

GROWTRACK

SESSION #3: OFFER

Welcome to GROWTrack Session 3, let's pray and we'll dive right in...

The "O" in G.R.O.W. stands for "OFFER".

As I've said, "G.R.O.W." should be looked at as a set of gauges on the dashboard to help measure or read spiritual health. So, today we will discuss the "O", which shows you what **you** should **offer** in order to grow.

Read: Romans 12:1 (NASB)

12 Therefore I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

- The word "urge" (parakaleo: from para = beside + kaleo = call aloud) literally means "to call to one's side" and is like someone calling another to his side and lovingly presenting his message to him.
 - Instead of simply asserting his apostolic authority, Paul preferred to appeal to the inner consciousness of his readers.
- "Present" (paristemi: from para = beside or near + histemi = set) literally means to place or set beside or near, hence, to place at someone's disposal.
 - The English dictionary notes that to present is to bring or introduce into the presence of someone especially of superior rank or status, to make a gift to.
 - To convey to another as a possession; to set, place or introduce into the presence or before the face of a superior; to offer gratuitously for reception; To put into the hands of another in ceremony.
 - "Present or Paristemi" is in the Aorist Tense, which calls for a once and for all presentation denoting a deliberate action involving the thought of finality.
 - "Paristemi" includes the ideas of to yield or surrender up, or to place at the disposal of another. The implication is that every aspect of a believer's life is to be yielded to God.
- The word for "body" as used by Paul represents the complete man, the "part" representing the whole which is a figure of speech known as synecdoche (su-nek-duh-kee), a **part** is put for the **whole**. (Ex: Give your hand in marriage)
 - So, our body represents the totality of our being, not just our physical bodies but our heart, soul, mind and strength...ALL of each of them! God wants ALL of our body on the altar, not just a part.
 - The body is the vehicle that implements the desires and choices of the redeemed spirit & is essential for making contact with the society in which the believer lives.

Quote: "There is actually only one thing you can dedicate to God, and that is your right to yourself".
Oswald Chambers "Getting There - My Utmost For His Highest"

Our sacrifice is a “*living*” one, which means one offered based on how we live, SURRENDERED to God.

Quote: “*The problem with living sacrifices is that they keep crawling off the altar.*” *Unknown author*

Comment: This “*total*” sacrifice pleases God and is our “*reasonable or rational*” service of worship. Most of you have probably heard about the pig and the hen that were out walking one day when they passed a church. The sermon topic on the signboard was, “How can we help the poor?” After a moment’s reflection the hen said, “I know what we can do. We can offer a ham and egg breakfast.” It took several moments before the suggestion sunk in, but when it did, the pig protested: “That breakfast would be only a contribution for you, but for me it would mean total commitment.” This is what God is asking from you. He wants all of you!

Question: “*How do I keep from crawling off of the altar?*”

Read: Romans 12:2 (NASB)

2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

- The word “*conformed*” (*suschematizo*: sus = together with + schema = external form, appearance) means to form according to a pattern or mold, to fashion alike, to conform to the same pattern outwardly.
 - The meaning is to form or mold one’s behavior in accordance with a particular pattern or set of standards. refers to an outward expression that does not reflect (or come from) what is within.
 - “*Suschematizo*” is used of masquerading or putting on an act, specifically by following a prescribed pattern or scheme.
 - “**CONFORM**” means to align your life with the schemes of the world.
- The word for “*be transformed*” is (*metamorphoo*: metá = denotes change of place or condition + morphe = form, shape referring to the essential form of a thing) has the basic meaning of changing into another form and is the term from which we get metamorphosis, which in biology denotes the amazing change of a lowly worm into a beautiful butterfly.
 - So, the change in view here is not a superficial fluctuation of conduct but a vital change revealing a new life.
 - “*Be transformed*” is in the imperative mood (command), which indicates that believers have some responsibility in this transformation.
 - We are to have tender hearts and obedient, submissive wills so that we might allow the Spirit to do His work within our hearts and lives, and not quench, grieve or resist Him.
- The word for “*renewing*” (342) (*anakaino’sis*: means to renew qualitatively) refers to a qualitative renewal or renovation.
 - Stated another way this renewal as used here in Romans 12:2 depicts an essential change in character of your thinking - you can now think a way that beforehand was not possible. Now your new mind allows you the potential to see life the way God sees life.

- Your mind is the control center of your attitudes, thoughts, feelings, and actions. Paul says that God wants your mind because He knows the power of the mind and wants it for Himself. He wants you to think His thoughts. As you do, your mind will be renewed. As your mind is renewed, you will be able to fulfill His will for your life.

Jesus Himself modeled what it means to “offer” for the sake of others, and we should be both instructed and motivated by this truth.

Read: 1 John 3:16-18 (NASB)

16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers and sisters. 17 But whoever has worldly goods and sees his brother or sister in need, and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God remain in him? 18 Little children, let's not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

- When LOVE is a VERB in our life, we are SEWING towards SPIRITUAL HEALTH.
- Christianity IS really intended to be an “all or nothing” kind of call...

Read: Matthew 16:24-25 (NASB)

24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me. 25 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

- In short, references to crucifixion in the ancient world evoked feelings of humiliation, dishonor, misery, and shame. Every person hearing Jesus' words in this verse very likely had a vivid picture of this in their minds. That would have made it jarring to hear Jesus use crucifixion in comparison to following Him.
- Self-denial was a common idea in the days of Jesus. However, Jesus pictured a self-denial that included willing participation in the death of self. In short, nobody who follows Jesus can hold on to even the smallest bit of their own agenda, their own dreams, their own way of living in the world. They must sacrifice every ounce of self if they would choose to walk after Him.
- To say that we should be a people that willingly offer and sacrifice for the purposes of God in our lives is a HUGE understatement!

Question: “What are some “Offer” gauges on your spiritual dashboard that you can observe to see if you are sewing to spiritual health?”

- **1st Point to Ponder:** Offer your TIME by SERVING and INVESTING in the lives of others.
- **2nd Point to Ponder:** Offer your GIFTS and TALENTS to STRENGTHEN your church family.
- **3rd Point to ponder:** Offer your TREASURE in OBEDIENCE to God and for the FURTHERANCE of the GOSPEL.

Comment: “People that continuously receive but never offer will likely become takers, which is spiritually unhealthy.”

Question: “Is my church healthy and what am I doing to contribute to that health?”

Questions

Pray