

## 1 **CULTIVATING GROWTH**

Week 3 - Live with Intention

## 2 **Pacing our Growth**

- Growth is a process – it is a marathon not a sprint.
- Fruit is produced in seasons, and often the preparation to bear more fruit comes after a season of hard work, endurance, struggles and tribulation
- Like all God's laws, this just is. It's something we need to embrace in our Christian journey, and something that drives us deeper into intimacy with Jesus

## 3 **Growing in Character**

- Storms will hit our lives that will reveal things us in we didn't know even existed
- God doesn't do this to show us failure, but to prepare to prune us for even further work
- Character means "the proof of genuineness and the brand of what is tested and true." Thus character is only revealed through the tests it received. Character reflects what is inside us.
- God doesn't care what our external life looks like- He cares what is happening and who we are. He is after our authentic heart issues.

## 4 **Defects Revealed**

- God doesn't ask for perfection overnight; defects are stubborn and take a long to leave
- Addiction or other strongholds oftentimes require accountability and support as to avoid relapse
- Knowing our weaknesses is critical; pride is the greatest barrier of growth; when we think we have no problems, no sin and are focused on appearance, we are in dangerous waters
- People easily live a double life in Christianity– being what they want to project, and then hiding sin
- Recovery helps us to stay in the light

## 5 **Nurturing Connection**

- All growth comes through nurturing connection; busyness is the enemy of connection
- Busyness causes our heart space to be cluttered and removes the

sacredness of quality time with God and those we love.

- If we begin striving in our busyness, before we know it we have left God and are serving some things He never intended for us to serve; doing things God never asked us to do.
- This is wasted time sucking precious resources – limited resources
- Through connection with God, self and those we love, we can avoid giving ourselves away frivolously

## 6 Stay in the Light

- Like plant life, our heart needs to remain in the light to grow
- Living in the light is keeping our hearts exposed before the Lord and seeing it through His filter, rather than our tendency to hide and deny
- Deception is a subtle form of spiritual stagnation – where we think we are somewhere or something we aren't.
- "Light" comes from the Greek Word which means "divine illumination to reveal and impart life, through Christ." We don't possess this light – this light comes by being in relationship with Jesus.
- How desperately we need Him!
- Sometimes we don't know where we are until a trial comes and pulls the "rug under our feet" and we realize we possess disbelief.
- Those are divine seasons for re-connecting to God
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## 7 Seasons of Pruning

- Pruning removes unnecessary plant parts that are only consuming vital ingredients rather than aiding in growth
- By the removal of these parts, the plant itself will thrive
- Our spiritual life operates the same way – God needs to reveal and remove those things that are sucking His life from us, rather than aiding in our growth and strength
- If you're wondering why you are going through trials and tribulations, God may be pruning you to allow you to be humbled and prepared for future growth
- God doesn't will that we suffer, but He does take advantage of the humbling effect those seasons have.
- The blooming rose bush should help us gain incredible hope – this is God's message to us – that "He who began a good work in us will finish it until completion."

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## 8 **Failure**

- When weakness and failure are revealed, it is a fork in the road
- Failure will breed self hatred and contempt if we don't face it properly
- We can allow failure to define from now until eternity, but that means we have minimized the cross and the grace Jesus came to provide
- Failure is a teaching tool – it humbles us, empowers us, and allows us to trust God
- Peter's example.
- Restoration is God's ultimate goal – and not returning us to where we were, but creating an ever more powerful version of ourselves.
- If you've experienced failure, you in the process of transformation
- Take your failure and let it become the foundation that God uses to elevate you. But remember, you can stay in the pit and never live out your destiny if you let failure mark you.

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## 9 **My Power Versus God's Power**

- Refer to chart
- Test your heart and ask God to show you anything that isn't pure – and rather than run or hide from what He reveals, embrace it, face it and allow Him to restore you into His intentions. It is painful, humbling and even humiliating, but not when He touches it! It eventually becomes glorious – it's the reason why grace is so amazing!

## 10 **Self Care**

- Self care is the act of cultivating an environment where we can become while in our relationship with God, self and each other.
- Our lives are sustained by the proper care and nourishment of God-defined needs
- The risk of burn-out is severe if we don't "hydrate" through rest – not activity, busyness, pouring out and giving.
- We will avoid burn-out if we can replenish and fuel ourselves with God's resource
- Practice the Presence of God

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