

**Created for This
Grow- Session #4
Small Group Notes**

Introduction:

When it comes to growth we recognize:

- We were created to grow and most often it is painful and uncomfortable.
- We who are in Christ have been called to grow into the image of Christ.

What are examples of ways that you have growth to be painful or uncomfortable? How does our perspective after going through a growing moment impact the way that we view that experience?

How does the world see going through pain? How does being conformed to Christ impact the times that we face that are painful or uncomfortable?

Discuss:

1. Read Luke 8:4-10

Explain: If we are going to be a people that grow, we are going to have to be a people that asks questions. In explaining the parable to the disciples, Jesus described four types of soil. The seed that fell on the hard soil of the path represented people whose hearts were hardened, similar to seed thrown on paths that are worn down that become resistant to taking root. Growth can't happen in hard soil. The remaining seeds soils represent When the seed fell on the rocky soil, Jesus described that as people that hear the Word of God but they struggle to grow because they aren't being consistently fed. Therefore, it shows how growth best happens in community, not in isolation. The third seeds fall among the weeds that struggle to produce fruit in their lives because of the worries of the world. Thus, growth happens in many things, but we must be intentional if we are going to grow in the right and best thing. True growth however is going to happen in the right soil that allows for deep roots to take place. Sometimes it takes a moment for the roots to dig deep but growth is still occurring. Therefore, growth is more like a crockpot than a microwave.

Ask:

What are some words or phrases that stood out to you in these verses that speak specifically to growth?

Are there evidences that you can see in someone's life that has these types of soil? If so, what are they? Why is growth just as much public as it is private?

What is an example of something that takes time to grow but gets stronger as it goes along?

How have you seen community with other believers help till the soil of our hearts in a way that wouldn't otherwise happen?

2. James 1:1-4

Explain: James advised those facing trials to approach them with joy. When trials are rightly faced, they are avenues to spiritual growth. When faced wrongly, they become temptations to evil. James did not say trials should make us happy or that we should look forward to them. Rather, James wrote with a deep realization that life's pressures have a way of strengthening our character and faith. In other words, they help us develop perseverance. Perseverance is defined as persistence in doing something despite difficulty or delay in achieving success.

Ask:

According to James, what should be a Christian's attitude when facing trials? How often is this your attitude in your own hard times? What are the implications if we choose to have the wrong attitude during trials?

One of the chief tools that the Lord uses for growth is pain and suffering. How have you seen this to be true in your life? How can even the pain and suffering of those closest to us impact our growth?

What are examples of stories of people or things that persevered? Why are we drawn to these stories in our lives? How can your perseverance be an example to others?

3. Colossians 2:6-7

Explain: "Rooted" denotes firmness. To be rooted in Christ is to be secure in your identity as His child. Such an identity is secure and unshakeable. "To be built up" entails a gradual and continual process of sanctification. "To be established" in the faith involves a legal term meaning "confirmed." Paul assures believers in 2 Corinthians 1:21-22, "Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge." Christians are forever sealed with the Holy Spirit. Note the progression of one's faith walk with the Lord. You must have roots before you can be planted. Once planted, you have the foundation to be built up, and once built up, you become established in the faith. Remember as well that we never come to the end of the road of growth, it is a lifetime process, but keep walking.

Ask:

Why do you think Paul chose the word "rooted"? What can be the problem of trying to act "planted" before we are "rooted?" What does such imagery convey about the nature of the believer?

What are reasons that we push against or struggle being identified as a growing Christ follower? How much of this is due to our culture's influence in the church?

Based upon this discussion, if you had to put in your own words to define what it means that you are created to grow as a follower of Christ, what would you say?