

# GROWING

## why growth matters, what it looks like and how it happens

*“All over the world this gospel is growing.. ”*  
[Colossians 1.6]

‘Growth’ is the theme of this series of studies, and it’s begun with the prayer that it will prove to be a real growth point in our life, and lives, as God’s people here.

Growth is expected among God’s people, since the God who makes alive is the God who also makes things grow: and growth is exhorted upon them, as something which is neither occasional nor optional.

*“Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*

You can find the background to this series [here](#).

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## 10. Psalm 144 [w/b Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> November]

*“The Lord my Rock, who trains my hands for war”*

This Psalm divides into two parts. The first part (vv.1-11) comprises a lot of material which is found in other psalms, particularly Psalm 18 - which is a prayer of thanksgiving for deliverance which the Lord has effected for the psalmist: here the remembrance of the Lord's deliverance in the past prompts the prayer for His renewed deliverance in the present. The second part (vv.12-15) describes the world which such delivering grace from the Lord will secure for the next generation.

We're reading this psalm as part of our series on 'growing' and considering especially the fact that the Lord 'trains our hands for war'. 'Training' is one of the four core components in our stated purpose, whereby we are helped to grow into ministry.

*[There may not be time for all the questions to be addressed in your Community Group: key questions for us as a fellowship in this study are questions 1, 2 & 6. Do try as always to leave good time for shared prayer!]*

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1. **Read Psalm 144.1-15.** Read the whole psalm a couple of times to get the feel of what is being said. If you have the time you might read Psalm 18 too, on which the first part of the psalm leans quite heavily.

In what respects (if any) are you able to identify with what David is saying?

Are you aware of your life as a believer being a battle - and if so, in what ways?

**2. Read Psalm 144.1-2.** David addresses his prayer for help very deliberately and carefully to the Lord.

What are the different ways in which he speaks of God? Why do you think he takes time to speak of God in these various ways?

In what sense might it be said of *you* that the Lord trains your hands for war? And what might such 'training' involve in the life of the church?

**3. Read Psalm 144.3-4.** Having spoken so expansively about God in the opening couple of verses, these next two verses set humanity in sharp contrast to Him.

Why does David make a point of speaking about humanity in this way?

Do you think he is expressing *wonder* that God should take any interest in David's present needs, or *disdain* at how insubstantial are his present foes? Or both?

**4. Read Psalm 144.5-8.** These verses express the burden of David's request: in the face of his enemies he looks to the Lord as the 'warrior' God (see Ex.15.3) to enter the fray on his behalf.

Think of instances in your life when you have known the Lord's 'rescuing' grace: how did the Lord intervene on your behalf?

Why do you think David uses the language he does in invoking God's help?

In what sort of way was the enmity against David finding expression, according to v.8? How might we find ourselves experiencing similar enmity from others?

**5. Read Psalm 144.9-11.** The preceding verses - both the praise directed and the petitions directed to God - are here repeated in summary form.

In what sense is it a '*new*' song that David now sings to God, when in large measure he's quoting earlier material?

How can we ensure that it's a '*new song*' that we bring to the Lord as we pray and avoid our own prayer life becoming 'stale'?

6. **Read Psalm 144.12.** David starts now to speak about the situation he longs to see secured by the Lord: and he starts by speaking of the 'next generation' (*'our sons .. our daughters..'*).

Why do you think he speaks of the next generation of young men being like 'well-nurtured *plants*' and the next generation of young women being like 'carved *pillars*'?

What might that 'nurturing' and 'carving' equate to in our life as a fellowship - particularly with reference to the ministry we exercise among the 'next generation'?

7. **Read Psalm 144.13-15.** The Old Testament often speaks of the blessing of God in very material terms as here: inherent in it is the experience of growth, abundance and security.

How are you encouraged by reading these verses?

In what ways should we be looking for the fulfillment of these verses in our life as a fellowship today?