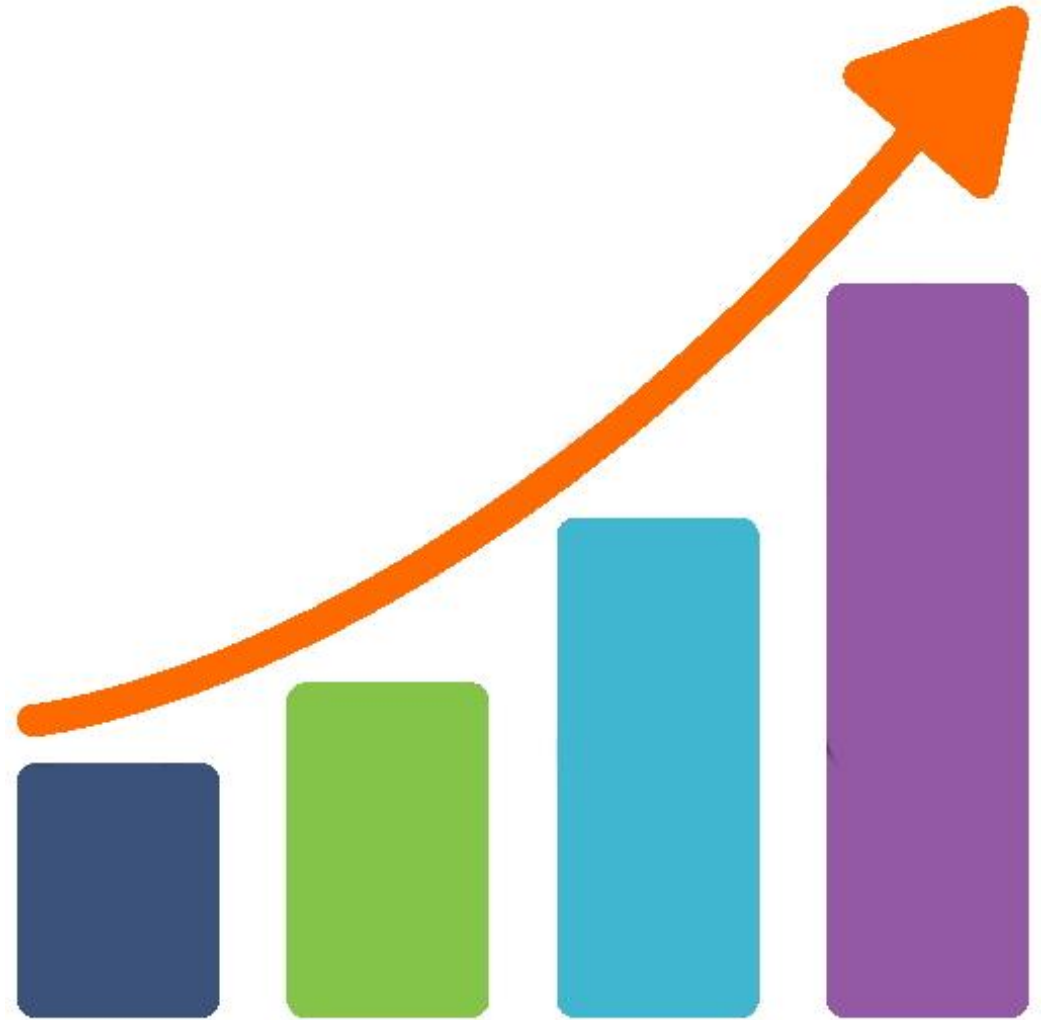

**A
TIME
TO
PROGRESS**



Ecclesiastes 3

- 1 *There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under the heavens:*
- 2 *a time to be born and a time to die,
a time to plant and a time to uproot,*
- 3 *a time to kill and a time to heal,
a time to tear down and a time to build,*
- 4 *a time to weep and a time to laugh,
a time to mourn and a time to dance,*
- 5 *a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,
a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing....*

"So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, **speaking** the truth in love, we will **grow** to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, **joined** and **held together** by every **supporting** ligament, grows and **builds** itself up in love, as each part does its **work**."

Ephesians 4:11-16 (*speaking, growing, joining, holding, supporting, building, working*)

IT'S GOD'S TIME TO PROGRESS BY....

- *Growing in our identity as a child of God*
- *Growing in our ability to love well*
- *Growing in the stewardship of our gifts*
- *Growing in our soul through grief & loss*
- *Growing in our character & knowledge*

IT'S GOD'S TIME TO PROGRESS BY GROWING IN OUR IDENTITY AS A CHILD OF GOD

For those who are followers of Christ we are given a change of identity:

John 1:12; 2 Cor 5:17

*“I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God’s grace given me through the working of his power. Although **I am less than the least of all God’s people**, this **grace was given me**: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.”*

Ephesians 3:7-8

God is your real father.
Don't treat this knowledge casually.

“I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty”.

2 Corinthians 6:18

IT'S GOD'S TIME TO PROGRESS BY GROWING IN OUR ABILITY TO LOVE WELL

1 Cor 3:16-17 ; Ephesians 2:19-22 ; John 13:34-35

1 Cor 3:16-17 (New Living Translation)

“Don’t you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you? God will destroy anyone who destroys this temple. For God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple.”

Ephesians 2:19-22

“Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”

John 1:14

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

Jesus then told his disciples and us how important the growing in our ability to love well is:

John 13:34-35

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

How does this work out practically? Got to love the church!

Ephesians 5:25-27

“...Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.”

Ten little Christians standing in line. One disliked the preacher, then there were 9.

Nine little Christians stayed very late. One overslept Sunday, then there were 8.

Eight little Christians on their way to Heaven. One took the low road and then there were 7.

Seven little Christians chirping like chicks. One disliked music, and then there were 6.

Six little Christians seemed very much alive, but one lost his interest and then there were 5.

Five little Christians pulling for Heaven's Shore, but one stop to rest, then there were 4.

Four little Christians each busy as a bee. One got his feelings hurt, then there were 3.

Three little Christians knew not what to do. One joined the sporty crowd, then there were 2.

Two little Christians, our rhyme is nearly done, differed with each other, then there was 1

One little Christian can't do much 'tis true, brought his friend to Bible study, then there were 2.

Two earnest Christians, each won one more. That doubled the number, then there were 4.

Four sincere Christians worked early and late. Each won another, then there were 8.

Eight splendid Christians if they doubled as before. In just so many Sundays, we'd have 1024.

***In this little jingle, there is a lesson true,
you belong either to the building or the wrecking crew!***

CONCLUSION: THIS IS A TIME TO PROGRESS

“For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love.”

2 Peter 1:5-7

HOW SHOULD YOU RESPOND TODAY?

- ASK - ask God to strengthen you
- ALLOW - allow God to fill you with His Holy Spirit
- ACT - we must go, must act (Luke 4:43)

