

Weekly Devotional 4.29.2024

# Grace Alone

## Growing in Grace: The Gift of Growth

**“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.” 2 Peter 3:18**

Is there an area in which you've grown over the years? Maybe you have seen growth in your professional career. Things like conferences, professional seminars, and mentorship relationships have contributed to your growth and are even encouraged by your employer. For other careers, studying trends and issues in your field and reading scholarly and peer-reviewed articles ensure a working knowledge in your field and allow you to continue growing in your area of expertise. Maybe you have seen growth in a specific talent like cooking or playing sports. Hobby enthusiasts might watch YouTube videos to learn and improve their skills or even attend local clubs to connect with other enthusiasts. Athletes grow in their abilities by conditioning their bodies with proper diet and exercise and reviewing footage of their opponent to adjust their offensive and defensive strategies. Growing in something means gradually increasing in the knowledge of something and gaining experiencing in that area. In the same way, growing in grace requires us to grow in our knowledge of Jesus and follow him as Lord and Savior.

Growing in both knowledge and grace is a gift from Jesus and at the center of every Christian. Growing in grace is a gift from God and reflects his grace towards us. Peter begins and ends his second letter with the idea of growing in grace and knowledge—that grace would be multiplied and that all would grow in grace. Grace and knowledge grow together; when we grow in one, we grow in the other. What is the knowledge in which we are called to grow? This isn't just general knowledge or facts about a job or hobby. We find throughout Paul's letters that the knowledge in which we are called to grow is specifically the knowledge of God (Eph. 1:17; Col. 1:9,10; Phlm. 6). This knowledge is specifically what God has revealed in Christ and what that means for us. Think about your spouse or a close friend. As you've gone through life, learned more about them, and experienced different things with them, you've grown in your knowledge about them, learning more and more about them, but you have also grown in your experiences with and love for them. Likewise, when you learn more about Jesus and what he did for us and are obedient to him as Lord of your life, you will grow in your love for him and his grace. The more you learn, the more you grow! The Lord is infinite in his grace and knowledge; as his finite creation, we will always grow in these areas. By his grace, we grow in grace.

Our ability to grow in God's grace and knowledge is one of his many blessings to us. The book of Psalms begins with, “Blessed is the one...whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law, day and night” (Ps. 1:1-2). Those who meditate on the law (God's Word) are blessed. This “law” is more than a book of rules and regulations. The Torah paints a beautiful picture of God as creator and the nation of Israel as his covenant people. The law established God's love and grace for a fallen, rebellious creation. This is the law to which the psalmist is referring. How blessed we are that God has revealed himself to us in his Word, the Bible, where we find the story of redemption in Jesus—a story of God's love and grace. The psalmist is communicating that we are blessed when we not only read God's Word and the story of redemption but also when we are constantly delighting in it and meditating on it. That means reading scripture, reflecting on its meaning, and doing this with joy! When was the last time you read your bible with this in mind—reading it joyfully and meditating on its meaning? My prayer for us is that we find joy reading the Bible and meditate on it at all times throughout our lives (Ps. 119:97). As Christians, we should be passionate about joyfully reading scripture so that we can mine God's Word for the riches and treasures it possesses. When we grow in the knowledge of God, we will grow in grace—growing in our love of Jesus, our obedience to him as Lord and Savior, and growing in our love for others.