

# *Journey #6*

## **Growing In The Truth**

### **Three Crucial Tools For Your Spiritual Growth**

Everyone in Ms. Jones' 5th grade class received a seed, soil and a cup. The assignment: Take care of the seed and watch it grow during a month's time. James put his seed in the cup, put the soil on top of it and took it home. After a month, he brought it to school to show the class. He was amazed how everyone else's seed had grown except his. "You gave me a bad seed!" James said to Ms. Jones.

"I did not give you a bad seed James," she replied. "Young man, you gave your seed a bad environment."

Are you growing in your relationship with God? How can you avoid letting your relationship with Him end up like James' seed, where no growth takes place? It's essential in your life—and in the life of every believer—to grow spiritually so that you can know God more intimately, deepen in your knowledge of His Word, and share His truth in your witness to others.

**The 411:** *In this study, you'll learn three key elements of spiritual growth.*

#### **Communicate With God: Prayer**

*"When Jesus had finished praying, one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his followers to pray.'" —Luke 11:1*

God has given us His Word, the Bible, which offers us incredible truths about His character, love and purpose for our lives. Let's look at the verses below and discover new insights about Him.

#### **Truth: Luke 11:1-3**

Why do you think Jesus talked to God in this way? Do you view God as someone who is willing to converse with you?

#### **Truth: Philippians 4:6-7**

How does prayer help you get to know God?

#### **Truth: 1 John 5:14-15**

At some point in your relationship with God, you'll want to ask Him for things. How can this verse guide your prayers?

*"We are certain that God will hear our prayers when we ask for what pleases Him." —1 John 5:14*

Just as friends converse on the phone and catch up on the latest details and events of their lives, God wants to know what's going on in your world. He wants you to talk to Him because this builds intimacy with Him. God also has things He wants to share with you, so you aren't the only one communicating in the conversation. During your prayer times, take time to meditate, be still and listen to God as He speaks to your heart and addresses issues in your life.

#### **Community of People: Fellowship**

Each winter, geese fly south. Their unmistakable formation and squawking can be seen and heard for miles. To you, their form and noise might seem annoying. However, there's a method to the madness. As geese make their trip, the triangular formation enables them to "draft" off each other, creating less wind resistance.

When the leader gets tired, a goose from the back will fly up and take his place. So what's up with that noise, huh? It's the constant squawking of encouragement the other geese give to the leader. Without it, the leader would grow weary. It's obvious that geese definitely understand the importance of community.

*"We should keep on encouraging each other to be thoughtful and to do helpful things. Some people have gotten out of the habit of meeting for worship, but we must not do that. We should keep on encouraging each other, especially since you know that the day of the Lord's coming is getting closer." —Hebrews 10:24-25*

**Truth: 1 Corinthians 12:14-20**

How does this Scripture passage relate to your relationship with other Christians?

**Truth: 1 John 1:7**

How do you relate to other Christians when you live close to God?

**Truth: Hebrews 10:24-25**

Why is it important for Christians to be in relationship with each other? What might happen if you did not develop relationships with other followers of Jesus?

### **Manual for Life: The Bible**

Keisha was the proud owner of a new car. Her cousin Deidre had purchased the same vehicle model. One day Kim was riding in Deidre's car. As Deidre drove along, she hit a knob on the steering column and the radio came on.

"How'd you do that?" Kim asked.

Deidre then reclined her seat and hit the massage button. "Does my car do that?" Kim asked.

"Of course," said Deidre. "Have you been reading the owner's manual?"

*"Everything in the Scriptures is God's Word. All of it is useful for teaching and helping people and for correcting them and showing them how to live."* —2 Timothy 3:16

If you're like most people, the "manual" is only read in times of trouble, not as a regular part of life. Check out the verses below and see what God's manual, the Bible, has to say about the believer's life.

**Truth: 2 Timothy 3:16**

Who inspired the Bible, and what is it useful for?

**Truth: John 17:17**

What does this verse say about God's Word?

What is your current view of God's Word? How does God use His Word in our lives?

The Bible is the only manual for your life and relationship with God. Other books are good only if they don't contradict the teaching of the Bible; if they do, they are off-base.

How can you begin to make consistent Bible reading a part of your life?

### **The Application**

- What has God been saying to you through this lesson about your own growth? Write a prayer of response to God articulating your own desire, or lack of desire, for growth. Ask God to show you the next steps to take this week to help cultivate growth in your own life.