

CG Participant Journal - Growth

Passage: Luke 2:39–52 (ESV)

Main Idea: Just as Jesus grew physically, we are called to grow spiritually—and that growth is meant to shape the life and health of the church.

Opening Reflection

When you hear the word *growth*, what comes to mind first?

- Something measurable (numbers, progress, milestones)?
- Something internal (character, maturity, faith)?
- Something messy or uncomfortable?

Write a few thoughts below:

Read the Scripture

Read **Luke 2:39–52 (ESV)** slowly.

As you read, underline or note:

- Any repeated words or ideas
- The areas where Luke says Jesus “grew”

Big Picture

Luke describes Jesus growing in four ways:

“And Jesus increased in **wisdom** and in **stature** and in **favor with God** and **favor with people.**”
(Luke 2:52, ESV)

Reflection

- Why do you think Luke includes all four areas?
- What would be missing if growth were only spiritual and private?

Write your thoughts:

1. Growth in Wisdom

Jesus amazes the teachers in the temple with His understanding, but His wisdom is ultimately seen in His obedience and submission (vv. 50–51).

Wisdom is not just **knowing** God’s Word—it is **walking** in it.

Reflect

- What is the difference between knowledge and wisdom?
- Why is it possible to know Scripture well but still resist obedience?
- How might this show up in the life of a church?

Personal + Church Reflection:

- Where do you see God calling *our church* to grow in lived-out wisdom, not just right beliefs?

Write below:

2. Growth in Size

Luke implies that growth includes physical and visible increase.

God assembles His people—and when He does, growth often feels messy.

Reflect

- Why do churches often pray for growth but struggle when it happens?
- What kinds of tension, inconvenience, or change come with a growing church?
- How does growth expose our preferences and comfort?

Personal + Church Reflection:

- How do you typically respond when growth disrupts what feels familiar?
- How might God be using growth to shape our church’s character?

Write below:

3. Growth in Favor with God

“Favor” points to grace. For us, this begins with salvation and continues through the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit.

Church growth is not manufactured—it is supplied by God.

Reflect

- What does it look like for a church to depend on God’s grace rather than its own strength?
- How do prayer, obedience, and dependence on the Spirit affect a church’s health?

Personal + Church Reflection:

- Where do you sense God inviting our church to rely more fully on His grace?

Write below:

4. Growth in Favor with People

A healthy church grows in love internally and credibility externally.

People may disagree with our beliefs, but they should see our love.

Reflect

- What does unity look like in a diverse, growing church?
- How do you think people outside the church typically experience Christians?
- What might it look like for our church to grow in favor with people without compromising truth?

Write below:

Where Are You?

Not all growth is healthy growth—and sometimes we realize we've drifted off the path.

Take a moment of honest reflection:

- Which area of growth stands out most to you right now?
- Where might God be inviting *you* to re-engage?
- Where might God be inviting *our church* to take a next step?

Write or pray silently below:

Closing Prayer

Use this space to pray—on your own or with your group—for:

- Wisdom that leads to obedience
- Grace to embrace the messiness of growth
- Unity and love within the church
- Favor with people outside the church, that Jesus would be clearly seen

You may want to write a short prayer here: