

Kings Norton Baptist Church

Sunday 5th May 2024 10 am

Growing?

Welcome to all

Opening Scripture.....

Hymn MP 631 Tell out my soul the greatness of the Lord

Scripture Psalm 45 (page 569)

Prayer

Children's talk Helena

Chorus MP 233 His name is higher

Notices Invite for Cameo, Bring and share lunch today.
BBQ, picnics, giving packets. BCM prayerletter, prayer sheets.

Prayer and Lord's prayer

Readings Matthew 13:31-35 (page 980),
Hebrews 5:11-6:12 (page 1204)

Hymn MP 1227 The splendour of the King, clothed in majesty.

Sermon Growing?

Hymn MP 889 More about Jesus would I know

Closing Prayer:

Prayer and Exordium

- As I was working on this sermon I could hear the sound of mowing machines outside. Everywhere the grass is shooting up fast. The trees are blossoming and filling out with new bright green foliage. It made me think "what about me? am I growing?" Am I blossoming in my Christian life? Am I growing in grace, am I growing in faith, in love, in serving? How about in the giving of self to the Lord, is there now today less of me and more of Christ? Is there less of me in my speaking, is there less of me in my thinking - and more of Him, and of others?
- How about you? What about you? Are you growing? Are you more Christ-like now than you were say three months ago? Are you quicker to help?, and quicker to serve? Do you love your brothers and sisters more? Are you less centered on self and more inclined to the Lord?, more filled with him and His word? Do you speak of Him to others?

The parable this morning of the mustard seed is all about growth.

"³¹ He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches.""

the smallest of all your seeds, - the largest of garden plants, see the contrast! Not from large to small, - but from small to large. It is about 'growing?' x2. But what is it that is growing? Jesus says: **"The kingdom of heaven - is like *What is meant by the kingdom of heaven?*"**

The word for 'kingdom' is *bas-il-i'-ah* g932 hence our word 'basilica'. And while we may think of a building it really means: kingship, sovereignty, authority, realm and rule, especially of God. The kingdom of God is growing both in the world, and in the hearts of men. This parable is speaking of both the progress of the gospel in the world; and of the growth of grace in the soul.

But what of this rule or reign? The kingdom of heaven, or the kingdom of God is where He reigns as king. It is true that God is king over all he has made, and yet since the fall, the fall of Satan and the subsequent fall of man the world has been in rebellion against God. There is now another kingdom in which we are all living, *the kingdom of this world*. We are surrounded not only by people who refuse to acknowledge Jesus as Lord and King but also ideologies, governments, movements, indeed everything not of God - is against God.

When Jesus entered the world and started his ministry, he proclaimed and ushered in the kingdom of Heaven saying Mark 1:15 **"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"**

In other words he came to change the heart and minds of the rebellious so that they, we, will bow the knee and confess Christ as Lord - and do so gladly.

Where this has happened, and Christ Jesus is ruling and reigning, then it is said **'the kingdom of God has come upon you'**. Mt 12:28 // Lu 11:20

That Christ now reigns in this regenerated heart is seen in willing submission to his rule. Jesus said to Nicodemus, a religious man that he remained outside the kingdom. The new birth is the means of entering into this kingdom. John 3

This change of allegiance, this coming of the kingdom of God turns a person around. This internal, invisible work done by the Spirit of God produces within the person a love for God and a corresponding revulsion of sin. Water baptism is the public declaration and illustration of this profound change.

It is also a kingdom which is to come. His redeemed people, those whom Christ has bought with his own blood, will one day be perfected. And as such this bride the church will descend from heaven to a new world renewed and purged of all evil and all who sin. On that Day Christ will be marvelled at in the lives of His redeemed people - the kingdom of God has finally come as.

One day, finally, the kingdom of this world will be no more, and the kingdom of God will prevail over all. In Revelation 11 we read: **The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he will reign for ever and ever."** Re 11:15 Hallelujah, Amen!!

And on that day Habakuk's future prediction will be realised **for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.** Hab 2:14 That is how it will end, - or should I say begin.

But this kingdom the Lord ushered in when he entered this world had small and modest beginnings. Jesus is on his own preaching around Galilee. Three and a quarter years later after Christ's death and resurrection There were just 120 gathered from Galilee in that upper room in Jerusalem.

So from those small beginnings, the **smallest**, it grows and grows and grows until it has prevailed over all, to become the **greatest**, and takes over.

■ **There's a house further up on our road that is now being gutted. In fact the house had become smothered and overrun by the creeper that had engulfed it, which from its small beginning had taken over.**

We all understand what Ivy does, we even call it 'creeper'. We see it in a negative sense. Well Jesus uses a very common example for the day, a much more positive example, the mustard seed.

2a

The mustard plant

The word translated mustard (⁴⁶¹⁵ σίναπι) is sinapi. The common mustard of Palestine is the Sinapis nigra, a pod-bearing, shrub-like plant, growing wild, but also cultivated in gardens. The little round seeds were an emblem of any small insignificant object.

This well know seed is what he uses to illustrate growth. ³² **Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, the **smallest** becomes the **largest**.** Note the point is reinforced for it is a herb, and not a tree. Hence Jesus says it is the **largest of garden plants**, not the largest of trees. It can grow to a considerable height ten feet high or more, there are plenty of larger trees, but there's no other 'herb' like it.

Indeed, so much so that **that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches.** Mark, always the one to add details says it has **such big branches that the birds of the air can perch in its shade.**

Among the Jewish teachers a "grain of mustard" was a common expression for anything very minute. Our Lord's picks this up later saying "if you have **faith as a grain of mustard seed**" Mt 17:20 // Lu 17:6 - you can 'move mountains'!

So this mustard 'seed', proverbial for smallness, speaks of a great increase.

Jesus in this parable is saying that the Kingdom of God will, from small beginnings grow, and grow hugely. This growth is in two interconnected ways. In the world - and in me.

The first part - is the growth of the kingdom of Heaven in the world

Jesus ushered in the kingdom of God, not for the Jews only but for the whole world. Jesus is the light to the Gentiles, He is the Light of the world.

After his suffering, he showed himself to these men and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days - and spoke about the kingdom of God. Ac 1:3

Before ascending back to heaven Jesus commissioned his followers to go and make disciples of all nations. He told us to be His witnesses from Jerusalem out to the ends of the earth. His followers have been doing just that speaking of Christ and spreading the Gospel of free salvation through Jesus Christ.

■ **Let's watch this short video - it shows the spread of Christianity.**

He has scattered us as he did the early disciples, such as **Philip** who many believed **as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God.** Acts 8:12. Paul

2b

spoke about those who laboured with him as **fellow-workers for the kingdom of God.** Col 4:11.

That is what we are saved to do, to declare the Lordship of Christ God's saviour Son and to bring this good news to the lost. Are you doing it? If you know His call upon your life - then this is what you are to do. This is his purpose for you. You are to do this in one way or another, so that He is honoured. And as you do so you will find a Joy that will put all your problems into the shadows. How sad to discover, and how dishonouring to the Lord, that some Christians have gone weeks and months without speaking to anyone - about Jesus. When was the last time for you? what are you actively doing?

■ [This Wednesday we're going into Tudor House, will you come? will you support? Will you get involved? - I heard on Friday how two Christian women moved into a care home before they needed to, and what was their reason? To be a witness of the Lord to the other residents.](#)

From the gospel >> to the churches in the NT we have Acts, which is all about the spread of the word of God, through his obedient people, to the saving of the lost. The effective work of the Spirit of Jesus in the hearer transforms a life from one hostile and hateful towards God, to one who loves God and submits to his good rule and reign. Now **the Kingdom of God has come** to you.

As the gospel was preached, as the word of God spread, it did its transforming work, fulfilling the purpose for which it was sent. The guilty are convicted of sin and some are brought to eternal life in Jesus.

This new birth brings the changed heart, a life now submitted to the Lordship of Christ. The Lord's reign has extended.

That is the mark of a true Christian. This willingness to live under the Lordship of Christ is the requirement for membership here at KNBC.

We do not mean a nation becoming Christian, nor a place, but only people in whom Christ dwells and reigns. Where many are together changed, as in the times of revival the salt and light effect the society tangibly – and sometimes radically, - but that does not make us a Christian country.

The wedding of church and state, the joining of the secular state to the church will invariably result in the Holy church become more like the secular state and actually causes the kingdom of God to shrink.

These last days before Christ returns are known as the 'gospel age' for through the gospel the kingdom is growing and will continue to grow.

Do you see the kingdom of God growing? Who of those you know or those in your road that have come to faith? Have you spoken to them?

From one [Abraham], and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.” Heb 11:12

So we pray **May you kingdom come, may your will be done here on earth as it is in Heaven.** And then we obediently go and tell.

But it is not just growing numerically, by the adding of people, it is growing in people as more and more of that person's life comes under the Lordship of Christ. **All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing,** - so there it is across the world – but is it also growing in me? Paul goes on to say - **just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth.** Col 1:6. If it is not growing in me - I am unlikely to be actively taking it to others. We can trace problems back to their roots!

So lastly - is the kingdom of Heaven growing in me?

may your will be done - in me! x2. If that little seed has been sown, then expect it to grow. If you have sown a word in conversation with another then expect it to grow. If you have spoken to a child and planted a seed of truth then expect it to grow. You can believe what Jesus said will happen. So too in yourself, if there has been that little start of grace in you then expect it to grow, expect there to be progress in the giving over of self to the Lord, that is sanctification, or being made Holy, the mark of a genuine work of Grace in a true believer.

✚ *A previous pastor said of one young man “he has saving grace - but not growing grace”. I have pondered that phrase for many years, and recently it has been seen why this man did not have growing grace?? because he did not have, and never had, saving grace – and that has now been made clear.*

There is no saving grace without growing grace. For we read **being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.** Php 1:6

[Let me address two groups of people here.](#)

> Firstly those who are not growing towards Christ-likeness. Why aren't you growing?. Why not? Is it because there is no saving Grace? That will be the answer, that is the reason. There has been no work of grace in your life. Christ has not done an inner work in your life. For all your efforts, for all your religious adherence, for all you hope and declarations – there is no growth – because there is no seed, however small. There is nothing of Christ in you to

grow. We can all watch on as long as we like, but there will be nothing to be seen, there's nothing there.

But your sin is there. And it is to the cross you need to go. Sin and selfishness, grotesque and ugly spites the Lord who made you for himself. One day all of it will be exposed. If that is you run to Christ and plead with him to be merciful to you and to give you of Himself.

■ I was talking with a lady at Cotteridge on Wednesday about the prayer that the Lord hears "Have mercy on me a sinner" She said "yes my mother taught that". But she admitted she'd never said it... Have you?

> Then there's the other group of people in the room. You have sought mercy, you have confessed and turned from your sin, you have been reborn and professed your faith in and love for Christ. That good work in you has begun. That tiny seed has been planted. As a new convert you had a good start.

We have a new convert in our midst, he knows he has entered a new world, his heart is aglow with a new joy. There's a buoyancy, there's a new zeal, he is like a blind man suddenly restored to sight. The sensation is new and vivid. Yet little is seen clearly. In a little time, the young convert will see more distinctly, will judge more intelligently, will love more strongly, and with a more level-headed resolve be prepared to make more sacrifices for the cause of Christ. This is growth. This is the kingdom of God growing within a believer. It must never falter, it must never slow to a halt. Will it now grow to be the largest and take over completely and smoother away my will?

Beware, there are obstacles to growth. Growth can become stunted. As Peter says we must continue **like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation**, 1Pe 2:2.

Babies are to thrive, so we as Christian must thrive. **Do not go on a spiritual hunger strike**. Don't give up on the watering of God's word. Don't excuse yourself of the necessary heat of activity and service. Be always growing. With the help of Christ's Spirit push the enemy back, win the battles of the flesh, crucify self, and myself to the world.

■ Like walking into a house at night and shining a torch into all the corners let the light of Christ shine and expose the dirt. Dirt is not seen in the dark. Lord, let me have a faith which will bear the light of day, the light of self-examination, the light of the throne of judgment. If I hide my sin, how can I prosper? How will I endure to be judged at your appearing? Lord lift those flag stones and expose what is beneath. Lord show me what is there – and what I need to clean out that you make rule every area of my life.

4a

Peter goes on to say **grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever! Amen.** 2Pe 3:18

✚ **For this you were made, and for this you are being remade.**

Paul said to Christians at Corinth **Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow, our area of activity among you will greatly expand**, 2Co 10:15 growth is to be seen, growing faith means growing effect, and growing effectiveness.

■ I have been to funerals of believers and I am astonished to hear just how much they did for the Lord. "A life well lived"

Should I be astonished? For if a little has been planted then much should come Helena and the badge of what area of church ministry you are involved in. what would be written on your badge?

No wonder Paul regularly prayed believing for growth in the Lord's people **we pray ... that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God**, Col 1:10

■ Are you into investment? What is the growth ratio from a small seed to a tree 10' high? 1,000:1, 10,000:1? What an excellent return!!

Do you have an eye for a good deal? – have you spent much – only to find it turns out to be little. **Like the bundles of tickets spewed from the machines at Hollywood bowl, they are almost worthless.** Here is something that starts so small and you end up with something huge by comparison. Paul says to the Christians in northern Greece **your faith is growing more and more, and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing.** 2Th 1:3. To grow in faith is to grow in love, that is how you see the growth. Is your love for your brothers and sisters more evident? More obvious? More genuine?

■ Have you ever seen a loaf of bread that hasn't risen properly? (No they are not put on the shelves), part has risen, part has not.

Jesus joins this parable to the next to show how growth takes place. The little yeast is, through the hard work of kneading, spread throughout the whole dough. The more the yeast spreads through the dough -the more pervasive the effect. So the more Christ's rule spreads in your life -the more the effect.

Anyone in a profession expects to move on in their company, to grow in experience and competence and usefulness. It is natural. **Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men** Lu 2:52, and so must we.

As I finish ask yourself the question "Is the Lord's rule growing in me? Am I growing in grace, Am I growing in faith? And therefore in love, in serving, in the giving over of self? May the answer be 'yes' END

4b

Growing?

當我正在講道時，我能聽到外面割草機的聲音。到處的草都在快速地長起來。樹木正在開花，長滿了新的鮮綠色的葉子。這讓我思考「那我呢？我在成長嗎？我的基督徒生活是否蓬勃發展？我是否在恩典中成長，在信心、愛、服事中成長嗎？今天，在把自己交給主的過程中，我是不是少了，基督多了呢？我的說話中是否少了我的成分，我的思想中我的成分是否少了，而更多的是他和其他人的成分了？

你呢？你呢？你在成長嗎？現在你比三個月前更像基督了嗎？你是否能更快提供協助和服務？你更愛你的兄弟姐妹嗎？你是否較少以自我為中心，更傾向於主，更被祂和祂的話語所充滿？你有跟別人談論過他嗎？今天早上芥菜種的比喻都是關於成長的。

」 31

他又給他們講了一個比喻：「天國就像一粒芥菜種子，有人拿去種在田裡。最大的。

所有種子中最小的 -

園林植物中最大的，看看對比！不是從大到小，而是從小到大。這是關於「成長？」x2。但成長的是什麼？耶穌說：「天國就像

天國是什麼意思？

「王國」這個字是 *bas-il-i'-ah*

g932，因此我們用「大教堂」這個字。雖然我們可能會想到建築物，但它實際上意味著：王權、主權、權威、領域和統治，尤其是上帝的統治。神的國度在世界和人心中不斷成長。這個比喻既講述了福音在世界上的進展，也講述了福音在世界上的進展。以及靈魂中恩典的增長。

但這個規則或統治又如何呢？天國，或者說神的國度，是祂作為王統治的地方。確實，上帝是祂所創造的萬物的王，但自從墮落、撒旦的墮落以及隨後人類的墮落以來，世界一直在背叛上帝。現在我們都活在另一個國度裡，就是這個世界的國度。我們周圍不只有拒絕承認耶穌是主和

君王的人，還有意識形態、政府、運動，事實上一切不屬於上帝的東西都是反對上帝的。

當耶穌進入世界並開始他的事工時，他宣告並迎來了天國，並說《馬可福音》1:15“時候到了”，他說。「神的國近了。悔改並相信好消息！」

換句話說，他來是為了改變叛逆者的內心和意念，這樣他們，我們，就會屈膝承認基督為主——並且樂意這樣做。

當這一切發生時，基督耶穌正在統治並掌權，那麼就會說「神的國臨到了你們」。太 12:28 // 路 11:20

基督如今在這顆重生的心中作王，這從甘心順服他的統治就可見一斑。耶穌對一位宗教人士尼哥底母說，他仍然在王國之外。重生是進入這個國度的途徑。約翰福音 3

這種效忠的改變，這種神的國的到來使一個人轉變。神的靈所做的這種內在的、看不見的工作在人裡面產生了對神的愛和相應的對罪的厭惡。水的洗禮是這項深刻變化的公開宣言和例證。

這也是一個即將到來的國度。祂所救贖的子民，那些基督用自己的血所買來的人，終有一天會變得完全。因此，這間新娘教會將從天上降臨到一個更新並清除所有邪惡和所有罪人的新世界。在那一天，基督將因祂所救贖的子民的生活而感到驚奇——神的國終於來臨了。

最終有一天，這個世界的國度將不復存在，而神的國度將戰勝一切。在啟示錄十一章我們讀到：第七位天使吹號，天上就有大聲音說：“世上的國成了我主和他基督的國，他要作王，直到永永遠遠。”。啟 11:15

哈利路亞，阿門！

到那日，哈巴谷未來的預言就要實現，認識耶和華榮耀的知識將充滿全地，如同水充滿洋海一般。哈 2:14

這就是事情的結束，或者我應該說是開始。

但主進入這個世界時所開創的這個國度卻有著微小而謙虛的開端。耶穌獨自在加利利各地傳道。基督受死復活三年又四分之一年後，只有 120 人從加利利聚集在耶路撒冷的樓上房間。

因此，從那些最小的小開始，它不斷成長、成長、成長，直到它壓倒一切，成為最偉大的，並接管一切。

在我們的路上有一棟房子現在正在拆除。事實上，這棟房子已經被爬行植物所淹沒和侵占，爬行植物從一開始就佔據了它。

我們都明白 Ivy 的作用，我們甚至稱之為「爬行者」。我們從消極的角度看待它。耶穌用了一個非常常見的例子，一個更正面的例子，芥菜籽。

芥菜植物

芥末 (4615

σ ι ν α π ι) 的翻譯詞是 sinapi。巴勒斯坦常見的芥菜是黑芥菜 (Sinapis nigra)，一種結莢的灌木狀植物，野生生長，但也在花園中栽培。圓形的小種子是什麼不起眼的小物體的象徵。

他用這顆眾所周知的種子來說明成長。 32

雖然它是你們所有種子中最小的，但當它長大時，它是園林植物中最大的，並成為一棵樹，最小的變成最大的。請注意，該點已被強化，因為它是一種草本植物，而不是一棵樹。因此耶穌說它是最大的園林植物，而不是最大的樹木。它可以長到十英尺高或更高，有很多更大的樹，但沒有其他“草本植物”像它一樣。

確實如此，以至於空中的飛鳥都飛來棲息在它的樹枝上。馬克總是那個添加細節的人，他說它的樹枝如此之大，以至於空中的鳥兒可以棲息在它的樹蔭下。

在猶太教師中，「芥末粒」是任何非常微小的事物的常見表達方式。我們的主後來引用了這一點，說「如果你有信心像一粒芥菜種」太 17:20 // 路 17:6 - 你就能『移山』！

因此，芥菜“種子”，俗話說“小”，卻意味著巨大的增長。

耶穌在這個比喻中說，神的國會從小處開始發展，並且不斷壯大。這種成長有兩種相互關聯的方式。在世界上——也在我身上。

第一部一天國在人間的成長

耶穌開創了神的國度，不只為猶太人，也為全世界。耶穌是外邦人的光，祂是世界的光。

在受苦之後，他向這些人顯現，並提供了許多令人信服的證據證明他還活著。他在四十天的時間裡向他們顯現，並講述了神的國。醋酸 1:3

在升回天上之前，耶穌委託祂的跟隨者去使萬民成為門徒。他告訴我們要從耶路撒冷直到地極，為他作見證。他的追隨者一直在這樣做，談論基督並傳播透過耶穌基督自由救贖的福音。

讓我們來看看這個短片—它展示了基督教的傳播。

祂分散了我們，就像祂對待早期門徒一樣，例如腓利，當祂傳講神國度的好消息時，許多人都相信了祂。使徒行傳

8:12。保羅談到那些與祂一起為神國同工的人。西 4:11。

這就是我們得救要做的事，宣告神的救主兒子基督的主權，並將這個好消息帶給失喪的人。你在做嗎？如果你知道祂對你生命的呼召—那麼這就是你要做的。這就是他對你的目的。你應該以這樣或那樣的方式去做這件事，這樣他就會得到榮耀。當你這樣做的時候，你會發現一種喜悅，它會把你所有的問題拋諸腦後。發現有些基督徒已經數週甚至數月沒有與任何人談論耶穌，這是多麼悲傷的事，也是對主的極大羞辱。你最後一次是什麼時候？你在積極做什麼？

這週三我們要去都鐸宮，你來嗎？你會支持嗎？你會參與其中嗎？—我星期五聽說兩名基督徒婦女如何在需要之前搬進療養院，她們的理由是什麼？向其他居民作主的見證。

從福音>>到新約中的教會，我們有使徒行傳，這一切都是關於透過祂順服的子民傳播神的話語，以拯救失喪的人。耶穌的靈在聽眾身上有效的工作，將一種對上帝充滿敵意和仇恨的生活轉變為一個愛上帝並服從祂良好統治和統治的人。現在神的國已經臨到你了。

當福音被傳講時，當神的話語傳播開來時，它就完成了改變的工作，實現了它被差遣的目的。有罪的人被判有罪，有些人在耶穌裡獲得永生。這次新生帶來了改變的心，一種現在順服於基督主權的生命。主的統治已經延長。

這是真基督徒的記號。願意生活在基督的主權之下是成為 KNBC 會員的要求。

我們並不是指一個成為基督徒的國家，也不是指一個地方，而是指基督居住並作王的人。當許多人一起改變時，就像在復興時代，鹽和光對社會產生了切實的影響——有時甚至是徹底的一——但這並不能使我們成為一個基督教國家。

教會與國家的聯姻，世俗國家與教會的結合，必然導致聖教會變得更像世俗國家，實際上導致神的國萎縮。

基督再來之前的最後幾天被稱為“福音時代”，因為透過福音，國度正在增長並將繼續增長。

你看見神的國在成長嗎？您認識的人或您路上的哪些人已經信主了？你跟他們談過嗎？

從一個[亞伯拉罕]身上，他已經死了，他的子孫像天上的星星那樣多，像海邊的沙那樣無數。來 11:12

所以我們祈禱願你的國降臨，願你的旨意在地上實現，就像在天堂一樣。然後我們就乖乖地去訴說。

但這不僅僅是在人數上的增長，隨著人數的增加，隨著越來越多的人的生命處於基督的主權之下，它也在人身上增長。這福音在世界各地結出果實並成長，——所以它在世界各地——但它也在我裡面成長嗎？保羅接著說——自從你們聽到並明白神的恩典的全部真理那天起，這件事就一直在你們中間發生。西 1:6。如果它沒有在我身上成長——我不太可能積極地將它帶給別人。我們可以追根溯源！

最後——天國在我身上成長嗎？

願你的旨意成就在我身上！

x2。如果那顆小種子已經播下，那麼就期待它發芽吧。如果你在與他人的談話中播下了一個詞，那麼就期待它會成長。如果你和孩子交談過並種下了一顆真理的種子，那麼就期待它發芽吧。你可以相信耶穌所說的將會發生。同樣，在你自己身上，如果你內心有一點點恩典的開始，那

麼就期望它會增長，期望在將自我交給主方面會有進步，那就是成聖，或成為聖潔，這是一個人的記號。

一位前牧師談到一位年輕人時說：「他有得救的恩典，但沒有成長的恩典」。我思考這句話很多年了，最近才明白為什麼這個人沒有成長的恩典？因為他沒有、也從未有過拯救恩典——這一點現在已經很清楚了。

沒有成長的恩典就沒有拯救的恩典。因為我們讀到對此充滿信心，那在你們心裡開始善工的人必將其完成，直到基督耶穌的日子。菲律賓比索 1:6

讓我在這裡向兩類人講話。

>

首先是那些沒有成長為基督的人。為什麼你不成長？為什麼不？是因為沒有救恩嗎？這就是答案，這就是原因。你的一生中沒有任何恩典的工作。基督並沒有在你的生命中做任何內在的工作。對於你所有的努力，對於你所有的宗教信仰，對於你所有的希望和宣言——都沒有成長——因為沒有種子，無論種子多麼小。你裡面沒有任何基督的東西生長。我們都可以看多久，但什麼也看不到，那裡什麼都沒有。

但你的罪孽就在那裡。你需要走向十字架。罪惡和自私，怪誕和醜陋都怨恨為自己創造了你的主。總有一天，這一切都會被曝光。如果是這樣，你就跑向基督，懇求祂憐憫你，將祂自己賜給你。

週三，我在科特里奇與一位女士談論主聽到的祈禱“憐憫我這個罪人”，她說“是的，我母親教過這一點”。但她承認她從未說過……你說過嗎？

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然後房間裡還有另一群人。你已經尋求憐憫，你已經承認並轉離了你的罪，你已經重生並表達了你對基督的信仰和愛。你身上的美好工作已經開始了。那顆小小的種子已經種下了。作為一個新皈依者，你有一個好的開始。

我們中間有一位新皈依者，他知道自己進入了一個新世界，他的心因新的喜樂而煥發光芒。有一種輕鬆感，有一種新的熱情，他就像一個盲人

突然重見光明。這種感覺是新的、生動的。然而，幾乎沒有什麼是看得清楚的。過不了多久，年輕的歸信者就會看得更清楚，判斷得更明智，愛得更強烈，並以更冷靜的決心準備為基督的事業做出更多犧牲。這就是成長。這是神的國在信徒裡面成長。它絕不能出錯，絕不能放慢速度而停止。現在它會成長為最大的，並完全接管我的意志嗎？

請注意，成長會遇到障礙。生長可能會受到阻礙。正如彼得所說，我們必須像剛出生的嬰兒一樣，渴慕純淨的靈奶，好讓你們能在救恩中長大（彼前 2:2）。

嬰兒要茁壯成長，所以我們身為基督徒也必須茁壯成長。不要進行精神上的絕食。不要放棄神話語的澆灌。不要逃避必要的活動和服務。永遠成長。在基督之靈的幫助下，擊退敵人，贏得肉體的戰鬥，將自我和自己釘在世界的十字架上。

就像晚上走進一棟房子，把火把照進每個角落，讓基督的光照亮並暴露污垢。黑暗中看不到污垢。主啊，讓我有一個信仰，它將承載白晝的光，承載自省的光，承載審判寶座的光。如果我隱藏自己的罪，我怎麼能繁榮呢？我將如何忍受因你的出現而受到審判？主啊，抬起那些石板，露出底下的東西。主啊，讓我看看那裡有什麼——以及我需要清理什麼，你讓你統治了我生活的各個領域。

彼得接著說，在我們的主和救主耶穌基督的恩典和知識上有長進。願榮耀歸給他，從今時直到永遠！阿門。 2Pe 3:18

為此你被創造，也為此你被重塑。

保羅對哥林多的基督徒說，我們的希望是，隨著你們信心的不斷增長，我們在你們中間的活動範圍也會大大擴大，2Co 10:15
增長是可見的，信心的增長意味著效果的成長，效力的成長。

我參加過信徒的葬禮，聽到他們為主做了多少事，我感到很驚訝。
“美好的生活”

我應該感到驚訝嗎？因為如果只種了一點點，那麼就會有更多的收穫
海倫娜和你所參與教會事工領域的徽章。

難怪保羅常常為相信主的子民成長而祈禱，我們祈禱……願你們的生活對得起主，並在各方面蒙他喜悅：在一切善事上結果子，在對神的認識上不斷增長，第1章：10

你熱衷於投資嗎？從小種子到 10 英尺高的樹的生長比例是多少？
1,000:1、10,000:1？多麼好的回報啊！

您有眼光嗎？——你花了很多錢——
卻發現花得很少。就像好萊塢露天劇場的機器中吐出的成捆的門票一樣，它們幾乎一文不值。相比之下，這件事一開始很小，但最終卻變得很大。保羅對希臘北部的基督徒說，你們的信心日益增長，你們彼此的愛心也日益增長。

2日1:3。在信心中成長就是在愛中成長，這就是你看待成長的方式。你對弟兄姊妹的愛是否更明顯了？更明顯嗎？更正宗？

你看過沒有完全發酵的麵包嗎？

（不，它們沒有上架），部分已經上漲，部分還沒有。

耶穌將這個比喻與下一個比喻結合起來，顯示成長是如何發生的。小小的酵母，經過艱苦的揉捏，散佈在整個麵團中。酵母在麵團中擴散越多，效果越普遍。因此，基督的統治在你的生命中傳播得越多，效果就越大。

任何專業人士都希望在公司中繼續發展，增加經驗、能力和用處。這是自然的。耶穌的智慧和身量，並神和人喜愛祂的心，都一齊增長（路 2:52），我們也必須如此。

當我結束時，問自己這個問題：「主的統治在我裡面成長嗎？我是否在恩典中成長，我是否在信心中成長？因此，在愛中、在服事中、在自我放棄中？也許答案是「是」END