

St Peter's Milton. Vision 3. GROWING.

We have now come to the third part of the Church Vision and Mission Statement. We have already looked at Caring and Sharing and were reminded to:

- **Care for God's Honour & Name – He is Holy. Worship Him**
- **Care for God's World – He is Creator. Steward well God's world**
- **Care for God's People – He is Father and we belong to each other**
- **Care for God's Mission – He is the King and sent Jesus to establish His Kingdom**

Song, 'Cast all your care upon Him, because He cares for you.' 1 Peter 5v7

- **Share with God - Pray about everything**
- **Share with each other – Testimony and spiritual gifts**
- **Share with the world – the Message of Jesus, Good News of peace.**

And we looked at Isaiah 58 and Romans 12.

Song: Our God is a great big God.... And He holds you in His hands...

TALK ONE – Youth and All Ages.

So, what is GROWING all about?

- Grow up – mature
- Grow out – expand. (waistline or more people)
- Grow Together – unity and health

But what are some of the dangers or diseases that can hinder our growth?

Ask the question.....

Eg. Poor nutrition, lack of love, insufficient exercise, infections and bugs & viruses! Also poor light, space,....

Mental health for men and older people, but indeed for all of us... several things are needed in this dangerous and uncertain time that we are in....

One of the most helpful brief descriptions of Growing is given in Luke Chapter 2, where we have two verses which describe the growth of Jesus **v.40. And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon him.**
v.52. 'And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men.'

Here we can identify Four Major Dimensions of growth. Jesus is our perfect model and we are all called to grow up to become like Him.

1. **Wisdom** – this is more than knowledge though it includes mental and intellectual growth through learning, education and experience of life. Not all learning is FORMAL learning. Some of the wisest people have not had much schooling!
Intellectual and mental growth.
'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom' Proverbs
2. **Stature** – this includes height and strength, gained through exercise and good food, as well as the nurture of a loving family. **Physical growth**
3. **Favour with God** – this means growth in the spiritual dimension of relationship with God as Father and is marked by GRACE – God's undeserved favour towards us. Jesus called God Abba, Father and we can too by faith in Jesus by the Holy Spirit
4. **Favour with men** – this is a growth in the social and community dimension of relationships with others. We become gracious, emotionally strong and well connected with our family and community.

However, many of us may have missed out on one or more of these dimensions of growth. How can we grow well in each of these areas?

- Healthy bodies grow – with the correct nutrition and exercise and loving support
- Healthy churches grow – with the correct nutrition and exercise and loving support
- Healthy seeds grow – with the correct nutrition, light, protection from bugs and support

So, our part is to Feed, Water, Nurture, Protect, Release....

Prayer: *Lord, help me to grow in every dimension in a healthy way. Help me to 'fear the Lord' as the beginning of wisdom. Help me to feed regularly on your Word, as 'man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God'. Help me to love and care and share with my brothers and sisters in the family of God, so that we can grow stronger together. Help me to grow in my relationship with You as my Loving Heavenly Father, who loves me so much and wants me to grow up into the fullness of the image of Jesus. Help me to do my part in helping your church to grow both healthy and bigger in this place. AMEN*

