

The Growth Journal Magazine



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Competence

COMPETENCE is the ability or fitness for the task at hand. Consider for a moment someone who has character you see as trustworthy. Now, would you allow that same person to perform emergency brain surgery on you?

Perhaps Big Mama can be trusted with your money, but does that mean that she possesses the skills necessary to perform brain surgery? **We can be the most sincere person in the world and not possess the necessary skill set for the job.**

Viewed from that perspective, can we see how competence can either increase or decrease our credibility? Sincerity and competence are not the same thing. A person may not be qualified to be the head of a group or an organization simply because he is sincere. On the other hand, a person may possess the skills needed, but lack the character.

We must have both character and competence to maintain credibility. If there is a credibility gap, then we will find that we are lacking one of these two factors. If our words and our actions do not line up, sooner or later, we lose credibility. If we do not produce the results we promise because we lack the skills then we lose credibility. All is not lost though; we can reestablish our credibility without miracles. Just with hard work!!!

*Nicholas M.,
Lansing*

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Prayer
is the cure for
a confused mind,
a weary soul, and
a broken heart.

Amen

ADDICTION HOTLINE 800.815.6308

Food for Thought:

The devil doesn't come dressed in a red cape, horns and a pointy tail. He comes disguised as everything you have every wished for.

The 12 Disciples of Jesus Christ – John by Alywin Mitchell



We have been looking at the 12 disciples or apostles. We began with Peter, then James and now we are going to look at John.

The apostle John was the brother James. He was the other brother that Jesus nicknamed the "sons of thunder," maybe because of their passion demonstrated in Mark 9:38 and Luke 9:54, when John and James wanted to call down fire from heaven to punish the Samaritan towns that did not accept Jesus.

On the other hand, John liked to call himself "the disciple whom Jesus loved." John and James were known for being men of boldness, intense passion, and enthusiasm. John was probably younger than James since he is usually mentioned after him. They were fishermen with their father Zebedee when Jesus called them. John was the only apostle to die of old age. He died around AD 98.

With his intense passion and special devotion to our Savior, John had a special place in Jesus' inner circle. He is the one portrayed as leaning against Jesus' chest at the last supper. His devotion to Jesus and Jesus' love and trust for him was clearly described when Jesus was on the cross. The apostle John and Mary the mother of Jesus was at the cross. In John 19:25-27 we read, ²⁵ *Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.* ²⁶ *When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!"* ²⁷ *Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.* It's clear from these verses that Jesus instructed John to take care of Mary, His mother, after His death.

John communicates in his first epistle his love for believers "whom I love in the truth" and exhorts them to "love one another" by obeying Jesus' commands. In his second epistle, John communicates his deep love for those believers is in his care.

His joy was proclaiming the truth. His passion for truth fired his concern for the believers who might be deceived by false teachers. He had no problem calling out "false prophets" and "antichrists" who attempted to pervert the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It was the first Easter Sunday morning, with his typical boldness, enthusiasm and passion, that John outran Peter to Jesus' tomb after Mary Magdalene told the disciples it was empty. Although John won the race when he got there he stopped, stooped down, and looked in. Even though Peter lost the race when he got to the tomb, he didn't hesitate, he went right in! John's uncharacteristic hesitation seems very strange. This is the same man who was the only apostle brave enough to stand by Jesus at the foot of the Cross.

The 12 Disciples of Jesus Christ – John Cont.

One reason he may have hesitated was fear that after going in the tomb he would see that Mary Magdalene had been wrong.

Another reason he may have paused outside the tomb, was that he could have been fighting against a loss of hope or maybe the loss of confidence.

Or maybe he was just waiting for Peter to catch up. John was the youngest of the apostles, while Peter was the oldest and more matured. Maybe John was waiting to let Peter, who was kind of the leader of the disciples, to lead in the situation. But whatever the reason, we may never know.

We've all had those times when the question was, do I lead, do I follow, or do I get out of the way? But the grace of God within us gives us the power through the Holy Spirit to forge ahead in whatever circumstances we find ourselves. But we don't have to do it alone. Jesus is with us: "The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged." Deuteronomy 31:8

We can be encouraged by John's life because no matter what our circumstances, his life shows us that passion for the truth must always be balanced by a love for people. Without love, passion can turn to harshness or being hypercritical and judgmental. On the other hand, love that lacks the ability to recognize truth from lies can become slobbering sentimentality. His life also shows us that confidence and boldness, without compassion and grace, can suddenly turn to pride and self-righteousness. If we are to be effective witnesses for Jesus Christ, our conduct should be one that reflects a passion for the truth, and compassion for people.

Our Savior is Speaking
by Larry F., Lansing

*Our Savior speaks through His splendid creation
We stand in awe of this great revelation
The nineteenth psalms tells us the heavens will declare
And their silent voices are heard everywhere*

*We cannot deny that we are spoken to
Our Savior speaks softly with the morning dew
He delights to bless us and constantly stays
So close beside us in so many ways*

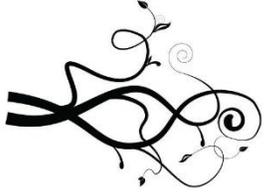
*He whispers in pleasure and shouts at our pain
His Words are so loving forever the same
Our Savior is speaking hear His voice so true
In love He is speaking, He's speaking to you
TV's and radios, computers galore
The world and its noise always begging for more
Technology tries to be louder still
Our Savior is speaking, forever His will*

*Our Savior is speaking as we gaze above
We can hear Him speaking with such tender love
While the waves of the ocean constantly sing
The world cannot silence the voice of our King*

References:
Psalm 19
Isaiah 40.8
Isaiah 55:6-13



Larry F. - LCF
Prisoner in Christ



I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.
John 15:5



Let me start by introducing myself to you. My name is Dr. Lorrie Trout. I am the Exec. Director and Founder of GROW – Grace Restores Overcoming Women. I'm ok with just being addressed as Lorrie, after all, it's just a Title. I'm not a medical doctor but received my Doctorate in Christian Business Administration after many years of study.

Enough about me, I am writing this to tell someone not to give up and to not be discouraged. I did put emphasis on my Title to say it doesn't matter how smart and intelligent or how saved we all may think we are, anyone can make a bad choice in life. I made my bad choice over nine years ago, while in church, but God has been faithful. I have confessed my sin and moved forward. You cannot stay in the past, living that wrong choice over and over in your head. What the enemy meant for bad, God turned it for my good and I know He will do the same for you. GROW was birthed in 2016 and today we provide transitional housing for women coming out of incarceration. We have three houses and have no idea what God will do in the future, but this program has changed the lives of many of the ladies that have come to us. Housing, employment, and life in general, is very difficult when you come into society with the felon label. But you know what, God will take care of you...somehow, someday. Everyone that has come into the program has not succeeded, and I don't expect everyone to; only those that come with a made up mind that they are ready to change their life and defy the odds of being re-incarcerated. I do put expectations on those we serve to change their way of thinking and to know that she is more than what society says she is and whatever that label says she may be. I took what was meant to be evil and allowed God to use it for my good. I tell my testimony every chance I get, not to puff me up but to give God the glory for what He has done in my life. I am not proud of what took place in the past, but I know God can use anyone, no matter the circumstance or situation, if you allow Him too.

The ladies that have come from TCF and The Adult Detention Center in Gardner have transformed and bloomed into a beautiful bouquet of flowers. A seed has been planted in their lives to help them move forward. At GROW we are Faith-Based so yes, they are expected to attend a church service. They must work in which we help to obtain employment, they must attend whatever their Parole Officer requests of them, and they have time to enjoy life on their own. Every lady is paired up with a Mentor to help hold her accountable as well as working on improving life-skills in general. Yes, we have Rules and Regulations for the program; it's not just a place to come and go as you please. Life is full of rules and regulations; it's not a get out of jail free card and do what you want to do and go where you want to go. Everyone deserves a second chance and that's what we're here for, to help these ladies overcome the barriers and hurdles they will face. The program is six months – two years, but you don't have to stay the complete two years. At least, give us a year to help you get re-established. We have helped several of our ladies get an apartment and truly, if GROW had not stepped in, it would have been quite difficult. We have furniture and household items we provide to those that graduate from the program and we will do whatever we can to help with the transition into society. Once again, the key to success is you having a made-up mind and willing to surrender your will to His and to allow us to come along side you and support you. If you feel like you are willing to do this and could be a candidate for the GROW Program, please talk with your Discharge Planner and they are welcome to communicate with me. They can visit our Website:

<https://www.growgracerestores.org>

Blessings and stay encouraged. You got this.

Dr. Lorrie Trout

St. Patrick – Not a Leprechaun

When it comes to Saint Patrick, the true story is even more exciting than the legend and the myth. The facts are far better than the fable. This day that belongs to St. Patrick has become about leprechauns, shamrocks, pots of gold, and green—green everywhere. Famously, the City of Chicago dumps forty pounds of its top-secret dye into the river. A green racing stripe courses through the city. But long before there was the St. Patrick of myth, there was the Patrick of history. Who was Patrick?



Patrick was born in 385 in Roman Britannia in the modern-day town of Dumbarton, Scotland. Patrick opens his autobiographical *St. Patrick's Confession* with these opening lines:

My name is Patrick. I am a sinner, a simple country person, and the least of all believers. I am looked down upon by many. My father was Calpornius. He was a deacon; his father was Potitus, a priest, who lived at Bannavem Taburniae. His home was near there, and that is where I was taken prisoner. I was about sixteen at the time.

Patrick skips over much of his first sixteen years. But who can blame him? At sixteen and being captured by barbarian Irish pirates is a pretty exciting place to begin a story. When the pirates landed on the Irish coast, they took Patrick about 200 miles inland where he was a shepherd and farm laborer. Six years passed and Patrick had either a vivid dream or a vision in which he was shown an escape route. Emboldened, Patrick made his break from his captors, traveling back over the 200 miles to the shoreline. As he approached the docks, a British ship stood waiting. The sails unfurled and Patrick was home. But he didn't stay long.

Before he was a prisoner, Patrick's Christian faith meant little to him. That changed during his captivity. His previously ambivalent faith galvanized and served to buoy him through those long, dark days. Now that he was back in his homeland he committed to his faith in earnest. He became a priest and soon felt a tremendous burden for the people that had kidnapped him. So, he returned to Ireland with a mission.

Patrick had no less of a goal than seeing pagan Ireland converted. These efforts did not set well with Loegaire (or Leoghaire), the pagan king of pagan Ireland. Patrick faced danger and even threats on his life. He took to carrying a dagger. Yet, despite these setbacks, Patrick persisted. Eventually the king converted and was baptized by Patrick and much of the people of Ireland followed suit. Patrick rid Ireland of marauding ways and a cultural and civil barbarianism by bringing not only Christianity to Ireland, but by bringing a whole new ethic. It was not too long ago that a *New York Times*' bestselling book argued that St. Patrick and his Ireland saved civilization.

Patrick would come to be known as the “Apostle of Ireland.” He planted churches, the first one likely at a place called Saul, in Northern Ireland, a bit inland from the coast and just below Belfast. Patrick planted more churches as he crisscrossed Ireland.

Curiously, like most of his legend, St. Patrick is not even truly a saint. He has never been canonized by the Roman Catholic Church. Patrick himself told us he was a sinner, not a saint.

So, we remember Patrick best not in the legends and fables and not in the ways his holiday tends to be celebrated. Perhaps we remember him best by reflecting on the “St. Patrick’s Breastplate,” which has traditionally been attributed to him. The word breastplate is a translation of the Latin word *lorica*, a prayer, especially for protection. These prayers would be written out and at times placed on shields of soldiers and knights as they went out to battle. St. Patrick’s *Lorica* points beyond himself and his adventurous life. It points to Christ, the one he proclaimed to the people who had taken him captive:

Christ with me,
Christ before me,
Christ behind me,
Christ in me,
Christ beneath me,
Christ above me,
Christ on my right,
Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down,
Christ when I sit down,
Christ when I arise,
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.

Women Empowering Women - by Linda Lewis

A Prayer for You

Dear Lord,

Thank You for the woman reading this prayer right now. Thank You for her heart. May You bless her right now. Fill her with Your incredible peace. Wrap her in Your love. May she feel confident and worthy. I pray that she would grow closer to You every day. Fuel a desire deep within her to seek after You. I pray that she would lead a life by the example Christ set. May she face everything with courage and may she walk in integrity. Help her with anything she is struggling with, surround her with encouragement, and give her your precious wisdom. May she experience joy today in Jesus' Name, AMEN!

My Sisters, ALWAYS remember that there is Power in Prayer so Pray Without Ceasing!

1 Thessalonians 5:17

Words to Grow By - by Linda Lewis

Is There Anything Too Hard for God?

IF GOD could close the mouth of the lions for Daniel,
Part the Red Sea for Moses,
Make the sun stand still for Joshua,
Open the prison for Peter,
Put a baby in the arms of Sarah,
And raise Lazarus from the dead,
THEN
HE can certainly take care of YOU.

NOTHING you are facing today is too hard for HIM to handle!

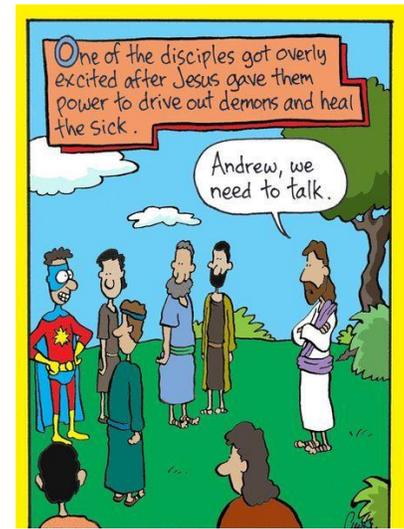
Psalms 27

N H S I R I N O I T I D A R T A P P F E
 T A L J B W Q C D A Q H F U Z L Z O T T
 Q N M M O M M Z P K G S S O R C C T M A
 J D Z O F R N Z Y T P Q S P E M B A O R
 Q B S P R D U M B A R T O N I E N T F B
 C H R I S T I A N G L H R L L R H O I E
 C E B M A K N L N K Q O C I E T A A W L
 Y D A G R Q G F Z H L Y E R W G F T Y E
 R M I N I S T R I E S V K O A T E A E C
 C C K N B X G S S T E K R C N M D N R S
 C L X B E B R H H R W G Q I U I H B D O
 D O O R E H E E I O K W A F L L X T T R
 R A R V F I E P E N P S A O D U B L I N
 X T K N E Z N A L E E I H F E L P W G R
 L U V B E R T R D K T Q J W Z A F E F R
 D L O G Z D P D A H D S N S T X P O S L
 C A P T I V E N Y M K F J R D I Y Q L L
 E U Z F W Y S X C P J L I J P Y U L U L
 S H E X O U F S Q V V C R E N O S I R P
 V G H T I V F W Q T K Z N R C T F Y U B

Growth	Believer	Holiday
Ministries	Prisoner	Dublin
Clover	Lucky	Corned Beef
Green	Saint	Irish
Patrick	Christian	March
Cross	Pirates	Snake
Roman	Shepard	Captive
Pipe	Faith	Legend
Dumbarton	Gold	Shield
Potato	Celebrate	Tradition

Just for Laughs

- What happens if you cross poison ivy with a four-leaf clover?
You get a rash of good luck!
- What kind of bow can't be tied? A rainbow!
- What do you call a big Irish spider? Paddy long legs!
- Who was St. Patrick's favorite superhero?
Green Lantern.
- Why should you never iron a four-leaf clover? You don't want to press your luck.
- Why are so many leprechauns gardeners? They have green thumbs!



off the mark.com by Mark Parisi

ST. PATRICK REMINISCES ABOUT DRIVING THE SNAKES OUT OF IRELAND



Two little boys were known troublemakers, stealing everything they could get their hands on, even from the church. One day a priest stopped one of the boys and asked, "Where is God?" The boy shrugged and the priest repeated, "Where is God?" The boy ran out of the cathedral crying to his home where he hid in a closet.

Eventually his brother found him and asked, "What's wrong?" The crying boy replied, "We're in trouble now! God is missing and they think we took him!"



Grown Up Sin!

James 1:13-15 NIV 13 When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; 14 but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

Last month I talked about “Grown Up Love”. I talked about what happens when your love matures. This month I want to talk in contrast about Grown-Up **Sin**.

James gives us a very blunt no nonsense explanation about how we get in trouble with sin. The first thing he clarifies that it is of no fault of God’s. God does not tempt, nor can He be tempted. Temptation is not in His nature. Instead it is a result of your own evil desire. That explains why some people’s weakness is drugs, some people is sex, and others is theft, etc., etc. We are usually drawn to the sin we **enjoy** the most. He says that once the desire is formed it gives birth to sin. First was the idea or desire, then the actual act. We moved from one phase to another. We could have stopped there, but because it is a thing that we really like, our selfish nature says, “Do it!”. But here is where my topic kicks in. James says, “when sin is fully grown” it gives birth to death. We will deal with the death in a minute. But this “full-grown” thing indicates that we fed, developed, nurtured and grew that sin over a period of time. That means we have had many chances to walk away, denounce it or repent. Why would it take that long? Back to step one, **we desire it**. So now we deal with the final phase. It says, full grown sin gives birth to death. Death is the grandchild of your desire. Desire gave birth to Sin. Sin gave birth to Death. Death is not necessarily physical death as we imagine, but spiritual death. That is the separation of man and God. Sin drives a wedge between us and the Lord. That is why we feel so helpless and lost. Sin separates us from God’s light and into darkness so we can no longer see our way out of a tormented life. Just to boost this theory, Paul also says that the “wages of sin are death” in Romans 6:23. Sin leads to death.



But there is hope. John gives us the cure for this dead state. In 1st John 1:9 we hear this, “If we **confess** our sin He is faithful and just to forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness”. I highlighted the word confess because the Greek word that John actually used was “*homologeō*” which basically means “to say the same thing”. It means that God already knows your foulness. He knows what you love and what you desire. He just wants you to confess or **say the same thing**. When you do that He will reconcile you back into a relationship with Him as though you had never sinned.

Let’s wrap this up. Do your best to control your desires by guarding your heart from the temptations of the world. If you are tempted, try not to let it give birth to sin. If you do sin, recognize it and don’t let it develop and mature. If you find yourself lost...Stop, drop and cry out to God and let Him know that you admit and agree that you have fallen into sin and wish to be restored.

What must I do to be saved?



If you've never accepted Christ as your Lord and Savior, or if you've turned away from Him for a life of unrighteousness, then take a moment and say this prayer:

“Lord, I confess that I am a sinner and ask your forgiveness. I believe that your son Jesus died on the cross for my sins and

was resurrected with all power. I invite Jesus to be the Lord of my life and your Holy Spirit to come into my heart to guide me for the rest of my days. Amen.”

Romans 10:9 says that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

If this is you, please write Growth Ministries and we will gladly help you start your new life in Christ.

Growth Ministries, Inc., Attn: Executive Secretary, P.O. Box 4375, Olathe, KS 66063



Write Us

We would love to hear from you. If you have a testimony, a prayer request, or a question about your walk with the Lord, send us a letter. We would love to pray or rejoice with you. Maybe you are a writer and you have a spiritual word of encouragement for the readers of our newsletter. We would love to review your article to see if we can use it in our newsletter. We also like to share poems from you more artistic sisters and brothers.

We also ask that you be mindful of what you send to us as there are some things that are prohibited for print:

Inappropriate Verbiage/Profanity

Sexually Explicit Verbiage/Images

Political opinions

Opinions regarding social/systemic injustices

Demeaning or Offensive Views