

**Proverbs 26:11** "As a dog returns to its vomit, so a fool repeats his folly."

**2 Peter 2:22** "Of them the proverbs are true: 'A dog returns to its vomit,' and 'A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud.'"

### GETTING ON THE GROWTH TRACK

**Psalms 1:1-3** "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers."

#### 1. The Gardener's Handbook: The \_\_\_\_\_

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16, 17).

The Grower's Tasks:

- A. Submission and \_\_\_\_\_ to God (Rom. 12:1)
- B. Need and \_\_\_\_\_ (Proverbs 3:5, 6)
- C. Responsibility and \_\_\_\_\_ (Luke 9:23)

Six Ways to Get a Grasp on Your Bible:

- \_\_\_\_\_ the Word
- \_\_\_\_\_ the Word
- \_\_\_\_\_ the Word
- \_\_\_\_\_ the Word
- \_\_\_\_\_ on the Word
- \_\_\_\_\_ the Word

#### 2. The Value of \_\_\_\_\_: Discipline

"My son, do not despise the Lord's discipline and do not resent his rebuke" (Proverbs 3:11).

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful" (John 15:1,2).

#### 3. Pulling the \_\_\_\_\_

We have a problem, and the problem is \_\_\_\_\_. Trying to "do better" does not work, so we need help! Help has come in the form of the Gospel.

The Way of the Gospel includes Repentance and Living by the Spirit. The Biblical Strategy to Avoiding Sin:

A. PRAY

"And lead us now into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one" (Matthew 6:13).

"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The Spirit is willing, but the body is weak" (Matthew 26:41).

B. RUN

"No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it" (1 Corinthians 10:13).

"Flee from sexual immorality..." (1 Corinthians 6:18).

"Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart" (2 Timothy 2:22).

#### 4. Putting on the Gloves: The Importance of \_\_\_\_\_

God designed spiritual growth to be an active partnership with Him. Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35b).

#### 5. Time...Waiting for the Harvest

Time is a necessary ingredient of \_\_\_\_\_.

"This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain – first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come" (Mark 4:26-29).