

April 30, 2023

Growing In Grace

by Ken Weliever

John Houseman was a British-American actor and producer who was hired to do commercials for the investment firm Smith-Barney in the 1980's.

Looking immaculate in his 3 piece suit, he spoke with confidence and authority as he sternly looked into the camera and with his gravelly voice affirmed, "Smith-Barney. They make money the old fashioned way. They earn it."

That's a great motto for an investment company. And wonderful advice for accumulating wealth. However, it's not the way we need to approach salvation and our relationship with God.

Unfortunately, too many Christians are stymied and stunted in their spiritual growth because they are so works oriented that they are failing to "grow in grace," as the apostle commanded in 2Peter 3:18. They are living like the lyrics of the Alan Jackson song, "Where I Come From," that folks "are tryin' to make a living and working hard to get to heaven."

I doubt any of us can seriously imagine God sitting on His throne, with a John Houseman look, sternly offering the edict, "You get into heaven the old fashioned way. You earn it." Yet, in reality we may feel that way. We may project that mistaken idea to others. In fact, we may even inadvertently preach

and teach lessons which leave that impression.

Several years ago, a friend told of attending a gospel meeting, where he overheard a lady leaving the building summing up her take-a-way from the sermon saying, "I don't think I'll ever be good enough to go to heaven." That is not the message at the heart of the Gospel's Good News.

Consider these Bible verses.

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them (Eph. 2:8-10).

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Rom. 3:23-24).

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), (Eph. 2:4-5).

"But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me" (1 Cor 15:10).

"Let us therefore come boldly to the

Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.

Important Dates

Singing - Northwest church of Christ, Austin, - June 3

If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.

throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16).

Growing in grace reminds me that God did for me what I could never do for myself. He provided the means of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Growing in grace increases my trust in God’s promises and provides a peace that surpasses human understanding.

Growing in grace gives confidence, certainty and assurance in my daily walk with God.

Growing in grace provides the motivation to keep on keeping on and pressing forward toward the heavenly prize.

Growing in grace experiences worship as an exciting privilege and not a cumbersome duty.

Growing in grace issues itself in the development of the virtues of moral excellence, perseverance, self-control, brotherly kindness and love.

Growing in grace encourages good works and fulfilling God’s design in Christ Jesus.

Growing in grace stimulates the development of my talents, a righteous stewardship of my resources and good use of my time,

Growing in grace is coupled with knowledge of the “gospel of grace,” and is ever learning and always receptive to God’s will.

Growing in grace is fortified by faith, buoyed by hope and energized by Divine love.

Growing in grace seeks to be more like Jesus and never uses grace as an excuse for laziness, indifference, or sinful deeds or desires.

Growing in grace extends graciousness to family, friends, and brethren in speech, actions, attitudes and a willingness to forgive as Christ has forgiven me.

Growing in grace finds purpose even during trial, temptation, sickness or suffering.

Growing in grace rekindles our passion when our spiritual flames flicker.

Growing in grace breeds humility instead of pride, knowing whatever I achieve it is by God’s grace.

Growing in grace offers gratitude to the Giver of all grace for His abundant blessings.

Growing in grace fully realizes no one can ever earn God’s grace.

“May the God of all grace...restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you” (1Pet. 5:10)

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Prayer Requests

Jack Wilson is still struggling with pain and limited mobility and had a procedure to gauge the viability of a treatment for the pain.

Jerry Richardson is still undergoing treatments to strengthen his immune system.

Dinah Williams continues to have mobility issues.

Don Simmons is still struggling with his breathing; he is on oxygen at all times. **Alene** is having hip issues.

Randall Vanaman had surgery on his foot and is recovering.

Doug Adair had surgery on his back and is recovering.

Lisa Mullen (Darrell’s sister) is undergoing chemotherapy.

If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.

“praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,”
(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)

The Oaks West church of Christ is a group of individual Christians who have been added to the Lord’s body through baptism (Acts 2:38, 47; Gal 3:26, 27), and have joined themselves together (Acts 2:42ff) in an effort to do the Lord’s will.

We are not a part of any larger organization - we do not follow any man-made creeds and we do not answer to anyone other than the Lord.

Our standard of faith and practice is the Word of God. We believe in the God of revelation (Eph 3:1-7; 2 Tim 3:16-17) and follow his instructions in an effort to have an ongoing relationship with him (1 John 4:7-11; 5:3).

Our times of study and worship are open to all, and our members are happy to meet with interested individuals or families for study.

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