



But GROW in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. - 2 Peter 3:18

GROW

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According to 2 Peter 3:18, what are 2 things we can grow in?

- 1- _____
- 2- _____

Grace is God’s undeserved favor and love toward us. When we grow in understanding God’s grace towards us it draws our hearts closer to him because we realize how much he loves us even though we don’t deserve it. The word for knowledge in the above verse is not just intellectual knowledge but intimate personal knowledge. To know someone personally is to have a relationship with them. Part of growing in the grace of God is understanding who he is and how much he has truly done for us in the person of Jesus. Understanding the truths of God’s grace and love helps us love God even more. This truth is seen in the verse in the Bible which says, “We love him because he first loved us” (I John 4:19). Our relationship and love for God grow even stronger as we grow in the grace & knowledge of Jesus and his love for us.

Growing in a relationship with God is like growing in a relationship with another person. It takes time and effort. Once we put our faith in Jesus we come into a relationship with God. That relationship can grow just like an earthly family relationship, friendship or even marriage relationship. When my wife and I were dating we spent a lot of time asking each other questions and learning each other’s likes and dislikes, family background, spiritual beliefs, and so on. Even though I already had a relationship with her as my girlfriend, I wanted to know more and more about her. We used to leave love notes and letters on each other’s cars in the college parking lot and pass a journal back and forth sharing things. As we got to know each other we fell





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more and more in love. After we entered into the covenant relationship of marriage we grew even closer together and are still getting to know and strengthen our relationship even after 14 years of marriage.

What do you think is the primary way we can learn about God so that we can know him better?

Think about the way we communicate with people that we are not facing to face each day. We don't write snail mail letters much anymore, but we sure do text a lot between our cell phones, Facebook and twitter. This kind of communication is not the most intimate or deep for many people, but it is a way to connect with others. Think of God's Word (the Bible) as thousands of Facebook posts, or text messages or even tweets where God is revealing what he is like and how much he wants to reveal himself to us and to be known by us. He already knows us in and out and wants us to know him. We can get busy and ignore checking out what is on God's newsfeed lately or to read his latest text to us, but O how much he wants to be in relationship with us.



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Grow in Relationship with God through His Word

To grow in understanding God's grace and in the knowledge of Jesus, we have been given his Word (the Bible) which reveals his grace and gives us the knowledge of who He is.

Grow through Memorizing & Reading the Bible

I Peter 2:2

“Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may GROW up into salvation”

What should we long for according I Peter 2:2?

Go back and read I Peter 1:23-25. What is the spiritual milk that it is referring to that helps us grow?

Why should we long for this spiritual milk according to 1 Peter 2:2?

Just like babies need milk to grow, we need spiritual milk to feed our souls. It says by the spiritual milk we will grow up into salvation. There are 3 aspects to our salvation: being saved from the punishment of sin, the power of sin, and the presence of sin. God's Word (the Bible) helps us grow in understanding that through Jesus we no longer will be punished for our sin in hell, that we can have the power to master sin and not give in to doing it, and that we can trust we will be completely separated from sin and be with God when we get to heaven one day.

Matthew 4:4

But he answered, “It is written, ““Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.””



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What bodily nourishment does a person have to have to live on this earth?

How is God's Word like bread for our soul? _____

What does Matthew 4:4 say we need even more than bread to live each day spiritually?

II Timothy 3:14-15

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it ¹⁵ and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

In the above passage, what is Paul challenging Timothy to "continue" in?

What is "able" to give a person wisdom and understanding that salvation is through faith in Jesus according to 2 Timothy 3:15?

It is important to understand that Satan wants to steal, kill, and destroy (John 10:10) our souls and wants to blind our minds so that we cannot see "the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God" (2 Corinthians 4:4). Satan wants to steal away the truth of Jesus from our minds and hearts. We need to preach the gospel to ourselves every day. The best way to remind ourselves of the gospel according to 2 Timothy 3:15 is to "continue" to keep our minds in the "sacred writings" of the Bible.

Just like I Peter 2:2, II Timothy 3:15 says that the "sacred writings" are "ABLE to make you wise for salvation". Again, salvation (being saved from the punishment, power, and presence of sin) is revealed to us through Jesus Christ who is revealed to us in the Bible. How would we know who Jesus is and that he died and rose to bring us salvation without the Bible? We would not know. "Faith comes by hearing and by hearing from the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17). The scriptures of the Bible are called God's Special Revelation in Theological terms.



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2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

According to 2 Timothy 3:16 “all scripture” comes from where? _____

The words of the scriptures have come from God’s mouth just like breath comes from the mouth of one breathing. Just like the Spirit of God brought forth life to Adam when he breathed into his nostrils the “breath of Life” (Genesis 2:7) so the scriptures were breathed out by God to reveal the source of eternal life (Jesus). We call this doctrine (teaching) the inspiration of the Scriptures. The Bible is God’s Word to us.

2 Peter 1:19-21

¹⁹ And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, ²⁰ knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. ²¹ For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

In verses 20 & 21 from the scripture above, does prophecy of Scripture come from men? _____

According to 2 Peter 1:21, how were the scriptures produced? Who did men speak from to produce Scriptures?

Who were the scripture writer’s prophecies (proclaimed words) carried along by?

So, according to 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:20-21, all scripture comes from God and not from men. This means we can trust the scriptures to be true since everything God says is true and trustworthy.



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John 17:17
“Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth”

According to John 17:17 what does Jesus pray for us to be sanctified (set apart) in? _____

What does Jesus say truth is? _____

Psalm 119:60
“The sum of your word is truth,
and every one of your righteous rules endures forever.”

What is truth according to Psalm 119:60? _____

Jesus prayed to God the Father that we would be separated to himself (sanctified) through his truth and that his word (the Bible) is truth.

So, why read God’s word? Because it is our daily spiritual bread. We cannot live without physical food nor can we live without spiritual food. Christianity is about a relationship with God and we must be in his Word to hear from him.

II Timothy 3:16-17
All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching,
for reproof, for correction, and for training in
righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be
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What 4 things does 2 Timothy 3:16-17 say all scripture is profitable for?

- 1- _____
- 2- _____
- 3- _____
- 4- _____



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Look at these 4 words and describe the one thing you feel you need God's word to help you with today?

Notice the 2nd-word "reproof" which is the Greek word (elegchos), means to re-prove (prove over and over again), brings conviction or to convince by proof. We think of this word reproof more like to discipline or correcting behavior, but it is talking more about correcting thoughts and beliefs which results in the right behavior. The last 2 words in II Timothy 3:16 have more to do with corrective behavior. Reproof is correcting our understanding of truth and what to believe. The one who is doubting or living in total unbelief can have their mind and heart changed when reading the scriptures because the scriptures can prove the truth to the heart. Think of the compound word reproof. It is to give proof or re-prove something over and over again, it is to convince us that something is true. The scriptures prove to our hearts and minds who God is through the person of Jesus and that he is the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). The word "reproof" in 2nd Timothy 3:16 is the same Greek word for "conviction" used in Hebrews 11:1 which says, "faith is the assurance of things hoped for the conviction of things unseen. Another English translation of this word is "evidence" (KJV Bible). The Word of God brings proof to the truth of Jesus and hammers conviction into our hearts. God's word gives us evidence that what he says is true. We can't help believing something that has been proven to our hearts. If you are struggling in believing in Jesus, read the scriptures. If you are doubting the truth claims of the gospel, memories the scripture. The hammer of the Holy Spirit will drive the truth nail right into your heart as you "continue" (2 Tim 3:14) in his Word. The Scriptures will prove, give evidence and reprove to your heart that the gospel is true. Do you need faith? Read the Word of God. Do you need convincing and convicting that Jesus is who he says he and will do what he says he will do? Read God's Word. Are you struggling to feel close to God? Read God's Word. Are you having a hard time overcoming sin? Read God's Word and obey it.



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How to Study the Bible

Reveal, Respond, Result

The Bible is God's story and is all about him. He desires to be known and to know us. He has given us his word to **reveal** who he is, what he has done, how we should **respond** toward him, and what is the **result** of responding to what God reveals.

Mark 4:24

And he said to them, "Pay attention to what you hear: with the measure you use, it will be measured to you, and still more will be added to you".

"Pay attention" (Greek -Blepo) = means to see, perceive, look into or behold. To think and try and understand the meaning of what you hear.

Mark 4:24 is at the end of a story that Jesus tells about a farmer who throws seeds down on different kinds of soil (ground) and then gets fruit from the seed that falls on good soil. Jesus explains that his Word (the Bible) is like a seed that falls on people's hearts and people respond differently to what they hear. Some people reject and don't believe immediately, many seem to receive it, but then it does not change their lives and bear any fruit. Some receive, understand, and hold onto the Word of God and it changes their lives and good spiritual fruit comes. This, of course, is the kind of response God wants us to have.

In Mark 4:24, what do you think Jesus means by "pay attention" to what you hear?

"Pay attention" in Mark 4:24 means to look into carefully and understand and obey what you are hearing God say in his word.

What is God REVEALING in his word? What should we be "paying attention" to when we read the Bible?

John 5:39

³⁹ You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.



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In the above verse, what does Jesus say the scriptures are really about?

Jesus goes on to say in John 5:45-46 “Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set your hope. ⁴⁶ For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me.”

Who does Jesus say Moses wrote about? _____

Read John 1:1-14 and answer the following questions:

Who is the “Word” talking about in verse 1-3? _____

Is the Word revealed to be God himself according to verse 1? _____

Did the people receive Jesus the “Word” when he came down to live with them according to verse 11?

What right did God give to the people who accepted and believed (trusted) in the Word (verse 12)?

If the Word is talking about Jesus, then we see that the “Word” of God is a person and not just writings from God in a book that we should live by. Ultimately, the Word of God is all about Jesus. Jesus is the living Word of God. You see, the scriptures are all about Jesus and what he has done. Remember from the “KNOW” section of this study that JESUS is the GOSPEL and the GOSPEL=JESUS. The Word of God is all about **revealing** the good news (gospel) of Jesus and how we should **respond** to what is revealed to us. We then see the **result** of what happens to those who respond well to God’s revelation.

When we read the Bible, we must “pay attention” to what he is saying. So many people look at the Bible as just another religious book and another way to try and straighten their lives up or become a better person. As Jesus said in John 5:39, “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life”. If you read the scriptures just like another religious book trying to find a way that you can do things to gain eternal life, then you have missed the whole point of the Bible. It is not about you earning eternal life through what you do, it is about Jesus and what he did for you.



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Behold Jesus and Be Changed

2 Corinthians 3:12-18

12 Since we have such a hope, we are very bold, ¹³ not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not gaze at the outcome of what was being brought to an end. ¹⁴ But their minds were hardened. For to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. ¹⁵ Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their hearts. ¹⁶ But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. ¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸ And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

Read Exodus 34:29-35 to understand the context of 2 Corinthians 3:12-18: What does the Exodus passage say happened to Moses face?

Why did Moses face shine so bright? Who had he seen? (Verse 29)

What did Moses cover his face with so that it would not shine so bright?

Now read the above passage from 2 Corinthians 3:12-18:

What does it say happens to the minds of those who read the old covenant (law) in verse 14&15?

Read 2 Corinthians 4:3&4, what causes people to have a spiritual veil over their minds? _____

What are unbelievers blinded from according to 2 Corinthians 4:4? _____



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According to 2 Corinthians 3:16, what happens to a person “when one turns to the Lord”?

According to 2 Corinthians 3:17, where does “freedom” come from? _____
When we “turn to the Lord” then we receive the Spirit of the Lord into our hearts and we are freed from the power of Satan’s lies. The blinder (the veil) is lifted from our minds and we can now see the truth of God.

What causes us to be transformed according to 2 Corinthians 3:18? _____

The word “beholding” (Greek- katoptrizō) means to gaze, look intently, look into a mirror intently. This is a verb in the present middle participle. If you remember from the KNOW section that a present participle shows that it is an action that is continuing. The middle voice usually means the action is being done by the person to themselves. The word can mean to look at yourself in a mirror. We know as people who love to look at ourselves then we can stand in front of a mirror-gazing and looking at ourselves daily. We do daily routines such as brush teeth, brush hair, put on makeup (ladies), or flex our muscles (guys) all to look at ourselves and try and make ourselves look better. This word “beholding” is only used one time in the New Testament, and it is right here in 2 Corinthians 3:18.

What does 2 Corinthians 3:18 say we are “beholding”? _____

The word “glory” (Greek- doxa) means weight, excellence, majesty (greatness). The “glory of the Lord” is the full weight of his nature (who he is) and character (what he does). If we were to add the weight and fullness of who we are, we fall way short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

According to 2 Corinthians 3:18, we are to look intently at the “glory of the Lord”. When we continue to read the context of what the Holy Spirit is revealing in this passage if we look at chapter 4 we see specifically who’s glory are we to behold.

Who is the full image of the glory of God that we are to intently look at in 2 Corinthians 4:4-6?

As we look for Jesus continuously in his word and see his glory then we are changed into his image (likeness) from “one degree of glory (our sinful selves) to another (to be more like Jesus). This transformation is done through the power of the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:18). I John 3:2 says, “Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.” When we see Jesus at his coming, we will be changed. Let’s behold him now and be changed!



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Approach the Scriptures correctly: Look for Jesus- Reveal, Respond, Result

Let’s “pay attention” to what God wants to teach us. Since God wants to reveal himself to us so that we can KNOW him and GROW in our relationship with him, let’s approach the scriptures with these 3 main questions: What does God want to REVEAL about himself? How should I RESPOND to what he is revealing? Do I see any kind of RESULT for responses seen in the passage?

When I am reading or even teaching the scriptures, I first look for these 3 main questions and then dig deeper and ask more questions that might get me digging for the answers deeper.

See the chart on the next page to see some basic questions to ask yourself when reading through the scriptures.

	REVEAL	RESPOND	RESULT
MAIN QUESTION	<u>REVEAL</u> What does God reveal about himself and the Honor due to him?	<u>RESPOND</u> Do we see a response or reaction in any person after something is revealed to them?	<u>RESULT</u> What results are mentioned if any does anyone get for responding?
FOLLOW UP QUESTION	Do I see Jesus in this passage? Remember John 1:1-12 and 5:39-46, Always look for Jesus since he is the “image of the invisible God” and is the one who makes him known. Is there a type of Christ? Someone or something that resembles Jesus character or what Jesus has done? Is there a savior Is there a substitution Do you see God revealing something about his nature (who he is) or his character (what he does)?	What response am I going to have when God reveals something to me? Do people believe? Do people doubt? Do people reject? Do people obey or disobey? Do people honor God as the only Lord? Do people trust God? Do people sin and dishonor God? Do people honor or worship someone or something as god? Do people respond in sin and honoring of themselves?	What result does the passage say will come for those who respond to Jesus? Is there salvation, rescue, or restoring of relationships or honor. Is the result good or bad? Is the result based on how the person responds to what is revealed to them? What result will I get for responding in faith, obedience, worship, or honor, when I see something revealed to me? Does the result seem to be fare or good when I obey God? What about suffering? Do I see anyone being honored for honoring God? Do I see anyone shamed or separated from God?





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Example Bible Study

Zechariah Chapter 3:

What does the passage reveal about God? Do I see Jesus at all here?

What is a RESPONSE we see? Does God ask for any RESPONSE in this passage?

What is the RESULT of what is revealed in this passage, if any?



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Revelation Chapter 1:

What does the passage reveal about God? Do I see Jesus at all here?

What is a RESPONSE we see? Does God ask for any RESPONSE in this passage?

What is the RESULT of what is revealed in this passage, if any?



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Psalm Chapter 34:

What does the passage reveal about God? Do I see Jesus at all here?

What is a RESPONSE we see? Does God ask for any RESPONSE in this passage?

What is the RESULT of what is revealed in this passage, if any?

John Chapter 4:



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What does the passage reveal about God? Do I see Jesus at all here?

What is a RESPONSE we see? Does God ask for any RESPONSE in this passage?

What is the RESULT of what is revealed in this passage, if any?