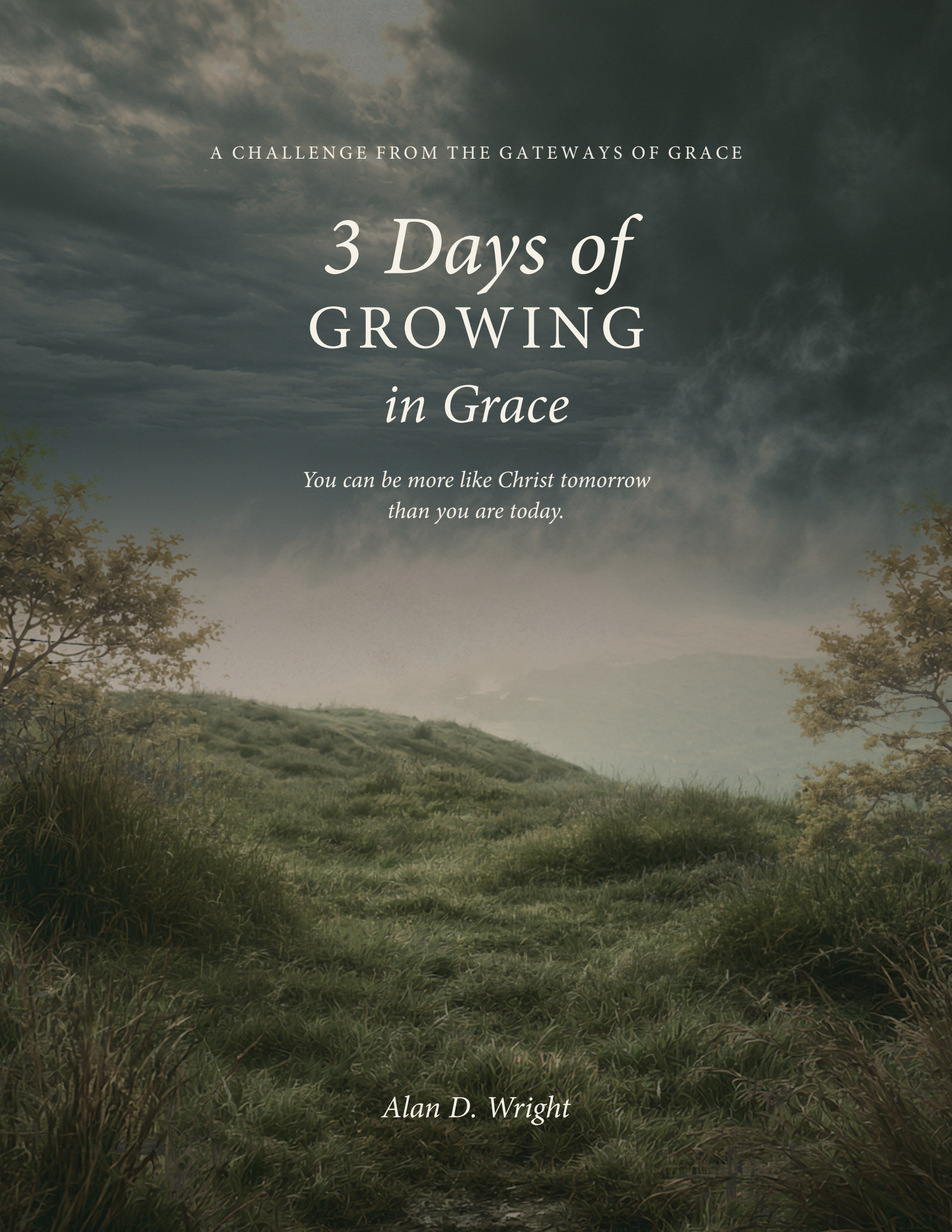

A CHALLENGE FROM THE GATEWAYS OF GRACE

3 Days of GROWING *in Grace*

You can be more like Christ tomorrow than you are today.

Alan D. Wright

WELCOME

Before You Begin

Spiritual growth isn't about trying harder. It's about stepping into the grace God has already given.

In this three-day challenge, drawn from Alan's opening teaching in *The Gateways of Grace* series, you'll spend a few minutes each day with one Scripture, one short reading, one question to reflect on, and one simple practice.

Find a quiet spot, grab a pen, and take it one day at a time. There's no pass or fail here—grace is free.

DAY 1 You Can Grow

DAY 2 Becoming, Not Imitating

DAY 3 Positioned for Grace

DAY 1

You Can Grow

"…grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

2 PETER 3:18 (ESV)

Here's some of the best news I could ever offer: You can grow spiritually. You can learn. You can grow. You can be more like Christ tomorrow than you are today.

It's odd because "grace" (Greek *charis*) means, simply, gift. Peter is saying, "grow in the gift." … The bike didn't grow—but I did. And as I grew, the gift became more fruitful to me.

That's why I like to think of the spiritual disciplines as gateways of grace. Habits like Scripture reading, meditation, rest, and prayer help us access the gift God has already given.

REFLECT

What has God already given you in Christ that you have only begun to enjoy? Where do you most long to grow?

PRACTICE

Write down one area where you want to grow. Each morning, pray Peter's words over it: "Lord, help me grow in Your grace and knowledge here."

DAY 2

Becoming, Not Imitating

"Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. …
So I do not run aimlessly … but I discipline my body."

1 CORINTHIANS 9:25–27 (ESV)

But anyone who tries to become like Jesus by simply trying to act like Jesus soon discovers that no real transformation is taking place. We don't become like someone by trying to mimic them. … It turns out you can't become a great tennis player by dressing like one.

Spiritual disciplines are not your attempt to become more like Jesus. They are pathways to experience the Person and grace of Jesus more fully—and as you experience Him, you become more like Him.

REFLECT

Where have you been "dressing the part"—trying to act like Jesus in your own strength?

PRACTICE

Set aside ten unhurried minutes today simply to be with Jesus. No list and no agenda—just enjoy His presence.

DAY 3

Positioned for Grace

"The path does not produce the change;
it only places us where the change can occur."

RICHARD J. FOSTER

Pause and let that sink in. The path does not produce the change; it only places us where the change can occur.

The disciplines don't produce transformation. They position us for it. They open the gate.

As we embark on this journey, remember: Grace is free. You cannot manufacture it. You cannot earn it.

But growth is not automatic.

REFLECT

What would it look like to position yourself for grace this week instead of trying harder?

PRACTICE

Stop striving for a few minutes today. Sit quietly before God and simply receive His love—no performance required.

KEEP GOING

Step Through the Gateways

Over these three days you've seen that you can grow, that grace is a gift to grow into, and that the spiritual disciplines don't earn God's favor—they open the gate to it.

Keep listening as *The Gateways of Grace* series continues next with resting in Christ. Each gateway is an invitation to experience more of the goodness of God.

"…grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

2 PETER 3:18 (ESV)

ALAN WRIGHT MINISTRIES

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Richard Foster quotation from *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*, rev. ed. (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1998), 8.