



GrowN
Week 6: THE Path of GrowN – Why Righteous? – Matthew 6:33
October 18th, 2023

9/13 th - The WHY(God's Roles)	(Sp. Disciplines -j 8 weeks)	11/8 th –
9/20 th – The Payback(P.B.A. Prodigal. God's Grace means..)	10/4 th – Meet the Bible	11/15 th –
9/27 th – The Power in Community	10/11 th – Why Suffering?	11/22 nd –
THE Path of GrowN	10/18 th – Why Righteous?	11/29 th – ADVENT
	10/25 th –	12/6 th – WNC Tmas Party?
	11/1 st –	12/ 13 th – Family Worship

[Week ? = Understanding the Kingdom of God????]

Series Resources: How People Grow by Cloud/Townsend and Cloud, H., & Townsend, J. (2009). [How People Grow: What the Bible Reveals About Personal Growth](#). Zondervan. Celebration of Discipline by Richard Foster

Week 2: Bailey, K. E. (2005). [The Cross and the Prodigal: Luke 15 through the Eyes of Middle Eastern Peasants](#) (Second Edition, pp. 42–44). IVP Books.

Handouts:
 Week 1 – God's Roles Chart. Week 2 – Community. Week 4 – The Bible. Week 5- Suffering Verses.

GrowN Concept #1: Quadrant Growth

Luke 2:52 HCSB *And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and with people.*

Jesus grew: Intellectually ● Physically ● Spiritually ● Socially

GrowN Concept #2: The Inheritance of Reconciliation

The Long-term Goal of GrowN: **2 Corinthians 5:18-21. NLT**

18 And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to Himself through Christ. And **God has given us this task of reconciling people to Him.** ¹⁹ For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And He gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation,²⁰ so we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making His appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, "Come back to God!" ²¹ For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

YES: Reconciling = Living your Life OUTLOUD with others so they may see Jesus in action.

NO: Reconciling ≠ You are going to Hell if you don't accept Jesus. Stop SINNING! Never saying anything. God gives you the abundant life – including lots of \$\$\$ - here on earth.

THE Payback: I have earned this, God ↔ God cannot love me because...I have sinned so...

GrowN Concept #3: God is FOR me – There is no "God cannot love me because..."

Romans 8:31-32

What then are we to say about these things?^(C) **If God is for us, who is against us?^(E)**

³² He did not even spare His own Son^(E) but offered Him up for us all;^(E)

how will He not also with Him grant us everything? HCSB

GrowN Concept #4: God will PROVIDE for me - I do not have to EARN His love.

Matthew 6:33 (25 – don't worry about your life)

But **seek first the kingdom of God^(A) and His righteousness,^(B) and all these things will be provided for you.^(C)**

GrowN Concept #5: THE Power in Community

I. The Power of Relationships in Community II. The Power of Acceptance in Community III. The Power of Forgiveness in Community

GrowN Concept #6:

[**Disciplines: C&T – The Bible. Role of Suffering & Grief. Righteousness. Discipline. Spiritual Poverty. Obedience. Sin & Temptation. Truth. Activity. Time. FOSTER – Meditation. Prayer. Fasting. Study. Simplicity. Solitude. Submission. Service. Confession. Worship. Guidance. Celebration.**]



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How People Grow – Not a therapy book but a book on the sanctification process. Does not discount therapy (it is being written by two of them!) but ADDS the sanctification process to the therapeutical model.

2 Peter 3:18

*¹⁷ Therefore, dear friends, since you know this in advance, be on your guard,^(A) so that you are not led away by the error of lawless people and fall from your own stability. ¹⁸ **But grow** in the grace and knowledge^(A) of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity.^{(a)(B)} Amen.^(b) HCSB*

With our FIVE GrowN concepts as a foundation:

- #1. Quadrant Growth.
- #2. Becoming a Reconciler.
- #3. Knowing God is for me.
- #4. Knowing God will provide for me.
- #5. Understanding the POWER in Community.

NOW WHAT do we actually DO?

[Disciplines: C&T – The Bible. Role of Suffering & Grief. **Righteousness**. Discipline. Spiritual Poverty. Obedience. Sin & Temptation. Truth. Activity. Time. FOSTER – Meditation. Prayer. Fasting. **Study**. Simplicity. Solitude. Submission. Service. Confession. Worship. Guidance. Celebration.]

Opening: We talked about the purpose of The Bible – The Role of Suffering & Grief... tonight we will talk about Righteousness... This all becomes a really good stew... we can't separate so much of this...

So... Why Righteous?

Matt 6:33 ³³ “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”¹

- Generally read Matt 6:25-34 for context
 - It's in the middle of a whole lot of worry
 - **6:25 worry**, *merimnao* (mer-im-nah-oh); Strong's #3309: From *merizo*, “to divide into parts.” The word suggests a distraction, a preoccupation with things causing anxiety, stress, and pressure. Jesus speaks against worry and anxiety because of the watchful care of a heavenly Father who is ever mindful of our daily needs.²

Henry Cloud: We need to seek God's kingdom and righteousness, not to be good, but to stay alive.³

¹ Jack W. Hayford, Paul G. Chappell, et al., eds., *New Spirit-Filled Life Bible* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Bibles, 2002), Mt 6:33.

² Jack W. Hayford, Paul G. Chappell, et al., eds., *New Spirit-Filled Life Bible* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Bibles, 2002), 1301.

³ Henry Cloud and John Townsend, *How People Grow: What the Bible Reveals About Personal Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009).



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ASK: What is righteousness – How do we become righteous? Is there more than 1 step/part?

Paul in Romans 3:10

¹⁰ As it is written: “*There is none righteous, no, not one;*”⁴

We are not – can not be – righteous on our own... This all hangs on God...

Salvation Equation – Pr. O

(God is and God provides) {Grace > Atonement}

(Man can now respond) + Repentance + Faith → (and God answers) Conversion +
 Regeneration + Justification + Adoption → Sanctification

As part of the salvation equation – *Justification* – the slate is wiped clean – we are justified – God’s *Righteousness* is imputed/given to us – it is NOT our own – we are *Sanctified* – immediate/ progressive... we have to choose the progressive part...

Henry Cloud: We need to seek God’s kingdom and righteousness, *not to be good, but to stay alive.*⁵

Jack Hayford defines righteousness as, G1343 – *dikaosune* (dik-ah-yos-oo-nay); Strong’s #1343: Just, the quality of being right. Broadly, the word suggests conformity to the revealed will of God in all respects. Righteousness (*Dikaosune*) is both judicial and gracious. God declares the believer righteous, in the sense of acquitting him, and imparts righteousness to him (2 Cor. 5:21 For He made Him who *knew no *sin to be sin for us, that we might become the *righteousness of God in Him.⁶).⁷

OT - H6662 tsad-deek' Righteous - just, lawful, righteous

- A. just, righteous (in government)
- B. just, right (in one's cause)
- C. just, righteous (in conduct and character)
- D. righteous (as justified and vindicated by God)
- E. right, correct, lawful

Used: Matt 6:33, 2 Tim 4:8, 2 Cor 5:21

NT – G1343 – *dikaosune* – in a broad sense: state of him who is as he ought to be, righteousness, the condition acceptable to God

- A. the doctrine concerning the way in which man may attain a state approved of God
- B. integrity, virtue, purity of life, rightness, correctness of thinking feeling, and acting

⁴ Jack W. Hayford, Paul G. Chappell, et al., eds., [New Spirit-Filled Life Bible](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Bibles, 2002), Ro 3:10.

⁵ Henry Cloud and John Townsend, [How People Grow: What the Bible Reveals About Personal Growth](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009).

⁶ Jack W. Hayford, Paul G. Chappell, et al., eds., [New Spirit-Filled Life Bible](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Bibles, 2002), 2 Co 5:21.

⁷ Jack W. Hayford, Paul G. Chappell, et al., eds., [New Spirit-Filled Life Bible](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Bibles, 2002), 1715.



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Henry Cloud: We need to seek God's kingdom and righteousness, *not to be good, but to stay alive.*⁸

ASK: What do we think that looks like? 1 – Seeking God? 2 – Seeking His Righteousness? Do we do it on our own? Do we need people/the church?

Henry Cloud – To be truly biblical, as well as truly effective, the growth process must include the Body of Christ.⁹

Going Back – A Complete Makeover – pg 145

Foundation for Righteousness –

The Theology of Redemption –

2 Cor 5:17 Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new *creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become **new**.¹⁰

Hayford Note: 5:17 new, kainos (kahee-noss); Strong's #2537: New, unused, fresh, novel. The word means new in regard to form or quality, rather than new in reference to time, a thought conveyed by neos.¹¹

we are new – UNUSED...

How People Grow – pg 145 - A COMPLETE MAKEOVER

ENTIRE CHAPTERS IN THIS book talk of how these processes work. In fact, throughout this book you will notice the role of the Body threaded through every task. The Bible teaches that growth happens in the Body of Christ as he imparts his gifts to each member.

The metaphor of the developing child (one that the New Testament uses often) is a good way to remember the overall concept. The theology of redemption is not one of rehabilitation. It is not as if God comes to us and says, "You look like a good candidate for a 'fixer-upper.'" Let's take you where you are

⁸ Henry Cloud and John Townsend, [*How People Grow: What the Bible Reveals About Personal Growth*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009).

⁹ Henry Cloud and John Townsend, [*How People Grow: What the Bible Reveals About Personal Growth*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009).

¹⁰ Jack W. Hayford, Paul G. Chappell, et al., eds., [*New Spirit-Filled Life Bible*](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Bibles, 2002), 2 Co 5:17.

¹¹ Jack W. Hayford, Paul G. Chappell, et al., eds., [*New Spirit-Filled Life Bible*](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Bibles, 2002), 1616.



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and clean you up a little, improve you here and there, and then you will be ready for my kingdom and for life.” This is not what the Bible teaches at all.

The theology of redemption is one of total destruction, of starting all over again, at birth. We are not to be “improved”; we are to be crucified and born again. As Paul says, the old has been crucified, and all things have become new (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 2:20). (Remember, he says “new,” not “complete,” as some would teach.) So we need to enter an entire developmental process. John speaks of us as “children” who are learning, whether young or old (1 John 2:12–14). Peter uses the term “newborn babes” (1 Peter 2:2). Hebrews refers to “infants” (Heb. 5:13). The spiritual developmental path is one of reconciling the creation to the way it was supposed to be.

We were to be born into the human race to grow up to be perfect or “complete” people. But the human race fell, and none of us has made it to adulthood “complete,” for we all came from a dysfunctional family: the human race. We all “missed the mark,” which is the Bible’s term for sin. So God wiped out the old and started over. We have to go through a rebirth and a re-growing up, this time in a new family. This family is his family, the Body of Christ. In that family we are to get all the things we missed out on the first time. Nurturance, modeling, truth, love, accountability, development of talents, and more are all to be present in this family to give the babies what they need to grow up to maturity and completeness. It is all about character development, the process of sanctification. And sanctification always happens in a family setting.

So, in this new family, the family of God, his Body, the developmental process takes place the same way the Bible describes the physical process occurring. Proverbs 13:20 says, “He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.” As people are walking and spending time with good people, they are growing into good people. God’s pattern has always been about life giving life. As he breathed life into mankind, and as that life is passed on by mankind from one person to another, so is spiritual and personal growth. It is produced in one and passed on to another. That happens in the Body.

Hebrews 10:24 tells us, “Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.” Make sure you are in a Body that is growing you up, and make sure you are designing those experiences for the ones you shepherd. If you do that, you are growing people in the way God designed. You are doing it according to Plan A.¹²

Henry Cloud - We need to seek God’s kingdom and righteousness, not to be good, but to stay alive.¹³

If we need people... then again...

Henry Cloud – To be truly biblical, as well as truly effective, the growth process must include the Body of Christ.¹⁴

¹² Henry Cloud and John Townsend, [*How People Grow: What the Bible Reveals About Personal Growth*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009).

¹³ Henry Cloud and John Townsend, [*How People Grow: What the Bible Reveals About Personal Growth*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009).

¹⁴ Henry Cloud and John Townsend, [*How People Grow: What the Bible Reveals About Personal Growth*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009).



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This involves – Acceptance

WHAT IS ACCEPTANCE, AND why is it necessary in order for people to grow? The Bible teaches that acceptance begins with God: “Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God” (Rom. 15:7). Christ’s acceptance of us is the model for how we are to accept each other.

*The word acceptance means “taking to oneself.” It is an invitation. Briefly defined, acceptance is the state of receiving someone into relationship. **To be accepted is to have all of your parts, good and bad, received by another without condemnation.** It applies to all our relationships: with God, others, and ourselves. It is closely related to grace, undeserved merit. **Acceptance is the result of the working of grace. Because of God’s grace, we are accepted into relationship. It is both a fact and something we are to take into our subjective experience, our hearts.***

God originally designed acceptance as a way of life. As humans, we were to relate to him and to each other with no thought of condemnation, judgment, or criticism. We were connected with each other. In the beginning, Adam and Eve “were both naked, and they felt no shame” (Gen. 2:25). They were vulnerable and not disconnected.

*However, when we sinned and fell from grace, acceptance posed a problem for God. His holy nature could not accept our sinfulness; yet his love kept him caring about us. **So God provided a costly solution: his Son Jesus—fully God, fully man, and without sin—died to atone for our sins (1 Peter 3:18). This sacrifice appeased the requirements of God’s holiness and restored us to acceptance.***

BACK TO THE SALVATION EQUATION

God’s acceptance of us in no way negates or minimizes our badness. In fact, he is able to receive us now, not because we are innocent, but because our debt of guilt has been fully paid, once and for all. So when we are afraid that he will not accept us because we have done something wrong, it is we who, at some level, are negating and minimizing what he has done for us. There is truly now no condemnation for those who belong to Jesus (Rom. 8:1).¹⁵

Acceptance – it is living not rejected...

We need to seek God’s kingdom and righteousness, not to be good, but to stay alive.¹⁶ Henry Cloud

ASK: How do we seek God’s righteousness?

Again – back to the Salvation Equation – Declared righteous – legally – through faith – NOT through works... (Romans 10:4) – Justification – Sanctified - Instant

¹⁵ Henry Cloud and John Townsend, [*How People Grow: What the Bible Reveals About Personal Growth*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009).

¹⁶ Henry Cloud and John Townsend, [*How People Grow: What the Bible Reveals About Personal Growth*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009).



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Also have to seek righteousness in another way – Progressive Sanctification

Jesus wants to make not just our lives better – but us better...

Pg 237 – I (Henry) found the ways of his kingdom, such as deep, abiding relationship with others, but I had to make changes in my own personality and character to be more like him, more “righteous.” As I did these things, I found emotional healing from my depression. In saying I became “more righteous,” I do not mean that I became a perfectly holy person or better than anyone else. Far from it. But I changed many dynamics and patterns in my life that were contributing to my problems. And things got better.¹⁷

What are the things Jesus is asking you to look at in your life...

Sufferings come... Life happens... we live in a sinful world & there is pain... is it ours? Was it someone else's that is impacting me?

Matt 6:33³³ “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”¹⁸

So now what?

Pg 237-238 – Changing meant turning from doing things my way to doing things God's way. I had to learn to be honest about myself and my feelings. I had to stop hiding my hurt. I had to become more responsible. I had to learn how to confront some people and to stop controlling others. I had to learn to delay gratification. (The list could go on and on, as I was not then nor am I now short on dysfunction.) But the point here is that having the life and the growth we're looking for involves our changing into people who do things God's way.

The following three Scripture passages about righteousness illustrate the characteristics of our goal of becoming that kind of person:

In other words, these are the three characteristics of people who do things God's way:

1. **REPENTANCE** - *“You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness” (Eph. 4:22–24).*

¹⁷ Henry Cloud and John Townsend, [*How People Grow: What the Bible Reveals About Personal Growth*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009).

¹⁸ Jack W. Hayford, Paul G. Chappell, et al., eds., [*New Spirit-Filled Life Bible*](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Bibles, 2002), Mt 6:33.



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1. *They put off the old ways of doing things and turn to the ways that God does things (repentance).*

2. **UNDERSTANDING & INSIGHT** – *“This is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God” (Phil. 1:9–10).*

2. *They seek more and more to understand and gain insight into what is best (understanding and insight).*

3. **DISCIPLINE** – *“No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it” (Heb. 12:11).*

3. *They commit to the pain of discipline in order to grow (discipline).¹⁹*

1 – REPENTANCE

- Life is found in doing things God’s way – Romans 7:9-11
- Not – **SHOULD** – but rather – **TO LIVE** – Romans 8:13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.²⁰
- See what happens when we shift from should to life:
 - READ PG 239-240
- John 10:10 – As Jesus said, “I came that they might have abundant life”

Matt 6:33 ³³ **“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”**²¹

2 – UNDERSTAND AND GAIN INSIGHT

- Philippians 1:9-10 – “And this is my prayer; that your love may abound more and more in **knowledge and depth of insight, SO THAT** you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of *righteousness* that comes through Jesus Christ – to the glory & praise of God.”
 - Knowledge & Insight

¹⁹ Henry Cloud and John Townsend, [*How People Grow: What the Bible Reveals About Personal Growth*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009).

²⁰ Jack W. Hayford, Paul G. Chappell, et al., eds., [*New Spirit-Filled Life Bible*](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Bibles, 2002), Ro 8:13.

²¹ Jack W. Hayford, Paul G. Chappell, et al., eds., [*New Spirit-Filled Life Bible*](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Bibles, 2002), Mt 6:33.



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- 1st - Learn the ways of the kingdom & all the things God tells us to do
- 2nd – We need to know how to APPLY that knowledge to our own lives in an in-depth way so that we can develop the purity that will lead to the fruit of righteousness.
- THE POINT – to become righteous/sanctified – MATURE – need to be gaining deeper insight into what is best for them...

We are not able to see & understand ourselves by ourselves –

Ps. 19:12-13 – David asking God for insight – As David said, “Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults. Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. Then will I be blameless, innocent of great transgression”²²

Ps 139:23-24 – Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; And see if *there is any* wicked way in me, And lead me in the way everlasting.²³

- We are never going to grow by listening to a sermon once a week & then go about our business – we must gain deeper knowledge about God’s ways (**His Kingdom**) and also find out how those ways apply to their own issues in life (**His Righteousness**)

*Matt 6:33*³³ “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”²⁴

3 – DISCIPLINE

- Disciplinary “process and time” with regard to seeking righteousness.
- We want the “quick fix” – We want what we want and we want it now!
- Clear teaching of the Bible, life & research – GROWTH TAKES TIME
 - Hebrews 12:11 “No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of **righteousness** and peace for those who have been trained by it.
- **ASK:** So how?
 - Commit to discipline
 - Groups – in and out – many seasons
 - Counseling
 - Classes – both professionally & personally
 - Invest in relationships to build intimacy
- Be an evangelist for the process
 - It takes time
 - There is pain & suffering – good pain
 - The lessons we learn will last forever!

²² Henry Cloud and John Townsend, [*How People Grow: What the Bible Reveals About Personal Growth*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009).

²³ Jack W. Hayford, Paul G. Chappell, et al., eds., [*New Spirit-Filled Life Bible*](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Bibles, 2002), Ps 139:23–24.

²⁴ Jack W. Hayford, Paul G. Chappell, et al., eds., [*New Spirit-Filled Life Bible*](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Bibles, 2002), Mt 6:33.



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Conclusion:

Henry Cloud - We need to seek God's kingdom and righteousness, not to be good, but to stay alive.²⁵

Henry Cloud – To be truly biblical, as well as truly effective, the growth process must include the Body of Christ.²⁶

Acceptance – it is living not rejected...

Out of these truths... How will you:

- **Repent?**
 - What does that look like for you?
 - Personally – with others? With God?
- **Understand and gain insight?**
 - What steps will you take?
- **Discipline?**
 - What will you join?
 - What will you be giving time to for it to change?

²⁵ Henry Cloud and John Townsend, [*How People Grow: What the Bible Reveals About Personal Growth*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009).

²⁶ Henry Cloud and John Townsend, [*How People Grow: What the Bible Reveals About Personal Growth*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009).