

**Message: “Dare to Grow”, from Youth Sunday’s “Get in the Game”, presented by Brian Frost on 02-05-2017 at Crossroads United Methodist Church, Waunakee, WI.**

Luke 2:41-52

Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem.

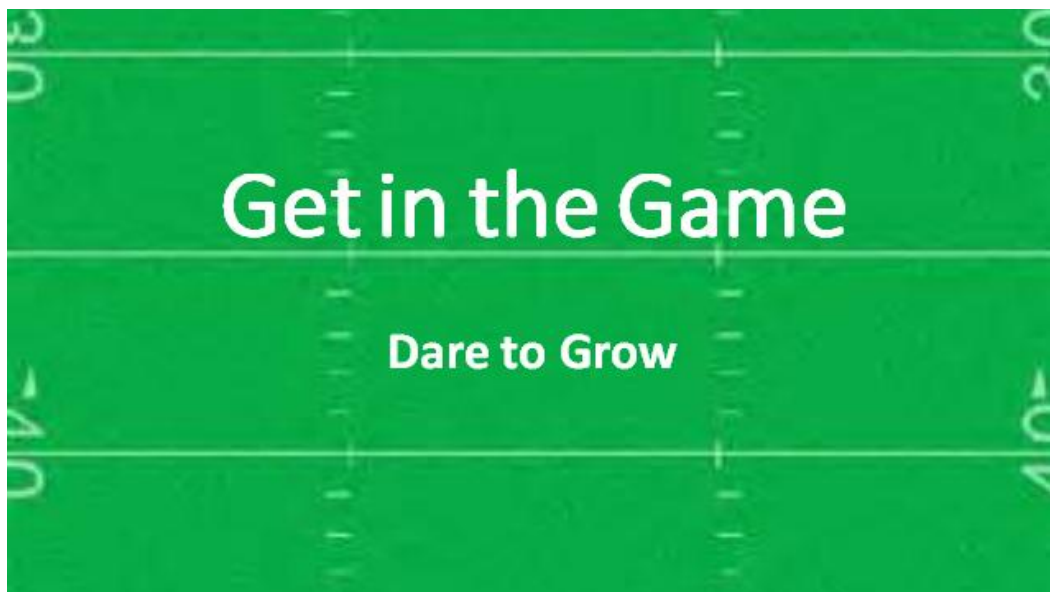
His parents did not know it, but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him.

After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. And when his parents saw him, they were astonished.

And his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress."

And he said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?"

And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.



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Good Morning – my name is Brian Frost, I belong to Lisa (Youth Group leader) and Scott (who read the Crossroads Creed) and Steven (a freshman at College).

It has been a pleasure to work with the youth in our congregation over the past three weeks as we developed the service – these are great kids, we should be proud.

Since it is youth Sunday – I’ve drafted a message for the youth. Adults can also play along.

In the Bible, the book of Peter tells us to follow in Christ’s steps and let him be an example for our lives. But the bible doesn’t say much about what Jesus was doing between the ages of 12 and 30 when he started his ministry.

Well, I was fortunate enough to be involved in two youth organizations that promoted that verse from the book of Peter. Both encouraged us to grow all four sides of ourselves–Mental, Physical, Social, and Religious (MPSR) and Be Your Own Self at Your Very Best All the Time (BYOSAYVBATT).



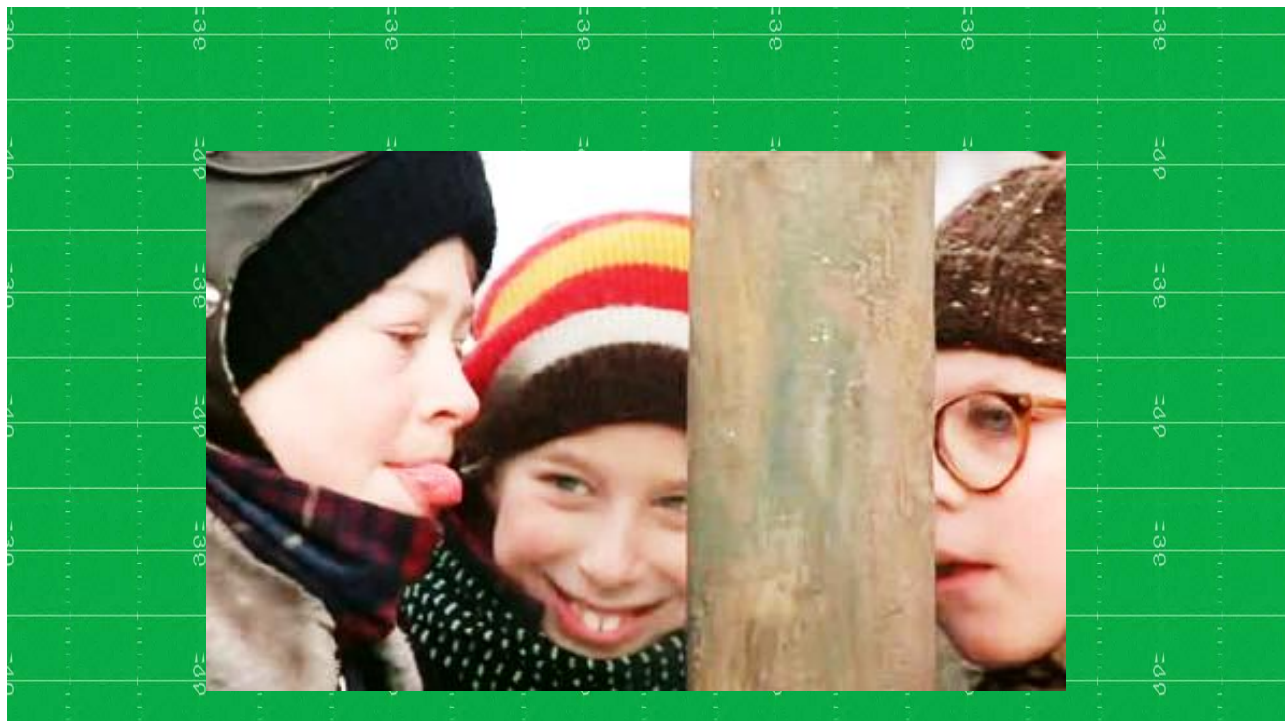
In fact, the American Youth Foundation (AYF) had an outline of how to develop and balance all four sides of your life–Mental, Physical, Social, Religious (MPSR)–and then share the talents you develop with others if you truly want to “Get in the Game.” It’s that process that I would like to share with you today.

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It all started when one of the co-founders of AYF was a young boy. He wasn't very healthy, always seemed to be sick, and one day his teacher singled him out – “William, I DARE YOU...”



Now today – those are the words you hear from a friend who is trying to get you to do something foolish.



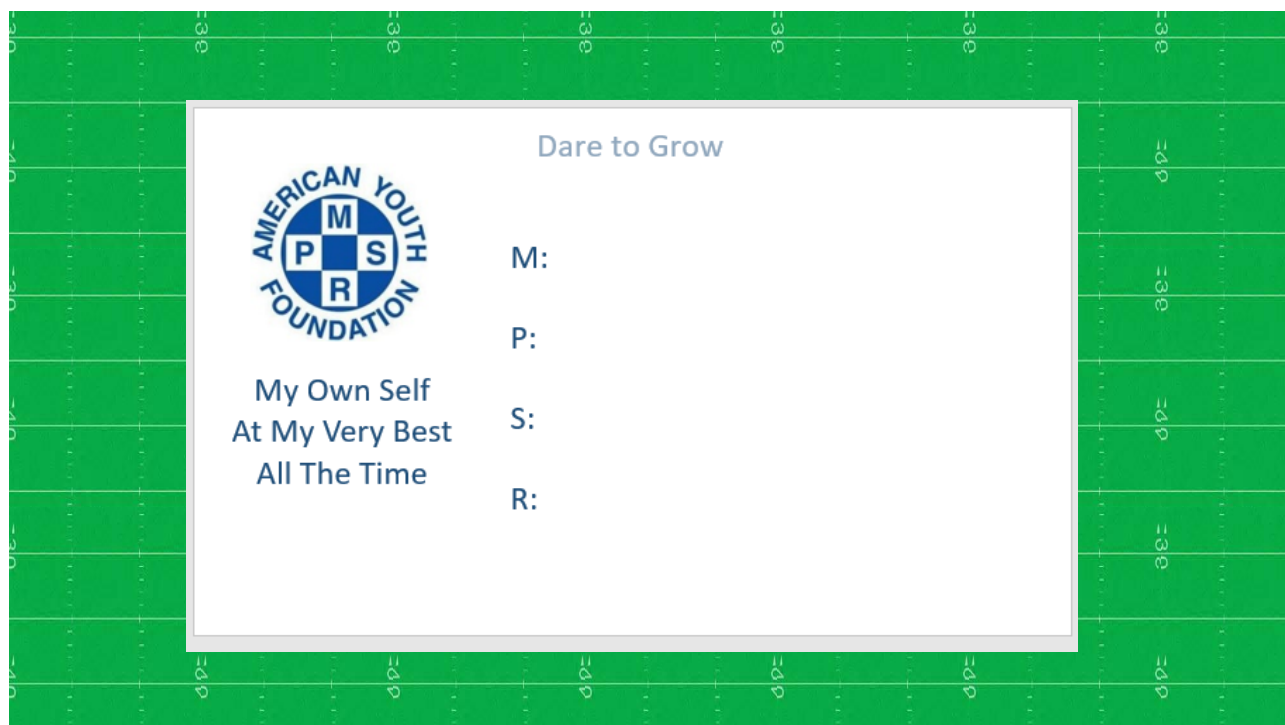
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But his teacher’s Dare was to do something positive - “I Dare You to be the most healthy boy in our class.”

It was a positive challenge that lit a fire in him. He did get healthy, and he spent a lifetime Daring himself and others to develop all four sides of their lives and share the results. It worked for him. He became a top leader Ralston Purina Company, and was one of the founders of the AYF, which has impacted thousands of this country’s youth. This was a guy who was truly IN THE GAME.

So how do we start develop all 4 sides like Christ and fully get in the Game? The AYF suggests that you focus on specific habits or characteristics you want to develop in each area. Write them down, DARE yourself to achieve that goal, review them periodically and adjust as you go.

Here’s a simple way to help you get started. Get a piece of paper and write the letters M – Mental, P – Physical, R – Religious and S – Social on the left side of the paper. Leave space between the letters so you have enough room to write by each letter.



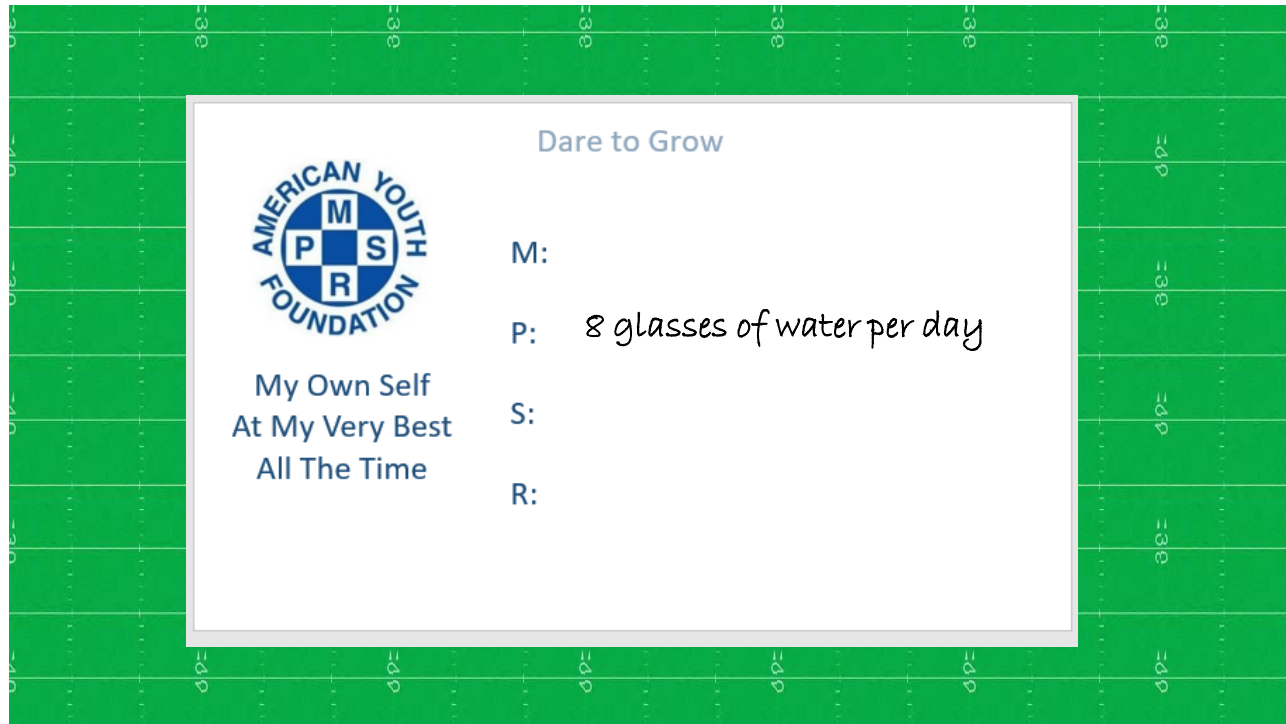
Let’s start with Physical; it’s easy to understand and ties in with today’s Super bowl.

P/Physical:


Your health is very important. When you’re sick you don’t have much energy for being in the game. Many people start something but they just don’t have the pep and punch in the end to finish the task at hand or what they started. Coaches, personal trainers and nutritionists are great at developing this side of our life. Coaches especially push harder and harder so you have more stamina than you opponent. What if we all dared ourselves to bench press 300 pounds by the end of the school year (or sometime in our lives).

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No, the same challenge isn't right for all of us. Start simple. Do you get enough sleep at night, plenty of fresh air, get enough water, eat wholesome food, and some (but not too much) sunshine? How about developing a healthy habit: wash hands before you eat, brush your teeth twice a day, get regular physicals exams, exercise each day, WEAR YOUR SEATBELT. Make it a personal, simple dare and write it down.

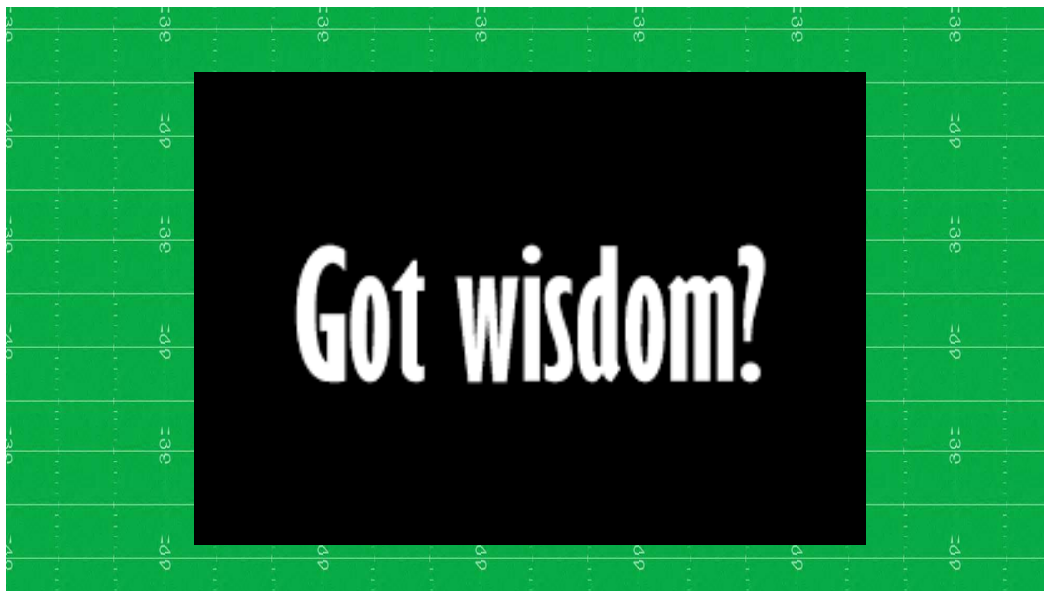
A white rectangular card with a thin grey border is centered on a green background with a repeating pattern of small white circles. The card contains the following text and logo:

**Dare to Grow**



My Own Self  
At My Very Best  
All The Time

M:  
P: 8 glasses of water per day  
S:  
R:



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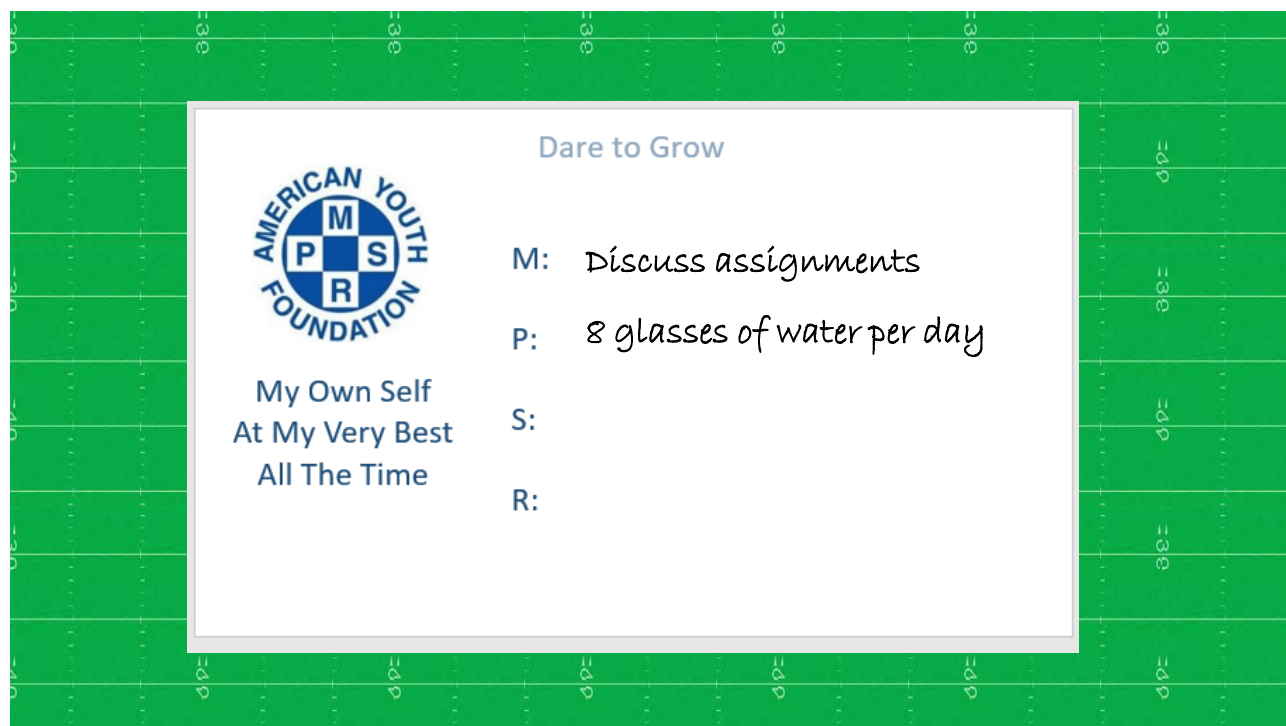
M/Mental:

Notice that the bible says Wisdom and not Knowledge. You know the difference? Knowledge – Tomato is a fruit, Wisdom – don’t put it in a fruit salad..

In school, I hope you develop both. Knowledge will get you a good grade on a test. Wisdom will likely get you a better grade and allow you to apply it life.

Where do you want to develop more wisdom? You could do it in School. Challenge yourself to get a better grade. Maybe learn how to study more effectively. Build a habit of take notes or contributing more in class discussions.

You could focus on your areas of interest: in sports, don’t just learn the skill, learn the game; in music, understand scales, sharps and flats; in dance, what makes it more dramatic. You could challenge yourself to study a topic you know little about - to get creative, think big, EXPAND your brain, expand your world You never know, you might find a topic that interests you that doesn’t ever get stale. It just might become your future vocation. Write down your specific ideas.



**AMERICAN YOUTH FOUNDATION**

**My Own Self  
At My Very Best  
All The Time**

**Dare to Grow**

**M:** Discuss assignments

**P:** 8 glasses of water per day

**S:**

**R:**

S/Social:

Ever heard of a person having a magnetic personality? A person that people are just attracted to. They just seem to always have a positive, optimistic attitude. Developing that kind of personality would be a big goal.

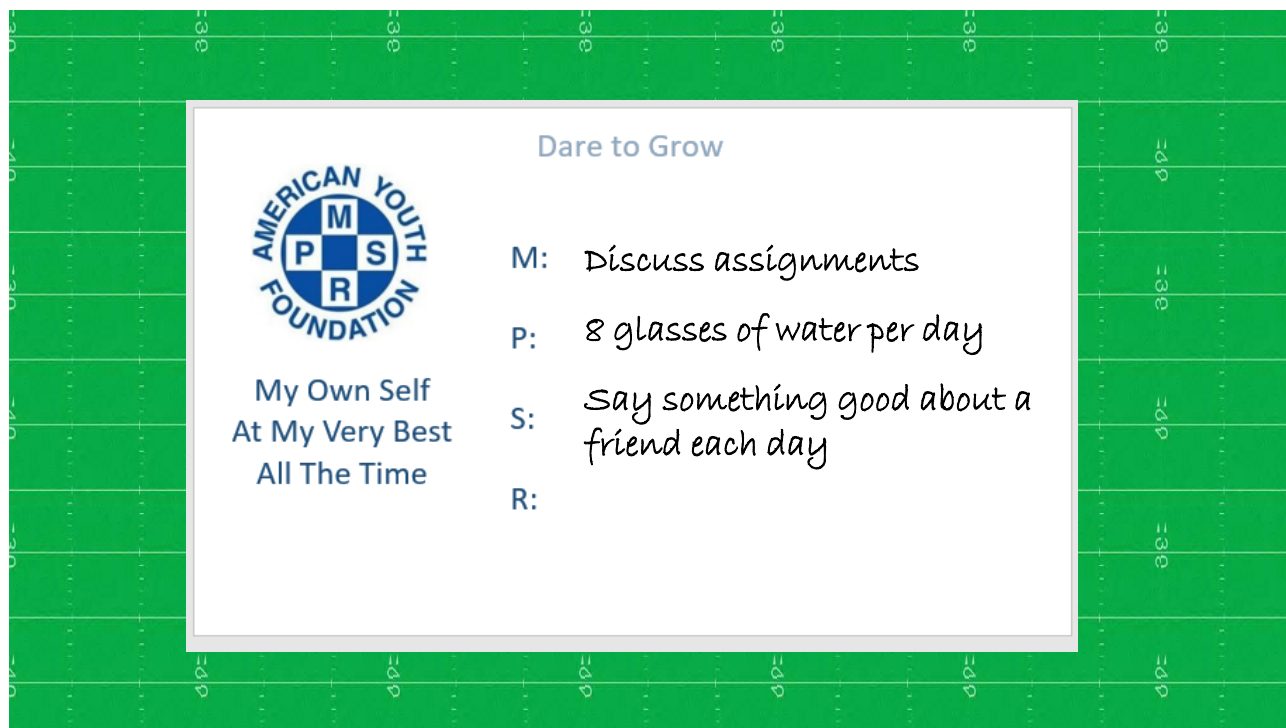


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But, I personally think Jesus was like that. The bible is full of stories where people were flocking to him. When he was gathering disciples, he came upon some guys who are out fishing, two of them repairing nets with their father. Jesus says, “Come follow me!” People flocked to him. Not just for healing but for knowledge.

Our pastor in Neenah used to encourage the congregation to be Christian Dolphins rather than Christian Sharks. Which will attract more friends?

Here are a couple other ideas for your growth card: hang around people that inspire you or have positive attitudes, have empathy for others. Be thoughtful and notice the little things, look for the good in someone, express gratitude, have face-to-face conversations (not snapchat), be honest, kind, supportive; have confidence, develop a strong handshake, look people in the eye, show interest in them–SMILE.



R/Religious:

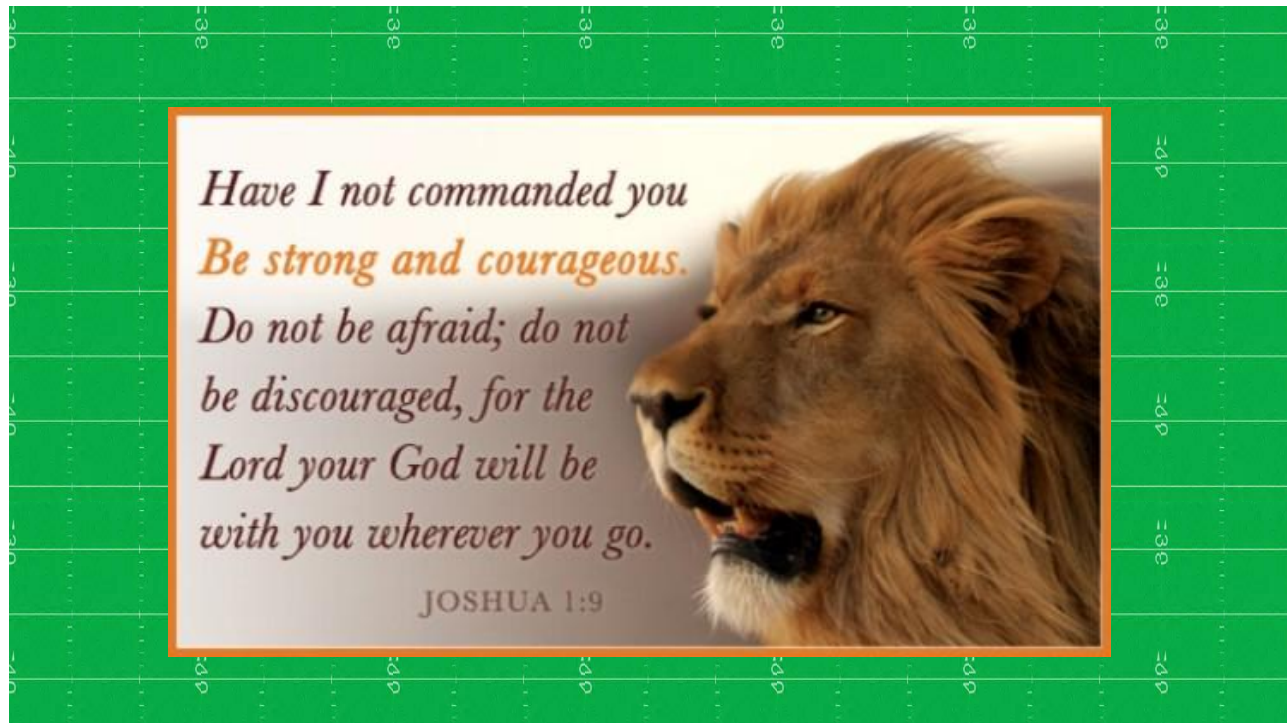
Boy this is an important one. I want you to think about building your character and developing your relationship with God. Doing this will help you strengthen all other sides of your life. Think about it:

Demonstrate your Christ like characteristics. Fairness, honesty, compassion, dependability, kindness, justice, love. How can you not attract others to you?

The bible is full of stories, parables and songs about how to live. It also describes a few people who demonstrate how not to live. It's a history that we can learn from. Those that don't understand history are doomed to repeat it – and some of it isn't good.

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Having a good faith foundation gives you both strength and courage that gives you stamina to go on in the face of adversity. That will boost your energy and confidence to finish the game!!!



You develop good character traits and people will see it a mile away. You will mature, you will carry yourself differently and stand out above others. You will also influence your friends. Who knows, you might even be the influence that encourages others to act with good character, make good decisions or want to join a church.

Most importantly, build your relationship with God. Pray! He can be your best friend and leader. He will provide what you need when you need it. And you will need him.

Your growth journey will not be easy. Sometimes you will stumble and not achieve your goal – get up and try again. Sometimes you will get discouraged and you will want to quit, but the path of least resistance makes a crooked river – and crooked men.

Some people will think you're a little weird, some will disagree, some will not be ready to participate in the game, some might be working against you.



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Other times, you will find out you didn't do the right thing. Maybe you were wrong and hurt someone's feelings. That's when you need your relationship with Christ. Develop your relationship so you can find him quickly – right here – at the corner of Grace and Mercy. You will find strength to face adversity and forgiveness when you mess up. No map, no compass, no GPS.



Funny thing is – sometimes you will seek God in prayer, sometimes he will find you.

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So what is our Dare to develop our faith? Pray – talk to God (sit quietly and listen for his reply), read the bible, attend church, confirmation or youth group each week, practice random acts of kindness, forgive a friend – pick something and write it down.

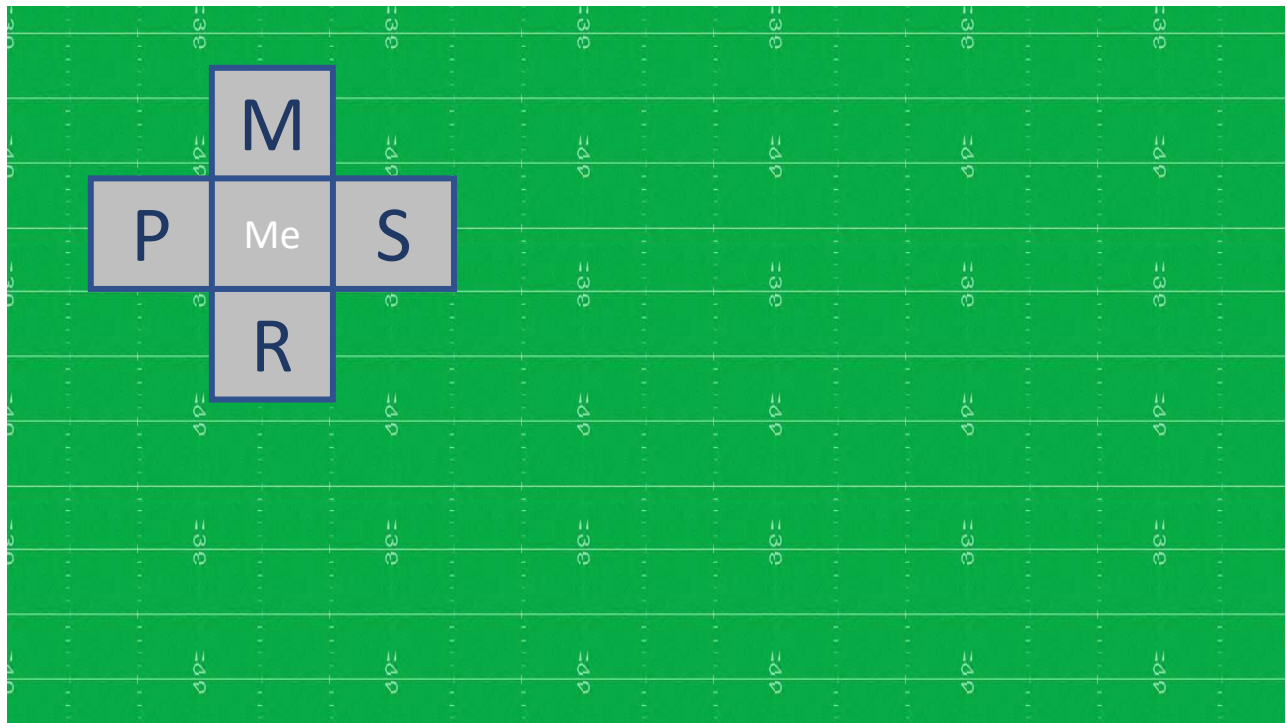
Christ didn’t increase in the four areas of his life and then just say, “See Ya! Going to go hang out on the beach for a few years. “

He GOT IN THE GAME!

He Shared all of his talents and in the end even gave his life for us.

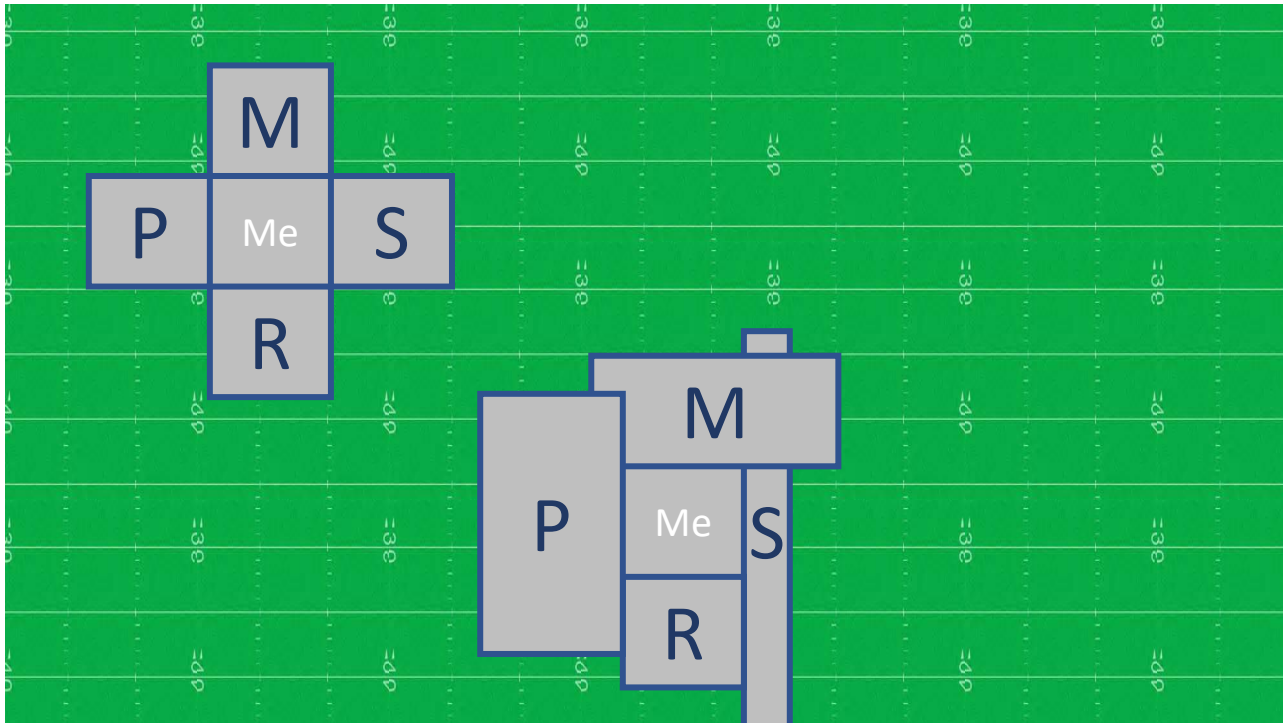
Go out and share – do a good turn, serve and help others, give of your time and talents, work for a cause. This is stuff that when you give it away, it makes your life richer and more fulfilling. You don’t need to wait – just get started – GET IN THE GAME.

So cool – you’re on the path, you’re following the bible, developing like Christ. Trying to keep it balanced is not easy.

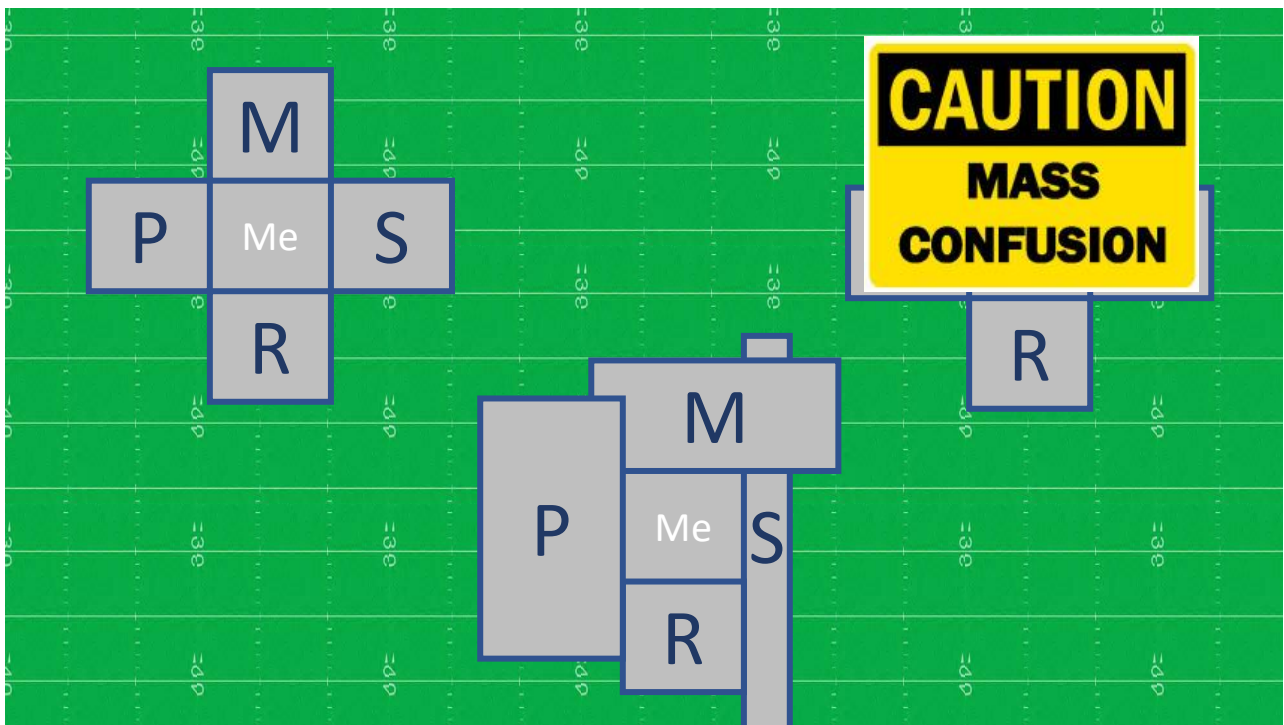


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Sometimes your four sides will look like this:




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But if you DARE you will GROW, you will mature, you will share and really be in the game.



**AMERICAN YOUTH FOUNDATION**

**My Own Self  
At My Very Best  
All The Time**

**Dare to Grow**

- M:** Discuss assignments
- P:** 8 glasses of water per day
- S:** Say something good about a friend each day
- R:** Give the message at church one Sunday

Youth – I Dare You – Growth like Christ takes all four sides of your life—mental, physical, social and religious. Be your own self, at your very best, all the time.

Adults – I have a Dare for you: Get in the game with our youth. Do simple things like supporting their fundraisers. Boy Scout Popcorn, Girl Scout cookies, music, fruit sale, buy a candy bar to support your coworker’s son or daughter in dance. Our church youth group is having a bake sale, donate baked goods – I dare us to clear the tables!

Let’s give of our time. Volunteer to be a confirmation mentor, Sunday School or Youth Group leader, coach a team, help the scouting organizations, Boys and Girls clubs, cover the food stand at a game, proctor at the Science Olympiad.

Most importantly, I challenge you to be a positive role model.

With that, I’d like you to see how our youth are Getting In the Game. Amen.