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GROWING PAINS

You could ask any young person how it felt when they had a growth spurt. Their bones ached. Their clothing no longer fit, and they felt “gawky.” They were growing physically into the person that God designed for them, but it did not happen overnight.

There are countries that do things to stop this growth. For a time, Japanese girls would have their feet taped tightly so they would not grow. They felt that large feet would be a detriment for their future. I remember being in high school and an acquaintance looked at my shoe size and said she would not wear that size shoe even if she needed to. I wonder if she has sore feet today. As for me, I never buy shoes that do not fit.

There are some spiritual comparisons with growing pains. As we grow spiritually, we often outgrow the “old way” of doing things as God leads us into something different and better. Like my high school shoe size, I do not wear that “small” shoe anymore. If I tried to wear it my feet would hurt. We, spiritually, must decide that even though change may be painful, it is the only way to grow.

Think of Jesus. He did not start out opening blind eyes or even walking on water. He was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness to be “tempted” or tested for 40 days. Most of us would not pass that test. He only passed it because he used the word of God and said, **“It is written.”** (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10.) Three times Satan came at him and tempted him, and each time he said the same thing, **“It is written.”** There is only one way that he could quote the scriptures and that is he learned them. Yes, Jesus is God in the flesh, but he went through the walk of a natural man so we can learn from him.

Only after that testing did Jesus start his ministry. But, along with that ministry came hatred, mocking, and death. This is all part of the growing pains that we will experience. Think of this, Judas was part of the inner 12. A friend. Yet, he was the one that would betray him. There will be betrayals, and much hurt in our growth. There will be a shedding of “friends” that do not understand your stand for the Lord. Yes, it will hurt, but it is all a part of the process to become a mature Christian.

You can go through it, or you can stay a babe in Christ, always wanting someone else to feed you. Is it easy? No way! It was not easy for Jesus either. He wept at Lazarus’ tomb, and he wept over Jerusalem. He had to go through what he did for us, and he allows us to go through these trials so we can grow.

You will find the growing pains are worth it when you stand before Jesus and hear him say, “Well done, thou good and faithful servant.”