

Growing

Recently, we have been talking and studying about “Growing the Church,” but have you considered the fact that we are actually talking about “Growing Christians?” The church will grow in one of three ways: Christians move into the area and join the congregation, unfaithful Christians are restored to fellowship, or the lost are baptized and added to the family of brothers and sisters meeting in a particular location.

Did you ever stop to think what part you play in growing new Christians? Do we welcome them into our midst, making sure they are integrated into the activities of the family? Or do we take the attitude that they will find their niche as time goes on? There are many simple things we can do to welcome new members into our family. When people move into the area, they often possess talents which can be incorporated into the congregation’s activities. But if no one takes the time to get to know the new members and their talents, we can’t take advantage of those resources. The same applies to restored and new members. Take the time to get to know them and recognize the unique talents they possess.

Often, we have sacred ground as far as our current members are concerned. In other words, Mr. or Mrs. Member has always done a certain job. However, someone may join the family who can add to the way the task is accomplished. Do we discourage the new member by refusing to consider that Mr. or Mrs. Member may welcome new ideas and willing hands to accomplish the task they are handling? If you are Mr. or Mrs. Member with a specific task you have handled for ages, take the time to get to know new members of the family. Teach them how to do some of the tasks necessary to keep the congregation running smoothly. Working together is a sure way to get to know someone and being responsible for a task makes members feel included. No matter how small the task, the participant will feel proud of their accomplishment.

Growing Christians is not the minister’s job but is an everyday task in which we should all participate. We will benefit as much as the new family member. Growing Christians is simply an outreach of growing the church and increasing our own spiritual commitment.

For the elders,
Don Wagner