

“Growing By Grace!”
1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

Introduction:

1. No Matter What Circumstances We Face – Because Of Your Relationship To God Through Jesus Christ (If You’re A Christian) – You Have Certain Responsibilities!
 - Looked At These The Last Few Weeks:
 - Responsibility To Pursue / Chase After The Goodness Of God!
 - By Rejoicing In God!
 - By Praying To God!
 - By Giving Thanks To God!
 - This Is Your Responsibility As A Child Of God!
 - Responsibility To Respond To The Goodness Of God!
 - By Applying Ourselves To:
 - God’s Witness!
 - God’s Word!
 - God’s Wisdom!
 - God’s Walk!
 - This Is Your Responsibility As A Child Of God!
 2. Have You Ever Come To The Point In Your Life:
 - Where You Said: I Can’t! I’ve Tried & I’ve Failed!
 - I Know I Have Said This Many, Many Times!
 - If You’re Honest & Humble – You Too Would Admit To This!
 - This Happens When You Try To Perform Your Responsibilities –
 - But, You Fail To Recognize & Rely Upon God’s Role In All Of This!
 - There Is A Great Balance Between:
 - Personal Responsibility From God To Grow!
 - Personal Reliance Upon God For Growth!
 - You Are To Respond To God’s Goodness By Being Holy!
 - But You Can Only Be Holy By Relying Upon God’s Goodness & Grace!
 - There Is A “Tension” Here – But It Is What Makes Up The Christian Life – From Start To Finish!
 - **IE:** Learning To Ride A Bike - I Had A Personal Responsibility To Ride - But I Needed To Rely Upon My Dad To Get Me Going - I Felt Like I Was Riding - But His Had Was On My Seat The Whole Time - Analogy Breaks Down, Because Eventually I Could Ride “On My Own” - But This Never Happens In The Christian Life! Whenever We Try To Ride “Solo” - We Will Fall! Every Time!
 3. After Showing Your Responsibility – Paul Now Turns To God’s Role:
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24!
 - Our Growth Is By God’s Grace!
 - “The Very God Of Peace!”
 - Or: “God Himself!” - Places The Emphasis On God & His Role & His Work In Us!
 - God Alone Is The Source Of All The Grace & Goodness & Holiness & Peace That We Need!
 - It Is Only Through His Strength That You Can Pursue His Goodness!
 - It Is Only Through His Grace That You Can Respond Properly To His Goodness!
 - This Is Why Paul, Toward The End Of This Letter, Appeals To God In The Form Of A Desire Expressed In Prayer To God – He Knew God’s Role In All Of This!
 - He Knew: Our Growth Is By God’s Grace!
1. ***God Purifies Us By His Grace!***
 - 5:23a - “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly!”
 - God Wants You To Be Holy!
 - God Commands You To Be Holy!
 - God Provides What You Need To Be Holy – His Grace!
 - A Holiness That Is Pure!
 - “Sanctify” – To Set Apart Unto God – To Make Holy!

- This Is The Only Solution For Peace!
- This Was Paul's Desire!
 - Why He Prayed That God Would Make Them This Way! He Know This Was The Best Way To Be & To Live! And Only God Is The Source!
- This Is God's Desire!
 - Is This Your Desire? In All Areas Of Life?
- If This Is Your Desire:
 - You Need To Rely On God's Goodness & Grace To "Sanctify" You In This Way!
- A Holiness That Is Pervasive!
 - "Wholly" – A Compound Word:
 - Holos – Whole Throughout
 - Telos – Complete To The Uttermost
 - This Word Refers To Both:
 - The Depth & Breadth Of Holiness!
 - "Deep & Wide!"
 - The Quality & Quantity Of Holiness!
- A Holiness That Is Permanent!
 - A Thorough Sanctification By God!
 - Extensive!
 - Is This What You Want?
 - Adelaide A. Pollard believed the Lord wanted her in Africa as a missionary, but she was unable to raise funds to go. In an uncertain state of mind, she attended a prayer meeting, where she heard an elderly woman pray, "It's all right, Lord. It doesn't matter what You bring into our lives, just have Your own way with us." At home that night, much encouraged, she wrote this hymn:
 - ~ Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!
 - Thou art the Potter, I am the clay.
 - Mold me and make me after Thy will,
 - While I am waiting, yielded and still.
 - ~ Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!
 - Search me and try me, Master, today!
 - Whiter than snow, Lord, wash me just now,
 - As in Thy presence humbly I bow.
 - ~ Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!
 - Wounded and weary, help me, I pray!
 - Power, all power, surely is Thine!
 - Touch me and heal me, Savior divine.
 - ~ Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!
 - Hold o'er my being absolute sway!
 - Fill with Thy Spirit 'till all shall see
 - Christ only, always, living in me.
- Is This Kind Of Holiness & Purity Your Desire?
 - Remember: Your Growth Is By God's Grace!
 - **IE:** Like Flying In An Airplane - You Are Going Up - But It's Not You Flying At All!

2. ***God Preserves Us By His Grace!***

- 5:23b - "And I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ!"
 - God Desires Your Holiness More Than You Do!
 - So, The Goal Of His Grace Is To Preserve You In Holiness!
 - This Is Why He Tells You To Not Quench His Spirit / Despise Not Prophecysings / Etc!
 - To "Preserve" - To Carefully Attend To You!
 - **IE:** Like Carefully Tending To A Fire, So That It Doesn't Go Out! To Keep / Observe / Watch!
 - And Like Your Purification, Your Preservation Comes From The Lord – By His Grace! Only

- God Is The Source!
- Preserve You Completely!
 - Another Word: "Whole" – Every Part!
 - The Desire Is That Nothing Be Lost!
 - These "Parts" / Elements Are Given:
 - "Whole Spirit And Soul And Body!"
 - Everything That Makes You You!
 - No Part Of You Is Meant To Be Overlooked & Lost!
 - And So, God Preserves You!
- Preserve You Changed!
 - "Blameless!"
 - God's Desire Is Not To Leave You Where He Found You – But To Change You & To Make You More Fit For Heaven!
 - "Blameless" - A Holy Character Reflected In A Holy Conduct!
 - This Is God's Aim!
 - 3:13 - "To the end He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God!"
- Preserve You Continually!
 - "Unto The Coming"
 - Or "At" His Coming!
 - This Transformation / Change Is To Take Place Here & Now!
 - So That When Christ Comes, You Will Be Blameless!
 - God Wants You To Become In Time What You Will Be In Eternity!
- You Need To Remember: Your Growth Is By God's Grace!
 - He Is The One Who Purifies You!
 - He Is The One Who Preserves You!
 - You Need To Learn To Recognize God's Grace In Your Life!
 - Any Good That You Pursue!
 - Any Good That You Respond To!
 - Any Good That You Do!
 - It Is God's Grace Working In You To Do It!
 - Philippians 2:13 - "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure!"
 - When You Make A Good Decision – It Is God's Grace!
 - When You Deny A Temptation – It Is God's Grace At Work In Your Life!
 - When You Serve – It Is God's Grace!
 - **IE:** Like Flying In An Airplane - You Reach Your Destination - But You Didn't Fly At All!
 - Because He Is The One Who:
 - Purifies You By His Grace!
 - Preserves You By His Grace!

3. ***God Performs Through His Grace!***

- 5:24 - "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it!"
 - God Has Called Us & Is Calling Us Unto Much!
 - Unto Holiness - 1 Thessalonians 4:7 - "For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness!"
 - How?
 - If God Calls You, He Will Enable / Empower / Equip You By His Grace!
 - He Will Do It!
- His Performance Is Faithful!
 - This Is The Very Nature & Character Of The "God Of Peace!"
 - He Is Reliable!
 - Numbers 23:19 - "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"
- His Performance Is Fruitful!

- He “Will Do It!”
- Philippians 1:6 - “He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ!”
- What God Has Called You Do Be, He Will Provide Through His Grace!

Conclusion:

1. Your Growth Is Only By God’s Grace!
 - God’s Role Is:
 - Purify! Preserve! Perform!
 - And He Does This Perfectly!
2. Yes, You Need To Do Your Duty – Exercise Your Responsibility!
 - To Be Holy, Because He Is Holy!
 - But Never Forget God’s Role!
 - When You Do, You Will Fall!
3. Learn To:
 - Daily Recognize God’s Grace In Your Growth!
 - Daily Respond To God’s Grace In Your Growth!
 - Joy / Prayer / Thanksgiving!
 - Daily Rely Upon God’s Grace In Your Growth!

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