



BETTER THAN BEFORE

GROWING INTO
GOD'S BEST FOR YOUR LIFE

WEEK 2

OVERCOMING EXCUSES TO GROW

DAY 1 - OVERGOME COMPARISON

Matthew 25:15 "To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away." (NASB)

From the very start of this parable, we see something striking: everyone received something. No one was left empty-handed. Every believer has been entrusted with spiritual gifts, opportunities, and influence perfectly matched to their God-given abilities. Your portion may look different than someone else's, but God's generosity is intentional, not random.

On a football team, there are different positions that require different talents. Although the players have different roles, they have the same goal—to win. The danger comes when comparison sneaks in. Tom Brady or Peyton Manning probably spent little time wishing to play left tackle because they knew their role as a quarterback. We see what others have and begin to think we fall short. Yet the call of God is simple: be faithful with what you've been given. Even the servant with one talent had something of immense value, a "talent" represented a lifetime of wages! God has already equipped you more than you realize.

Faithful growth begins with gratitude and stewardship. The soil of your growth is not found in longing for what you don't have, but it's found in being satisfied in what God has already entrusted to you. Every gift, skill, or opportunity can make a difference when it is surrendered to Him and used with intention.

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." —1 Peter 4:10 (ESV)

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

What has God entrusted to you that you might have overlooked?

How can you use that gift, skill, or opportunity faithfully this week?

DAY 2 - OVERCOME FEAR

Matthew 25:25 "So I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground." (ESV)

Fear is one of the enemy's most effective tools to stop spiritual growth. The servant wasn't careless; he was afraid. He feared failure, judgment, and what others might think of him. By hiding his talent, he thought he was safe, but "playing it safe" in God's Kingdom is actually disobedience.

A coach of a young basketball team took time encouraging the players not to be fearful to shoot the basketball at the goal. Often, fear comes from a distorted view of God. The servant assumed the Master was harsh and demanding. When we see God as strict or unloving, fear can paralyze us. But Scripture paints a different picture: God is patient, loving, and longs for our growth far more than He demands perfection.

Faith doesn't wait for fear to disappear; it acts despite it. Each step of courage becomes an act of worship, trusting that God's power, love, and self-control will guide us.

"For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control." —2 Timothy 1:7 (ESV)

"There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear." —1 John 4:18 (ESV)

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

What fears have caused you to "bury" your gifts or opportunities?

How would your faith look if you trusted God's character more than your fear?

DAY 3 - GOD EXPECTS RETURN, NOT EXCUSES

Matthew 25:19 "Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them." (ESV)

The day came when each servant had to give an account of what they had done with what the Master gave. The faithful servants brought increase; the unfaithful one brought excuses. Grace saves us freely, but stewardship is how we demonstrate our faith in action. Taking ownership of what we have and where we're at is the key to growth. This time of year, a lot of people have a gym membership, but only those who take ownership of their health show up to work out.

The lazy servant said, "I knew you to be a hard man..." His words were projection, not truth. Many of us still make similar excuses: "I'm too busy," "I'm not ready," or "Maybe later." But Jesus' lesson is clear: the time for growth is now.

God's return was expected. Similarly, He has entrusted each of us with time, gifts, and opportunities. How we use them reflects whether we truly believe God is good and worthy of our trust. Excuses shrink our soul; obedience expands it.

"So then each of us will give an account of himself to God." —Romans 14:12 (ESV)

"Be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." —James 1:22 (ESV)

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

What excuse has been standing between you and spiritual growth?

What practical step of obedience can you take this week to replace an excuse with action?

DAY 4 - OVERCOME INCONSISTENCY

Matthew 25:21 "His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much.'" (ESV)

The Master's praise wasn't about quantity but quality: "good and faithful." Both the five-talent and two-talent servants received the same reward because they were diligent within their capacity. In God's eyes, faithfulness is success. Like a young free-throw shooter, it takes a lot of faithful practice to shoot a high percentage at the line.

We live in a results-driven world; numbers, followers, achievements, but God values endurance, consistency, and sincerity. Every quiet prayer, unseen act of obedience, and daily choice to honor Christ contributes to eternal reward. Faithfulness reflects trust in God, not confidence in ourselves.

"Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful." —1 Corinthians 4:2 (ESV)

"And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up." —Galatians 6:9 (ESV)

When you continue to show up and serve, even when no one notices, heaven takes note. Growth happens through persistence in small things. Faithfulness transforms character and draws us closer to the image of Jesus.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

Where is God calling you to stay faithful even when you see little progress?

How can you redefine "success" in your life as faithfulness rather than visible results?

DAY 5 - OVERCOME COMPLACENCY

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

God’s ultimate desire is your spiritual maturity. Complacency is like riding a bicycle down a big hill; if you don’t pedal toward the bottom, you will eventually come to a complete stop. The servant who buried his talent stopped pedaling. He not only failed to invest, but he also disbelieved that growth was possible. God’s plan for His children is continuous transformation.

Growth is both a calling and an inheritance. It isn’t about trying harder, it’s about abiding deeper. As you walk with Jesus through the Word, prayer, fellowship, and obedience, you’re shaped into His likeness.

The faithful servants entered the joy of their Master because growth brings communion, not just commendation. Yielding to the Holy Spirit produces joy, peace, and deeper awareness of God’s presence.

“And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.” —2 Corinthians 3:18 (ESV)

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification.” —1 Thessalonians 4:3 (ESV)

Remember: God is more committed to your growth than you are. He cultivates, prunes, and completes what He begins.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

In what area of your life do you sense God calling you to grow right now?

What daily practices can help you stay rooted in His Word and presence?

How might your Christlike growth impact those around you?