



GROWING

WEEK SEVEN

“At Our Savior’s Way Lutheran Church, we value growing God’s family.”

There is a saying “The hardest instrument to play is second fiddle.” Our sin nature always wants to be first chair in whatever we do. Our sin nature focuses on self, with all our wants, needs and desires. Sin asks questions like: “What’s in it for me?” “What am I going to get out of this relationship, this job, or this investment?” Love asks different questions, like: What does God want me to do? What has God given me to share with others to help them be successful? How can I strengthen my family, or encourage my friends, or build up my coworkers? How can I glorify God today and invest myself to make life better?

Everything in our lives belongs to God. God created us, redeemed us, and lives through us by the presence of His Spirit in our lives. Jesus said, “I am the vine and you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5). St. Paul said, “Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?” (I Corinthians 3:10). St. Peter said, “You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God” (I Peter 2:9). These are powerful words that describe God’s investment in us and how daily and richly God is building us up so that our lives have meaning and purpose. Whatever gifts God has given us are not meant for ourselves but are given by God to be used for others. Our model for living is Jesus’ cross. We were once poor miserable sinners, but Jesus built and established us in His love so that we are now children of God.

We can’t make ourselves physically grow. Growth is a gift of God. But we can eat the right food, exercise and get proper rest to assist in growing healthy bodies. Spiritual growth too is a gift of God but we can help ourselves spiritually by reading God’s Word, spending time in prayer, serving and being in worship. And God can use each of us like gardeners helping the flowers in a garden, by nurturing, caring and helping others so their faith in God can grow.

“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good”(I Corinthians 12:4-7). Again the Bible says, “Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms”(I Peter 4:10).