. We can spur one another. There's a mutual growing.

[25 : 54] To be a growing Christian, we need to join up. Join up. And here's how we'll increase our faith as we grow up in every way. Into union with him, in our relationship with him, to be more like him.

Christ is the head. Not the pastor. The pastor isn't the head. He's the chief cook and bottle washer. He's the chief servant. You know, give me all the work to do. No, not really, but hopefully I can distribute the work.

We can all be ministers. We can all be servants together, ministers. But Christ is the head of the church. Not some man in Rome. Not some HQ somewhere in another place. But Christ is the head of this church.

He's the source of everything that we do. And God willing, as mature Christians, we can be attached to the head, Christ, and attached to the body, one another.

And spiritual maturity will come as we join up together. It's how the church grows. It's how we grow. Because we grow together. And there's three things that will happen. We'll be coordinated, contributing, and constructive.

[26 : 58] So when we get joined up, we get coordinated. In other words, we've got Christ as the head giving us direction and authority.

Instead of being wandering and wavering and storm-tossed, we've got assurance and strength because we're joined up. And we're drawing our strength from the head, from our Lord. Just like all parts of the body are under the control of the head.

And it says, verse 16, from whom, from Christ, the whole body fitly joined together. The Lord's church is likened to a body. Think of that, of your own body.

There's different parts. Hopefully they're all functioning reasonably well. And likewise in the church, we're all part and parcel, we're all different parts, interconnected, dependent on the Lord as the head.

And he fits all those parts that are you and me. He fits us all together from all kinds of places and all kinds of shapes and sizes. And he holds that body all together, doesn't he?

[27 : 56] And he makes all the different parts work. Right. Join up. Join up. As joined up Christians, we're wonderfully, perfectly joined together. We've got a wonderful connection with the head, our Lord Jesus, and with each other.

That's how we're going to grow, isn't it? Sometimes you get maverick Christians that kind of got to do their own thing and they float around and they don't really, they're not connected, they're disconnected.

But for us to grow, we've got to be connected. And there's a good dependence on one another because we encourage and we contribute to one another. There's an interplay, isn't there? We're interdependent. Just as the different parts of your body wouldn't function if they're on their own some. So not only are we coordinating, but we're also contributing. We see the human body, it says it's compacted by that which every joint supplies.

Compacted, in other words, it's held together. Held together. So we're joined like the different parts of a body are joined together. It's like we're all in these, we're all woven together, aren't we?

[29 : 02] Knitted together just like the different nerves and cells and bones and structures of the body. We're knit together. We're connected. And there's that precious supply and support as we help one another because we're in this together.

So you might give to me, I might give to you, you give to each other. That's what happens when we get together. There's an encouraging and we build up one another and there's a supply that happens. It talks about according to the effectual working in the measure of every part.

It's telling us here that as every separate part works properly, works like it should, then there's going to be benefit to everyone. And as each and every individual part does its job and operates fully.

It's a picture of that healthy body, isn't it? You know, you might have some obscure part of your body and you know about it when it starts hurting, don't you? It's some obscure part of your body.

You wouldn't even know what it's called but they tell you the medical name and the doctor says you've got a problem with your whatever it be, some technical name.

You think, I don't even know I had such a thing. But that could be the problem with the body, couldn't it? One little part not functioning can be a problem. But hopefully we can be rather a healthy body that's maturing and healthy together, that's functioning together and so we can be more effective in our faith together.

[30 : 21] So the picture there is for the growing Christian that we can join up, we can grow together. That's what's meant to happen. And God's doing a work in every part of us, isn't it?

In every one of us. We're all at different stages, different places, but the Lord's touching every one of our lives. As we regenerate it, as we convert it, and he's changing us, making us more like him.

God's doing an individual work with every part, every one of us. And so we need to care for one another, forbear one another, extend grace to each other as we all need each other.

That's the picture of a body, isn't it? We can't say, well I don't like the look of my big toe. No, it doesn't matter, it's connected. And the Lord is doing a work, he's strengthening us together, together, just like a body.

And so we see we're coordinated by the head, we're contributing, knit together, and we're constructive too. It talks about when this happens it makes an increase of the body. It makes an increase of the body because it's from him, isn't it?

[31 : 29] We see in Colossians a similar picture where Paul tells the Colossians he warns them about the danger of some, some people as we've been going through the book of Colossians, Paul talks about some who are not holding the head from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered and knit together increase it to the increase of God.

He's saying that some of these folk they didn't hold the head. Christ wasn't the head to them. They didn't have the authority of Christ over them. And when we do have the authority of our Lord when we do have Christ as our head it says the body the joints and bands are going to have nourishment. It says there's going to be a knitting together and it's saying the body's going to increase it's going to grow. And the wonderful thing the truth is that it's God who gives the increase isn't it? And we might all do our little bit as Paul talked about how he plants it Apollos watered as a picture of a plant and he's saying I planted this church this ministry Apollos nurtured it gave it water but it's God who gave the increase.

It's the same with anything we do for God isn't it? It's God who gives the increase it's God who blesses. Our Lord wants you to grow he wants you to grow people and as believers he joins us up

together.

Sometimes you think well do I have to be joined to him or her well that's how the church works isn't it? Sometimes we don't get to choose if they believe if they're a believer for all their faults and foibles even me we've got to be joined together that's a good thing isn't it?

[33 : 09] You can make up for my lack and vice versa he makes the body to grow we're together we're joined up and he makes that body healthy and strong he gives it nourishment vitality it says that the Lord builds up the body unto the edifying of itself in love think of it too that this building up it's not a manufactured edifying of men it's not some man-made construction it's the edifying of itself in love it talks about the love of God doesn't it?

So friends today my message is you can grow you can grow and God wants you to grow and you're in the right place you're here with the heart to hear about God we can grow up we can grow up it says growing up into him we're growing up into his truth we're taking every opportunity to be where the word is so we can grow it's food it's manna from heaven it's it's in our hands between the covers of our bible as we take the word as we meditate on it we can grow up and we can see that we can wise up to we're going to be like that tree that's planted where the rivers of water are we can wise up to the delusions and deceptions we can be awake to them we can actually think oh that doesn't line up with the word so that must be wrong or this one lines up with the word so that must be right we can make that decision wisely because we'll have the word in our minds we can wise up and then thirdly we can join up we don't fly solo as believers we're here for one another we've got much to give to contribute as a constructive part of the body and there's mutual benefit so you can grow and you can help others to grow and vice versa because we grow together don't we and it's the joining up like a body that's knitted together all the different various body systems you know it's mind blowing isn't it that God puts all of that together and makes it work your human body and it's the same with the body of Christ too so let's grow as we trust him let's pray

Lord we thank you that you are the one who brings the increase Lord we pray help us to grow every one of us as we are born again that's just the beginning Lord that you want us to keep growing our faith grow in love to grow in grace to grow stronger Lord to know more about you help us Lord to find you as that source of our growth that will depend upon you because you bring the increase we pray if any is feeling maybe they're still in spiritual babyhood Lord help us to to grow out of the nappies as it were to put the dummy away and to start to man up to to be a man in our understanding to to be adult Lord to grow our faith help us Lord to wise up such that your word will guide our steps we'll be like that tree that's planted by the rivers of water there's going to be fruit there's going to be freshness there there's going to be growth and Lord help us also to to join up to see the value of being together with our brothers and sisters to feel connected to see how we can help one another to grow and Lord we thank you for these things that it's your Holy Spirit that you are building your church and and we're glad to be just a little a little cell of it as it were a little a little outpost of it right here and for those that are visiting from other churches also that they can be a healthy growing believer as part of a healthy growing church in Jesus name we pray
Amen Amen Thank you.