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## The Secret to Spiritual Growth – Pastor Greg Laurie

We all want to experience spiritual growth and success. Sadly, we all know people who have been spiritual failures in life. Perhaps we regard ourselves that way.

Some have grown in leaps and bounds spiritually, while others have not grown at all. Some have done great things for God and His Kingdom, while others have done nothing.

You might say, "Well, Christianity just didn't work for me!" Listen, Christianity is not a product that works for some and not for others. Plain and simple: Christianity is Christ. He can and will work in any life that is truly dedicated to Him. G. K. Chesterton said, "Christianity has not been tried and found wanting. It's been found difficult and not tried."

Why do some succeed spiritually, while others fail? The short answer: Because they *choose* to. They want it, so they go for it. Others don't really want it, so they don't go for it.

You might protest, "That sounds like you think living the Christian life is human effort." I am not saying that. Scripture clearly says that it is not by works of righteousness that we have done, but by His mercy He has saved us (see Titus 3:5). But clearly there are some things that only God can do, and some things that only you can do.

Paul reminds us that we are to work out our own salvation "with fear and trembling" (Philippians 2:12). That does not say that you should *work for* your own salvation but *work out* your salvation. Another translation says to "carry to the goal and fully complete with self distrust."

The following verse explains it: "For it is God who works in you both to will and do of His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13). As the Beatles famously sang, "We can work it out." We need to work out what God has worked in. God enables us to do this, but we must also apply ourselves.

Let me say it again, there are some things only God can do, and some things only I can do. Only God can save a person. Only God can forgive and forget our sins. Only God can change the human heart. But at the same time, only I can believe. Only I can repent. Only I can follow. God will not do those things for me, as He has given me a free will to choose.