



Luke 2:52 (NLT2) *Jesus grew in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and all the people.*

This week's proverb: Proverbs 4:18, 19 (NLT2) ¹⁸ *The way of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, which shines ever brighter until the full light of day.* ¹⁹ *But the way of the wicked is like total darkness. They have no idea what they are stumbling over.*

1. Grow closer to God through devotion.
2. Grow more helpful to others through service.
3. Grow wiser with humility.
4. Grow more influential through integrity.

This year grow more influential in your world

Influence: [ˈɪnfluəns] NOUN

1. the capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behavior of someone or something, or the effect itself.

The Church in the book of Acts had a massive influence on its world.

1. When the Church opened for business, its impact was overwhelming.
 - a. 3000 added on opening day
 - b. a lame man walks
 - c. 5000 more added (leaders arrested)
 - d. signs and wonders (leaders jailed again)
 - e. many Jewish priests converted
2. They were influential because they were not trying to be influential. They were focused on doing the right thing. (Integrity, i.e., wholeness) This is the way of God's Kingdom. Contrary to human logic.

<u>Human</u>	<u>Christian</u>
Physical	Spiritual
Temporal	Eternal
Seen	Unseen
Outward	Inward
Competition	Cooperation
Winning	Losing
Strength	Weakness
First	Last
Self-Indulgent	Sacrificial
Leading	Serving

3. Many of the terms that we use automatically were created to communicate a specific message.
-Born again -Christian -believer -follower -disciple –(even from colonial times) Puritan
4. The early Church had two **guard rails** that kept them on track.

1. The Message of the Early Church was Jesus the Lord (Foundational Principle of the Kingdom of God proven by obedience)

1. When they received Spirit empowerment, **they preached Jesus** as Lord and Messiah.
Acts 2:36 (NLT2) ³⁶ *“So let everyone in Israel know for certain that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, to be both Lord and Messiah!”*
2. When they encountered the lame man, they declared **in the name of Jesus** get up and walk!
Acts 3:6
3. The **influence of Jesus** was evident in the disciples, and they refused to stop speaking about what they had seen and heard. **GOD GIVE EACH ONE OF US A FRESH VISION AND FRESH WORD!**
Acts 4:13-22
4. **Miracles** were happening through the hands of the apostles. Acts 5:12-16
5. Many of the **Jewish priests** placed their faith in the Lordship of Jesus and became **obedient**.
Acts 6:7

Acts 9:31 (NLT2) *The church then had peace throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, and it became stronger as the believers lived in the fear of the Lord. And with the encouragement of the Holy Spirit, it also grew in numbers.*

2. The Power of the Early Church was the Baptism of the Holy Spirit

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is mentioned **five** times in Acts.

1. The early church was **empowered** by the Holy Spirit.
2. The early church was **led** by the Holy Spirit.
3. The early church **walked** in the Spirit.
4. The baptism in the Holy Spirit is an **intentional daily yielding** of yourself to the control of the Holy Spirit. (It is more than an event—**It is a lifestyle!**)
5. The baptism in the Holy Spirit **produces godly qualities** in your life. (the fruit of the Spirit)
6. The baptism in the Holy Spirit will **lead you in a path of integrity**.
7. The baptism in the Holy Spirit will **position you to be a person of influence**.

Acts 17:6 (CSB) (the townspeople came) *before the city officials, shouting, **“These men who have turned the world upside down have come here too,***