

49. Growing as a Christian

Colossians 2



You received Christ Jesus as Lord. Live for him. Have your roots in him. Build yourselves up in him. Grow strong in what you believe.

Colossians 2:6-7

Growing as a Christian

A new Christian is like a fresh plant that needs air, sunshine, soil, and rain. Without these, it will not grow. Believers need to do this to grow:

- 1) Pray
- 2) Read the Bible
- 3) Meet with other Christians
- 4) Give to others
- 5) Tell the Good News

You talk to God through prayer. Pray to God anywhere, anytime. Pray with your eyes open or closed. God can even hear silent prayers. Isn't that cool?

God talks to you through the Bible. Read it each day. Start in Mark. This short book tells about Jesus' life.

Christians need to be with their believing brothers and sisters. If you can't go to church, ask God for Christian friends and Bible teachers.

God's heart is to give to those in need. Churches help the needy, and you can too. Open your eyes to see hurts. What can you share with others?

There are probably children in your life who do not know God. Tell your friends, "Jesus came into my life! Want to meet him?" This is called the "Good News."

Growing takes time and effort. God is your loving Father. He will teach you and help you grow up.

Questions

1. How is a new Christian like a plant?
2. What does a new Christian need to grow?
3. How many ways are you growing?
4. What part of growing do you need help with?

Pray this prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus,

I love you. I want to grow as a Christian. I want you to be proud of me. Please help me grow to be a good disciple. Help me to get what I need to grow. Thank you. Amen

Write in the hand the five ways to grow as a Christian. It will spell I GROW.

I will... pray
Give
Read my Bible
Obey and tell
Worship at church



Show students where the story is in the Bible. Use the Bible references above the illustration.

Before you read:

Activate Prior Knowledge

- a) Do you know any babies? How do their parents help them grow?
- b) How is a new Christian like a new child?
- c) What do you think this means – growing as a Christian?

Innocent Infant

Think of a little baby who might be set in a desert all by herself. What could happen to her? What would she need to be safe? How might she grow up healthy and wise? Bring in a variety of things that help babies and kids to grow up right: baby bottle, blanket, clothes, box of cereal, yogurt, books, flashcards, empty bottle of gummy vitamins, etc. Now, add things that don't help kids grow healthy: candy, soda pop, a stone, a twig, etc. Pile them on the table. Kids sort. Explain how Christians also need to grow up in wisdom and safety. Recount on your hands the five ways to grow.

Dizzy Lizzy

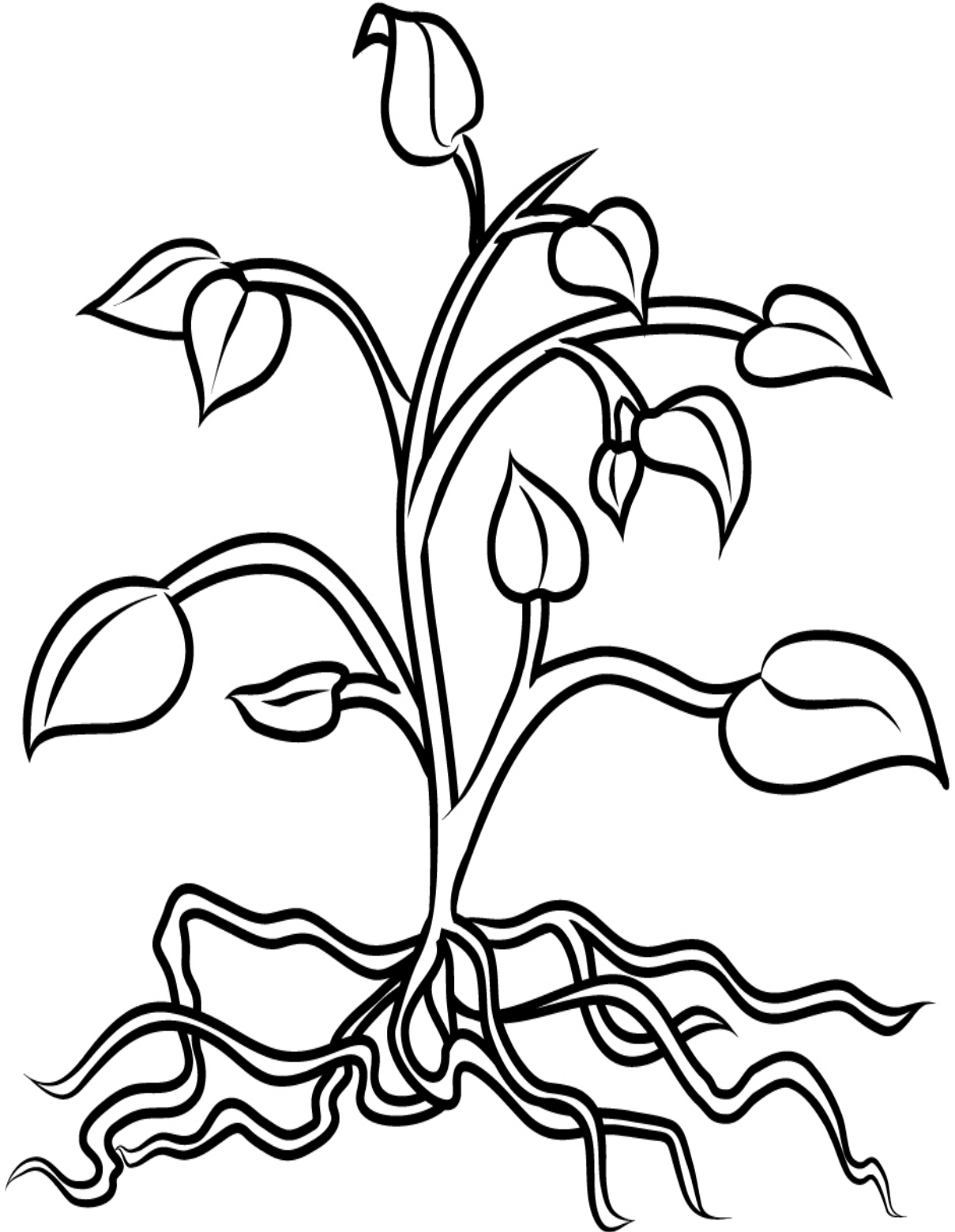
Now that I am a Christian, what do I do? What do I NOT do? How can I stay strong? It can be a little dizzying! Play this game to set yourself straight. Try to use an empty room. Tape pieces of paper on the walls. These will be a mix of pitfalls and good goals for new believers (see Colossians 2-3). Label them each: "Wrong Religions that deceive, firm faith, bad habits that go against God, staying with what I was taught about God, sins like lying, being encouraged, losing my connection with God, forgiving others, getting baptized, praising God with my songs, others judging me, obeying my parents, worshipping angels or other beings who are not God, serving the Lord, getting discouraged, setting my mind on too many things in this world, being greedy, anger, bad language, being kind, being patient, saying mean things about others." Put a new believer in the middle with eyes closed. Spin him around a few times. He has to wander with his eyes closed until he gets to a wall. Stop, where did he end up? Would it help or hurt his Christian walk? Don't wander by chance! Make a growth plan. Now that same believer chooses a good goal to walk toward. Five friends hold hands leading him along a good path. They each state one of the five ways to grow as Christians. Take turns.

Pro-ACTIVE

You can walk into a gym and just chat with friends without gaining muscles. It takes hard work, discipline, a little pain, and lots of repetition to grow strong. Firm faith is never an accident. Talk about what you might give up and how you might work hard to turn into a wise, strong Christian whom God is proud of. List ways you can make your faith firm while curling a small weight up and down. Pass the weight around the circle and cite your promises to grow.

Blooming with Prayer

Give each child a clear plastic cup, potting soil, and radish seeds. Plant them with a prayer that God would help the seeds bloom, grow, and be fruitful. Watch the roots grow down and the little blooms reach up to the sun. Compare it to your life as you reach deep into your heart and up to the Son of God to grow. Color this plant, add flowers, and write a prayer among the stems asking God to help you develop as a believer.



Handy Plan

If you leave a new plant alone without the right growth tools (sun, light, etc.) it will die. If you leave a new Christian alone without the right growth tools, his or her blooming faith could wither. Show your students this Bible verse. Ask them to memorize it:

“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.”

Colossians 2:6-7

(On your left hand, put up each finger) and say:

My Goals

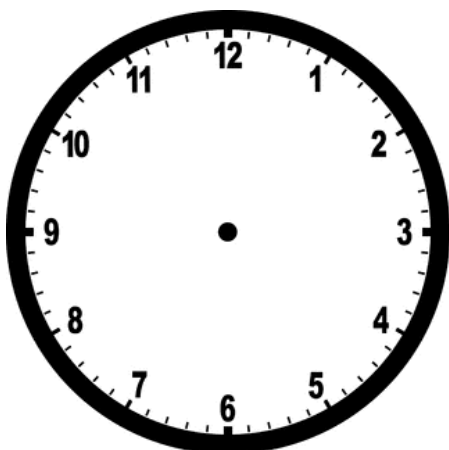
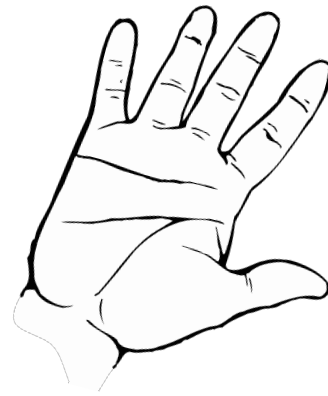
1. I want to continue to live in Christ.
2. I want to be rooted, not wandering.
3. I want to be built up, like a firm building.
4. I want to be strong in my faith, like I was taught.
5. I want to be full of thanks.

But how? (Palms up and shrug your shoulders.)

(On your right hand, put up each finger) and say:

My Growth: I- G-R-O-W

1. **I** will pray.
2. I will **g**ive.
3. I will **r**ead my Bible.
4. I will **O**bey and tell others about God.
5. I will **W**orship at church.



Got a Minute?

Get a daily reminder of your growth plan from Colossians **2:6-7**. Set your clock to buzz you every day at 2:06 pm. Spend one minute praying, until 2:07 for your growth as a Christian. Try to recount on your hands what you learned above. God does honor consistent, heart-felt prayer. After a month, ask yourself, am I growing? Draw hands on the clock set to 2:06.

Open Hand to God

Trace one hand in the empty space below. Write in the hand the five ways to grow as a Christian. It will spell I GROW. Start the main letters at the top of the finger and write vertically down the fingers.

Also, you can use round, colorful office stickers. Write the I-G-R-O-W letters on five stickers and place them on fingertips. Talk about ways you can pray, give, read your Bible, obey God, tell others the good news, and when and where you will worship at church.

I will... pray
Give
Read my Bible
Obey and tell
Worship at church