

Growth:

Process of increasing, developing, or maturing



Growth is supposed to be a natural part of the Christian walk - we are saved by God's grace and beginning with spiritual milk (the basics of the Gospel), we "grow up" in our salvation (1Peter 2:2). Marriage very similar to salvation and our walk with the Lord - we are "one" when we marry, but then spend the rest of our lives *growing* in that oneness. Couples marry expecting that they will find peace and happiness, but instead, find very quickly that there tends to be conflict in marriage. Couples usually do not understand that marriage isn't about their happiness, but about their *growth*. God uses marriage to help us develop and mature in our walk with Him as we grow in in our marriage relationship.

Proverbs 27:17 tells us that "as iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another." That sharpening; that *growth* will occur more in the marriage relationship than in any other earthly relationship we can have. Of course that will only happen if we are open to growing and view the conflict we experience as opportunities for growth rather than points of contention. Friends, weeds grow on their own without care or water, but a beautiful garden requires that we care for it, tend to it, water it, and pull the weeds. If you want a beautiful garden of a marriage - a marriage that glorifies God and is fulfilling to both husband and wife, you must care for it and tend to it. You must use sound tools to work through conflict in healthy ways so that you will grow - that you will become sharper; understanding and applying God's word and principles to your life and marriage.

Growth; that process of increasing, developing, or maturing happens in positive ways when we are purposeful about growing. We must first have an attitude of humility; understanding that we are *not* perfect and need to grow. Then as we work *with* our spouse and purposefully *seek* to grow in our walk with the Lord and in our marriage, we *will* mature and become more like Christ. It is a decision we must make every day.

Do *you* purposefully seek to grow in Christ? Do you invest time daily in knowing God more through God's word, prayer, worship, and fellowship? Do you seek to grow in the Lord together as husband and wife? Do you have an attitude of humility and really hear your spouse when they bring problems or issues up? Please *purposefully* seek to grow in your relationship with Christ and your spouse. #

Helpful Resources: *Fortified Marriages Resource page: www.fortifiedmarriages.com*

Working through the Fortified Marriages Manual & Workbook is a great way to grow in your marriage.

For more information about growth see the following resources:

How one couple improved their marriage by focusing on growth instead of happiness by Julie Compton

Why Marriage is One of the Biggest Keys to Spiritual Growth by Gleniece Lytle

Sacred Marriage; What If God Designed Marriage to Make Us Holy More Than to Make Us Happy?
by Gary Thomas