

STUDY 4

WRONG WAYS TO GROW

COLOSSIANS 2:6-23

It's quite normal to have seasons where we feel we're not growing as Christians. Like our development has been halted for some reason or another. And we can start to feel like what we're doing just isn't working.

What would you suggest to a Christian who says that they're not really growing?



GROWING INTO JESUS

Previously in Colossians: Paul is writing to the Christians at Colossae telling them how thankful to God he is that they accepted the gospel and trusted Jesus. He tells them he's been praying for them nonstop (1:9-12), and has been suffering (1:24) and working (1:28-2:1) for them so that they might grow in how deeply they know Jesus.

This week, Paul tells the Colossians that the next steps are to take no steps at all. Instead, he says, put down roots.

Read Colossians 2:6-10

1. How did the non-Jewish Colossians receive the Jewish Messiah, Jesus?

The Elemental Forces'

Ancient Greek had a word ('stoichea') that means "the fundamentals of how the world works" - how things work together in an orderly fashion. In the NIV it's translated "the elemental spiritual forces of this world". The word "spiritual" has been added by translators.

For Jews, the way their world worked was by rules and holy days set down by the law. Those were the 'fundamentals of life' for them in this world. For an average gentile in Colossae, ritual idol feasts at the local temple and following Greek philosophy were the obvious ways to find growth and fulfilment.

This common wisdom for how to get onside with your deity and live a full life is what Paul is referring to when he uses the Greek term stoicheia, which literally just means "basic principles".

2. How does Paul say that they should then go about life?
3. What might stop them doing that?
4. What is it that Christ *has* and Christ *offers* that nothing else can? (see v9&10)

