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around us who will try to steer us toward what is wrong. Therefore, we need to choose our companions wisely. The wise man said, *“He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm (Proverbs 13:20).* Paul plainly stated, *“Do not be deceived: ‘Bad company corrupts good morals’” (1 Corinthians 15:33).*

Practice God’s word – James wrote, *“But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves” (James 1:22).* After we feed on the word of God, we need to follow it in our everyday lives and do what the Lord has instructed us to do.

Spend time in prayer – James explained that if we “[lack] wisdom,” we can *“ask of God...and it will be given,”* provided that we *“ask in faith without any doubting” (James 1:5-7).* However, we also need to recognize how this is connected with the last point. Just as resting without exercise will not promote physical health, praying without practicing God’s word will not lead to wisdom. Since wisdom is the ap-

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plication of knowledge (a simple definition), then we must know the word of God to gain wisdom from Him. This is why James wrote later in this chapter about how we are to *“receive the word implanted”* and be *“doers of the word” (James 1:21-22).*

- Andy Sochor -

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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

Guest Article: Growing in Wisdom, Stature, and Favor - Part I

The four gospels focus primarily on the public ministry of Jesus leading up to His crucifixion and resurrection – a period of approximately three years. In addition to this, Matthew and Luke include some information about His birth and infancy. Luke also briefly records one event in Jesus' childhood – the time when He was “lost” in the temple at twelve years old (Luke 2:41-51).

We may be curious about what happened as Jesus grew up, but the Scriptures are mostly silent about this. However, the Holy Spirit did see fit to include a statement about the *growth* of Jesus:

“And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men” (Luke 2:52).

This may seem somewhat obvious and, therefore, almost insignificant. Yet this statement was given for a reason. If Jesus grew in wisdom, stature, and favor, then it should be expected for us to do the same. In this article, we are going to consider how we can grow in each of these areas.

Physical Growth

This one is the most natural and obvious way in which one can grow, so we will discuss it first and use it as a framework for the other areas we will be discussing. Although it is natural for a child to grow in stature as his physical body develops, there are ways to promote this growth in a healthy way. These would apply to each one of us.

Nutrition – We need to make sure we eat and drink things that encourage our body's health. This is about taking in those foods that can sustain us and provide the energy we need for our daily activities.

Avoiding harmful foods/ substances – Some things are unhealthy or even destructive to our body. We must abstain from certain things that will hinder growth.

Exercise – Doing some type of physical activity with our body helps to strengthen and condition it. This means being active in some way.

Rest – Our body also needs time to recharge and heal. Even when we are

engaged in activities that are good and beneficial, we still need some quiet time away so that we do not become burned out.

These things promote the proper growth of our physical bodies. Yet we can use this same framework to promote growth in other areas as well.

Wisdom

Some wisdom will be gained naturally through age and experience. Yet there are things we can do to ensure that we are gaining as much wisdom as possible.

Feed on God's word – In listing reasons why the word of God was to be desired, the psalmist wrote, *“The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple”* (Psalm 19:7). This *“wisdom”* gained from the word of God *“leads to salvation”* (2 Timothy 3:15). Therefore, His word is both necessary and desirable.

Avoid evil influences – The word of God is able to show us the way that is right, but there are many