

# The Christian Arsenal

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## GROWING IN GRACE Good News About Grace

Dr. Ken Culver

Part 8 of 9

### INTRO:

Oxymorons: Diet Ice Cream  
Conservative Democrat  
Politically Correct  
Temporary Tax Increase

*“But grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” 2 Peter 3:18 (NIV)*

### HOW DO GROWTH AND GRACE FIT TOGETHER?

Growth is not how many things I do.  
Growth is how much closer I am.

*“You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.” Eph. 4:22-24 (NIV)*

### THREE PARTS:

#### I. PUT OFF THE OLD.

##### THREE OLD WAYS THAT DON'T WORK

#### 1. Trying to grow by doing good.

*“Neither do men pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst, the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved.” Matt. 9:17 (NIV)*

#### 2. Trying to grow by keeping the Rules.

*“Your hearts should be strengthened by God’s grace, not by obeying rules...”  
Heb 13:9 (NCV)*

#### 3. Trying to Grow by Feeling Bad.

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*“Who then will condemn you? Will Christ? No! For He is the one who died for us and came back to life again for us...”* Romans 8:34 (TLB)

## II. PUT ON THE NEW.

*“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, the old has gone, the new has come.”* 2 Cor. 5:17 (NIV)

The promise of the Christian life is the old has gone, the new has come.

### THREE THINGS ABOUT THIS NEW LIFE

#### 1. We don't have to achieve our new life.

We don't have to make ourselves new; we just have to put on the new life He's given us.

#### 2. We don't have to keep our new life.

*“Your old sinful self has died, and your new life is kept with Christ in God.”* Col. 3:3 (NCV)

#### 3. We don't have to put on our new life.

## III. BE RENEWED IN YOUR MIND.

*“Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way that you think.”* Romans 12:2 (NLT)

*“You began your life in Christ by the Spirit. Now are you trying to make it complete by your own power? That is foolish.”* Gal. 3:3 (NCV)

A renewed mind is not just determination – it's determined dependence on God.

### TWO QUESTIONS

#### 1. Why does it take so long?

God has a long-term plan in mind for your life.

#### 2. Where do I get started? – Start with trust.

Growth is not accomplished by trying hard. It is accomplished by trusting Him.

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*“He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.” Phil. 1:6 (NIV)*

*“For God is at work within you, helping you want to obey Him, and then helping you do what He wants.” Phil 2:13 (TLB)*

Not only does He help me want to do the right things, but also He helps me do the right thing.

*“Everything – and I do mean everything – connected with that old way of life has to go. Get rid of it! And then take on an entirely new way of life, a God-fashioned life, a life renewed from the inside and working itself into your conduct as God accurately reproduces His character in you.” Eph. 4:22-24 (Msg)*