

Q. What e_____ are you going to m_____ this year to_____?

I. God wants us to grow in Christ...

- God wants to grow in us a great harvest of righteousness (Christ's righteousness) (2 Cor 9:10)
- God wants to grow our faith in Christ (2 Cor 10:15)
- God wants to grow us to become more and more in every way like Christ (Eph 4:15)
- God wants to grow us to know Christ better and better (Col 1:10)
- God wants to grow us into the fullness of our salvation in Christ (1 Peter 2:2)
- And God wants to grow us in the grace & knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Pt 3:18)

II. God give us the power we need to grow in Christ

² May grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.³ His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,⁴ by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. -- 2 Peter 1:2-4

III. God calls us to make every effort toward growing in Christ

⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge,⁶ and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness,⁷ and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.⁸ For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. -2 Pt 1:5-8

IV. How virtue, self-control and knowledge relate to the things we say

"I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." - Mt 12:26-27

<p><u>Immaturity</u> * spouting off about everyone else's sins & every opinion I have</p>	<p>VIRTUE & SELF-CONTROL</p>	<p><u>Maturity</u> * confessing my own sins - being careful about thing I say & share</p>
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Prov 10:19; Eph 4:29; Col 4:6; Mt 7:1-5

<p><u>Immaturity</u> * presenting a gospel the world finds acceptable</p>	<p>KNOWLEDGE</p>	<p><u>Maturity</u> * proclaiming a gospel passed down from the Apostles</p>
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In 2016 LifeWay surveyed 586 Christian evangelicals:

- > 70% said that Jesus was the first being God _____
- > 56% agreed the Holy Spirit is a divine _____ - not a personal being
- > 28% even said the Holy Spirit is _____ with God the Father or Jesus
- > nearly 50% agreed that God accepts the worship of all _____
- > 66% said heaven is a place where _____ people will ultimately be reunited with their loved ones.

V. Making every effort this year to grow in Christ will require...

FIRST that we constantly LIVE in Christ

- BY Remaining in His Word and in obedience to His Word.
- BY Remaining in prayer with Him as we listen & respond to Him.
- BY Remaining in total dependence on Him and His salvation
- BY Remaining diligent in our practice/living out the qualities listed in 2 Peter 1:5-7,10

SECOND that we constantly LIVE in the Holy Spirit

- BY living according to the desires given to us by the Holy Spirit - see Gal 5:16-17
- BY letting the Holy Spirit control our lives so that He produces His fruit in us - see Gal 5:22-23
- By following the leading/promptings of the Holy Spirit in every area of our lives.

THIRD, that we constantly LIVE in community with other Christ followers. → "Doing Life Together"

- we need the body - one another's gifts, comforting learned through trials, insight, example
- One other - a friend or confidant you can share and pray with - a discipler (challenge), mentor (experience), coach (questions), counselor (from the Bible) - each gives you access to their life.
- Two or Three others you can be encouraged by & accountable to
- Group of others you can study with and do life with

VI. Primary actions needed to get the effort started...

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|------------------------------|------------------------|
| * REORGANIZE | * REND/RIP |
| * REENVISION | * REDUCE |
| * RENEW/REFRESH/RELAX | * RESTRICT |
| * REWARD | * REQUEST HELP/SUPPORT |
| * RISK | * RIGHT ATTITUDE |
| * READ | * RELY |
| *REVISIT/REAWAKEN/REMEMBERRR | |

VII. A prayer for the New Year adapted from the first 21 of Jonathan Edwards's resolutions.

Lord God Almighty, I understand that I am unable to do anything without your help, so I ask you to enable me by your grace to fulfill your will.

Give me grace to do whatever brings most glory and honor to you, pleasure and profit to me, and life and love to others.

Help me to number my days, spending my time wisely, living my life with all my might while I still have breath.

Humble me in the knowledge that I am chief of sinners; when I hear of the sins of others, help me to not look upon them with pride, but to look upon myself with shame, confessing my own sins to you.

When I go through difficulties and trials, remind me of the pains of hell from which you have already delivered me.

Place people in my path who need my help, and give me a compassionate and generous spirit.

Fill my heart with such love that I would never do anything out of a spirit of revenge, nor lose my temper with those around me.

Hold my tongue when I am tempted to speak evil of others. Thank you for the gospel and for the hope of glory.

Help me to live in light of these truths every day of my life, so that when the time of my death arrives, I will rest assuredly in you, and you will be most glorified in me. In Christ's name. Amen.

VIII. STEPS

I MUST AND WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO GROW IN CHRIST <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	WHERE I NEED TO GROW: righteousness, faith, knowledge, Christlikeness, grace, fullness of salvation, virtue, self-control, patient endurance, godliness, affection, love, confession, gospel	How will I LIVE in Christ? How will I LIVE in the Holy Spirit?	How will I LIVE in community? <input type="checkbox"/> one other <input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 others <input type="checkbox"/> group of others	Primary action (s) I need to take: R _____ R _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Pray
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