

1. We Shall Be Like Him

A Theological Vision for Growth Groups

Introduction

- a) If you want things to go well, you need to know which way you're going!

- b) It's all in the name: the goal of our Growth Groups is *growth*
 - At St Paul's, we're on about making healthy disciples, in ever-increasing number, to the glory of God

 - As part of that mission, the primary purpose of Growth Groups is to see the people of St Paul's *growing* as disciples of Jesus

- c) Reflection question as we begin:

To grow as a disciple of Jesus means: _____

1 What is “growth”?

- a) Growth is what God is doing in the world through the gospel (Colossians 1:4-12)
 - Growing *out* and growing *up*
- b) Gospel ministry aims to see people grow towards *maturity*, which means becoming more like Jesus (Ephesians 4:11-13; cf. Col 1:28, 1 Cor 11:1, Rom 8:29)
- c) Growth is a process in the present that looks towards perfection in the future (1 John 3:2-3)
- d) In summary, Christian growth is:
 - God’s work of transforming us to become like Jesus
 - by submitting our lives to Jesus
 - to make us ready to meet Jesus.

2 Aspects of this growth

- a) Growth in knowledge
 - Yet not just information, but transformation

b) Growth in holiness

- God desires his people to grow in holiness (1 Thessalonians 4:3)
- God requires his people to grow in holiness (Hebrews 12:14)

But isn't that salvation by works?!

Legalism and antinomianism (see diagram over the page)

- God empowers his people to grow in holiness (Philippians 2:12-13)

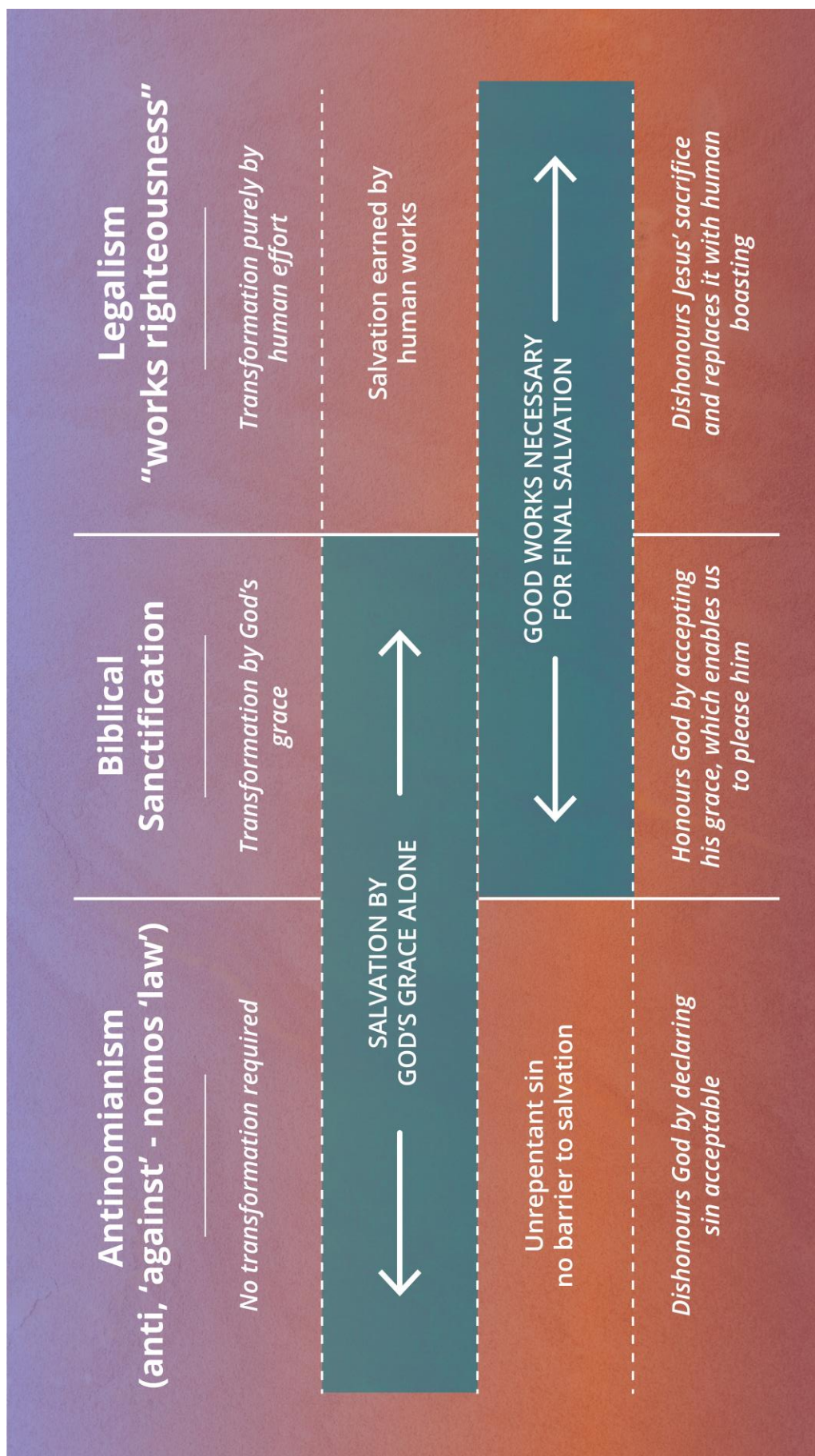
c) Growth in relationship with God

- Not just knowledge *of* God, but knowing God personally (John 17:3)

Conclusion

“We shall be like him” – 1 John 3:2

- a) “We” – together.
- b) “shall be” – not yet, but we strive towards it now.
- c) “like him” – the goal is nothing less than being like our Lord Jesus.



2. Growing Yourself

1. How
2. Preach the gospel to myself
3. Prioritise (and diarise)
4. Plan (daily, yearly)
5. Perspective

“I am not what I ought to be,
I am not what I want to be,
I am not what I hope to be in another world;
but still I am not what I once used to be,
and by the grace of God I am what I am.” —John Newton

3. Growing Your Group

4. Growth Goals

Look back at the definition of growth you wrote on page 1. Would you change it now after what we've heard this morning? If so, how?

1 Growing yourself

Reflecting on your own growth as a Christian disciple and as a leader, what are some specific goals you'd like to work towards in 2021? What concrete action could you take as a step towards that goal, and when will you aim to do it?

Growth Area	Goal	Action	By when?
Knowledge <i>Understanding of the gospel, the Bible, and theology</i>			
Holiness <i>Godly character, love for others, putting sin to death</i>			
Relationship with God <i>Devotion to God, delight in God, prayerfulness</i>			

2 Growing your group

As you seek to lead your Growth Group in growing as Christian disciples this year, what are some goals you'd like to help them work towards? What concrete actions could you suggest and encourage towards that goal, and when will you aim to do them?

Growth Area	Goal	Action	By when?
Knowledge <i>Understanding of the gospel, the Bible, and theology</i>			
Holiness <i>Godly character, love for others, putting sin to death</i>			
Relationship with God <i>Devotion to God, delight in God, prayerfulness</i>			

3 Accountability

Who can keep you accountable to the plans you've made above? Consider asking your Growth Group Team Leader to check in with you throughout the year in light of these goals. Or you could pair up with another Growth Group Leader and talk about this once every few months.

Spend some time praying with your GG Team for one another, that God would grow you and use you to grow others in your group this year.