



Developing Healthy Reproducing Christians

by

Duane L. Anderson

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**American Indian Bible Institute
Box 511
Norwalk, CA 90651-0511**

Developing Healthy Reproducing Christians

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Developing Healthy Reproducing Christians

Introduction

In some of His final instructions to the disciples in Matthew 28:19-20, Christ gave the Great Commission. That commission has one command. That command is to **Make Disciples**. He also gave them three participles which tell how to carry out that command; **going, baptizing and teaching**. As we are **going**, we are to share the Gospel to people of every ethnic group. As some of those respond by repentance and faith, we are to carry out the next participle which is **baptizing**. Baptism is identification with Christ and His body, the church. This leads us to the third participle **teaching**. Christ tells us to teach them to obey all that He commanded.

It is that final participle that we will be discussing in this manual. Once a person has publicly identified himself or herself as a Christian, **How do we teach that person how to obey all that Christ has commanded?** We will see that this involves three things. First, a person has to know what Christ has commanded (**knowledge**). Second, that person has to be shown how to apply those commands to his or her own life (**character**). Third, the person has to be shown how to pass on what he or she has learned to others (**ministry**).

Just as we experience physical growth and go through various levels of physical maturity, we also should experience spiritual growth which will involve various levels of spiritual maturity. In this manual we will be talking about the following levels of spiritual maturity: **new born babe; toddler; child; young man (or young woman); spiritual parent; and spiritual Timothy**. We will see the key areas of knowledge, character and ministry that develop at each level of spiritual maturity.

We also see in Genesis 3:7-13 that original sin changed man's three basic relationships. It changed his relationship with God (**separation**). It changed his relationship with himself (**fear, guilt and shame**). It changed his relationship with others (**blame**). In order to help a person grow to spiritual maturity, we help them learn how to begin to reverse the effects of these three changed relationships. This will result in a changed relationship with God, self and others.

The first section of this manual will give us the basic presuppositions (the Biblical foundations) that will be important to understand to help a person become a healthy reproducing Christian. Then we will discuss how those Biblical principles are applied at each level of spiritual maturity to help a person in his or her spiritual growth and development.

I.

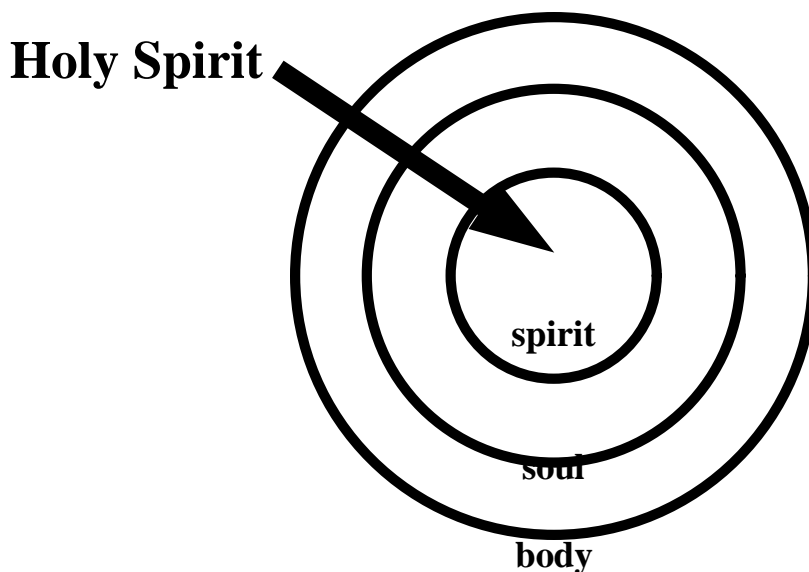
Understanding the foundations that will help us develop healthy reproducing Christians

God has commanded us to make disciples. However, many times we know what we are supposed to do but we do not know how to do it. In this first section we will look at the Biblical foundations which are important to understand in order to most effectively develop healthy reproducing Christians.

When Adam sinned, he was separated from God by sin. The results of that separation from God can only be reversed by having that barrier of sin removed by repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. At the moment a person places his trust in Christ that person is born of the Spirit. That means that the Holy Spirit comes into the human spirit. The Holy Spirit is now able to transform that person because change can happen from within.

If change is happening from within, the person will grow and mature spiritually. However, many new Christians do not understand that and try to change themselves by following a certain set of rules. Just as we cannot be saved by works, we do not mature by works. Romans 7:15-25 tells us that when we try to mature by our own efforts we have “I” trouble.

In the first seven chapters of Romans the Holy Spirit is only mentioned once. Then in Romans 8 the Holy Spirit is mentioned nineteen times. Romans 8 concludes by reminding us that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. When we mature by yielding to the Holy Spirit, we will be deeply rooted in the love of Christ.



A. Understanding the levels of spiritual growth

1. the new born babe

I Peter 2:2

As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, (NKJV)

Physical uses in the New Testament

talks about the time from conception to approximately one year old

Spiritual use in the New Testament

talks about the new Christian during the first few months of his or her spiritual life

The word that is translated “newborn” is used to speak of something that has happened just now at this very moment. The word that is translated “babes” is used to refer to a child that has not yet been born - John the Baptist, Luke 1:41, 44 - or a child very recently born - Christ, Luke 2:12, 16. As a result, when these words are used in a spiritual sense like they are in I Peter 2:2, they are speaking of a person who has become a Christian very recently.

Characteristics of a spiritual new born babe

They have a strong desire for food

They have a strong desire to grow

Just as the physical new born longs for milk, the spiritual new born also has a real longing for food. However, he does not know what kind of food he needs. If a false cult comes along, he will be ready to study with them because of this desire for food. In order to experience healthy growth, the new Christian needs a spiritual parent to help them in their spiritual growth just like they need a physical parent to help them in their physical growth.

I Thessalonians 2:7-8

But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing *mother* cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. (NKJV)

Needs of a spiritual new born babe

They need the pure milk of the Word - food
They need a spiritual parent to help them grow - love

2. the spiritual toddler

**The Greek word (nepios) speaks of a child that cannot yet speak clearly
(that is why we are using the word toddler)**

This word is used ten times in the New Testament. Six times it is used in a physical sense. Four times it is used to speak in a spiritual sense of a spiritual toddler. Everything that it says when it is used in a spiritual sense speaks of a person who started to grow and then stopped growing. As a result, the things that are mentioned about a spiritual toddler are all negative.

Characteristics of a spiritual toddler

1. **He acts like one who is not a Christian - I Corinthians 3:1**
2. **He is not able to understand difficult teachings from the Word - I Cor. 3:2**
3. **He experiences envy, strife and divisions - I Corinthians 3:3**
4. **His talk, understanding and thinking of spiritual things is limited - I Cor 13:11**
5. **He is tossed to and fro by every false teaching - Ephesians 4:14**
6. **He is easily deceived by false teachers - Ephesians 4:14**
7. **He is dull of hearing to spiritual truth - Hebrews 5:11**
8. **He needs to be retaught the basics of Christianity - Hebrews 5:12**
9. **He is unskillful in the word of righteousness - Hebrews 5:13**
10. **His senses are not developed to recognize good and evil - Hebrews 5:14**

Just as the physical toddler is very self centered and selfish, the spiritual toddler is also self centered and selfish. His focus is on my needs and my problems. In the physical life, a healthy child learns to grow beyond that self centered focus and begins to think about others. The same should happen in the spiritual life. However, many Christians never grow beyond this stage. Just like the new born babe, in order to experience healthy growth, the spiritual toddler needs a spiritual parent to help them in their spiritual growth.

Hebrews 5:12

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need *someone* to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. (NKJV)

Needs of a spiritual toddler

They need the milk of the Word - food

They need a spiritual parent to help them grow - love

3. the spiritual child

I John 2:12-14

I write to you, little children, Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning. I write to you, young men, Because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, Because you have known the Father. I have written to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one. (NKJV)

Characteristics of a spiritual child

They know that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake

They know the Father

The spiritual child is one who has experienced real growth in his or her Christian life. They know that the Father has forgiven their sins and those sins are no longer held against them. They understand that the reason why those sins have been forgiven is due to the fact that Christ paid for their sins by shedding His blood on the cross and that the Father shows that He accepted that payment by raising Christ from the dead. Second, they have gone beyond the point of just knowing about the Father. When we hear, read, study and memorize passages from the Bible, we get to know about the Father. However, we only get to really know the Father as we meditate on the Word and really learn to talk with God in prayer.

I Thessalonians 2:10-12

You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father *does* his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. (NKJV)

Needs of a spiritual child

They need an example to follow

They need regular encouragement

They continue to need spiritual parents

They need help in learn to walk to please God

4. the spiritual young man (or young woman)

I John 2:12-14

I write to you, little children, Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning. I write to you, young men, Because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, Because you have known the Father. I have written to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one. (NKJV)

Characteristics of a spiritual young man

They are strong - strong in spirit because they yield to the Holy Spirit

The Word of God abides in them - they are meditating on the Word

They have overcome the wicked one - they are having victory over sin

The word for young man is used in a physical sense to speak about the young men who buried Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5. The spiritual young man (or woman) is a Christian who has become strong in his spiritual life because he has learned to depend on the strength of the Holy Spirit instead of his own strength. He makes it a regular part of his life to meditate on the Word of God so that he can obey the things that he is learning. He has learned to have victory over sin by yielding to the Lord when he is facing temptation instead of struggling by his own efforts to have victory. He needs to continue to grow as Christ grew and matured.

Luke 2:40, 52

And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him... And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. (NKJV)

Needs of a spiritual young man

They need and want opportunities to serve the Lord

They need to continue to increase in godly wisdom

They need to continue to grow in their relationship with God

They need to continue to grow in their relationship with people

5. the spiritual parent

I John 2:12-14

I write to you, little children, Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning. I write to you, young men, Because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, Because you have known the Father. I have written to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one. (NKJV)

Characteristics of a spiritual parent

the spiritual parent must have one or more spiritual children to be a parent

the spiritual parent has really gotten to know the God of the Word

The basic requirement to be a physical parent is to have one or more children. The same is true for the spiritual parent. A spiritual parent must be one who has taken the personal responsibility to help one or more new Christians in their spiritual growth by providing spiritual food and especially by providing much love. The spiritual parent is also one who has really gotten to know God so that the love of God is flowing through his life to his spiritual children. - John 13:34-35

I Thessalonians 2:7-12

But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing *mother* cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father *does* his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. (NKJV)

Needs of a spiritual parent

They need to continue to grow in their ability to love

They need to continue to grow in the sharing of their lives

They need to continue to grow in their godly example to spiritual children

6. the spiritual Timothy

Acts 16:1-3

Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, *the* son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father *was* Greek. He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. Paul wanted to have him go on with him. And he took *him* and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek. (NKJV)

Characteristics of a spiritual Timothy

He already has a good report of other Christians

He already has an effective ministry to other Christians

A spiritual Timothy is a maturing Christian who we adopt as a spiritual son to help him develop a wider and more effective ministry. He may still be a spiritual young man or he may already be a spiritual parent. However, he is a growing Christian who has the potential for a much greater ministry if he can spend time with a mature spiritual leader to learn from his example. Such a person can often develop an effective ministry to a variety of cultures and ethnic groups. He will become a leader who effectively develops others leaders in various cultures.

I Corinthians 4:14-17

I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn *you*. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *you do not have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me. For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church. (NKJV)

Needs of a spiritual Timothy

He needs a spiritual parent who trusts him

He needs a spiritual parent who treats him as a beloved son

He needs a spiritual parent who treats him as a faithful son

He needs a spiritual parent who shares ministry with him

B. Understanding the process of spiritual growth

1. spiritual growth happens from the inside out

II Corinthians 4:16

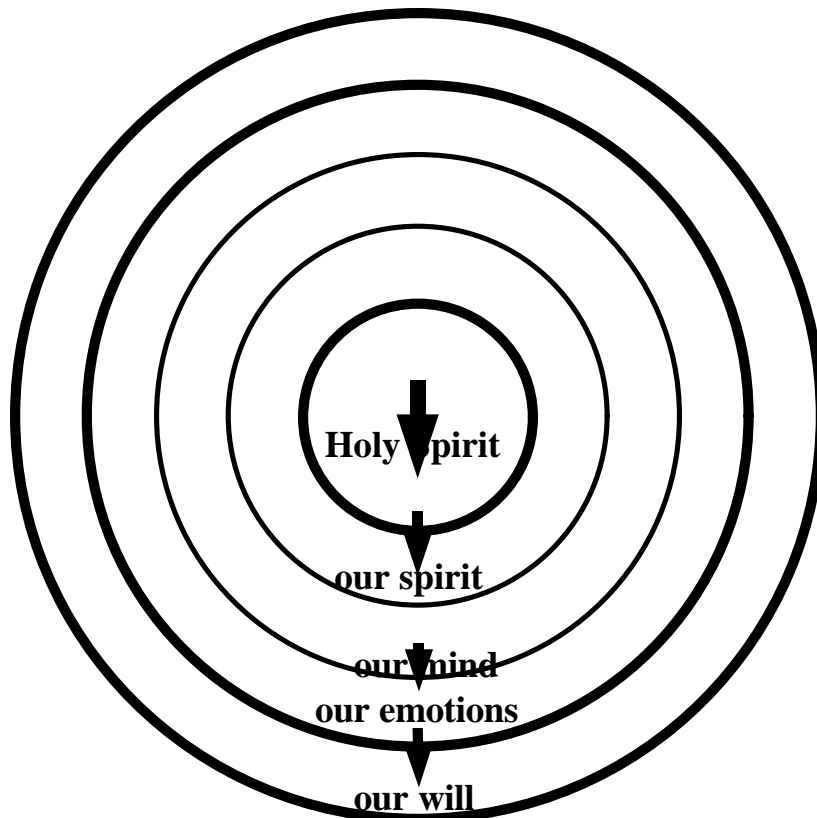
Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day. (NKJV)

**We understand that renewing is a daily process
We understand that renewing must happen in the inner man**

Many Christians try to help newer Christians change by getting them to promise to read their Bible every day, either to do or to avoid certain things, and many other outward habits and practices which they think will help these new Christians grow. Although these promises, practices and habits may be good, they are an attempt to change the outer man rather than the inner man. Instead, we need to focus on the inner man. This happens as we help people learn how to yield their spirit to the Holy Spirit. A transformed spirit will then allow our soul (mind, emotions and will) to be transformed. This will result in transformed actions because those actions are done in the power of the Holy Spirit and allow the love of Christ to flow through that person.

We yield our spirit to the Holy Spirit.

**He empowers our spirit, transforms our mind, renews our emotions,
which results in a will submitted to God to carry out the work of God.**



2. Spiritual growth happens best with spiritual parents

I Corinthians 4:14-16

I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn *you*. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *you do not have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me. (NKJV)

Instructors (paidagogos)

**“paidagogos” were slaves assigned to raise the sons of wealthy families
they often did this through severe discipline (fear)
an early “paidagogos” was a slave named “Mentor”**

Spiritual parents provide love and an example to follow

The word “paidagogos” is only used three times in the New Testament. It is used here in I Corinthians 4:15 and twice in Galatians 3:24-25 where we see that the Law was our “paidagogos” to bring us to Christ. However, once we come to Christ we are no longer under the “paidagogos”. The Christians in Corinth became Christians as adults so their physical parents were not spiritual parents (this is often true today also). They had never known the love and example that a spiritual parent provides. Their spiritual leaders has not become spiritual parents but were driving the Christians by fear instead of leading them by love and example. As a result, Paul has to deal with major problems in the church in every chapter of I Corinthians because the Corinthian Christians had stopped in their spiritual growth and had remained as spiritual toddlers (I Corinthians 3:1-3).

What Kind of Spiritual Leaders are We?

Instructors	Spiritual Parents
Lead by fear	Lead by love and example
Are concerned about doing our job	Are concerned about developing godly reproducing Christians
Develop spiritual toddlers	Develop spiritual parents and Timothys

3. Spiritual growth produces changes in knowledge, character and ministry

Exodus 18:20

And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do. (NKJV)

Moses was told to:

Teach the Word of God - help people grow in knowledge

Show them the way to walk - help people grow in godly character

Show them the work to do - help people grow in ministry

People grow in their Christians lives as we:

Help them learn how to present themselves to God

Romans 12:1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service. (NKJV)

Help them learn how to transform their minds (grow in knowledge)

Romans 12:2

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (NKJV)

Help them learn how to renew their inner man (grow in character)

II Corinthians 4:16

Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day. (NKJV)

Help them learn how to grow in love and service (grow in ministry)

John 13:34-35

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (NKJV)

Galatians 5:13

For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. (NKJV)

Questions to ask myself about the spiritual growth and development needed to develop healthy reproducing Christians

1. Questions about the foundation for spiritual growth and development

- a. Why is it important to focus on change from the inside out?
- b. What are some of the results when people try to experience spiritual growth through their own strength?
- c. What are some of the results when people experience spiritual growth by yielding to the Holy Spirit and taking root in the love of Christ?

2. Questions about the various levels of spiritual maturity

- a. Explain what you understand about the spiritual new born babe.
- b. Explain what you understand about the spiritual toddler.
- c. Explain what you understand about the spiritual child.
- d. Explain what you understand about the spiritual young man.
- e. Explain what you understand about the spiritual parent.
- f. Explain what you understand about the spiritual Timothy.

3. Questions about the process of spiritual growth

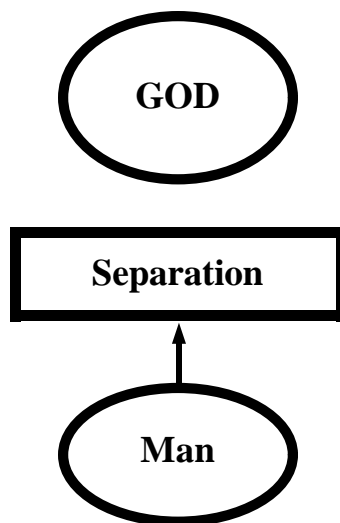
- a. Why do you think spiritual growth must happen from the inside out?
- b. Why do you think every Christian needs spiritual parents as well as physical parents?
- c. How would you explain the difference between an instructor (mentor) and a spiritual parent?
- d. Why is important to show people how to develop godly character?
- e. Why is important to show people how to develop an effective ministry?

C. Understanding the effects of original sin

1. Effects on our relationship with God

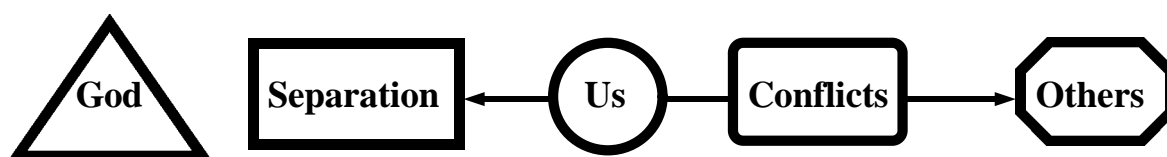
Genesis 3:7-8

Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. (NKJV)



Ever since the original sin of Adam and Eve, all people have been separated from God by sin. That separation from God has caused every person to look for one or more substitutes to fill the emptiness in their life. However, those substitutes can never produce inner peace. As a result, we continue to search for another substitute. These substitutes become the idols in our lives. In many cases these substitutes also lead to various forms of addiction.

The separation caused by sin means that man has no relationship with God. Sin also affects human relationships. Most human relationships are based on each person trying to get his or her own needs met rather than trying to meet the needs of others. This selfish attitude causes great human conflict. As a result, mankind is separated from God and has conflicts with others.



2. Effects on our relationship with ourself - fear, guilt, shame

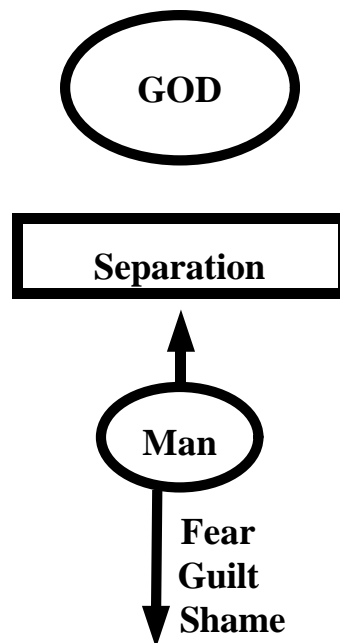
Genesis 3:7-11

Shame Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

Separation from God And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, "Where *are* you?"

Fear So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."

Guilt And He said, "Who told you that you *were* naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?" (NKJV)



Sin affected our relationship with God. Sin also affected our relationship with ourself. Adam and Eve immediately experienced a change inside themselves. Their lives were filled with fear which caused them to try and hide. Their lives were filled with guilt because their conscience told them that what they had done was wrong. Their lives were filled with shame because they realized that they would have to stand before God naked. As a result, they tried to cover up their shame with fig leaves.

Shame will usually cause us to cover our inward shame by placing the focus on our outward appearance. Only when we deal with what is causing us to feel shame inwardly will we be able to accept our outward appearance. Today people use every possible way to try to cover and hide the shame that they are feeling in their spirits. That is why people find it very hard to be honest about their true thoughts and feelings.

Biblical illustrations of how fear, guilt and shame affect us

Illustrations of the effects of fear

When Adam and Eve sinned, they became afraid and hid themselves from God. Just as fear caused them to act in a totally different way than in the past, so fear causes us to act out of fear instead of acting out of love (I John 4:18). Look at a number of Biblical illustrations of how people acted when they acted out of fear:

Abraham denied his marriage to Sarah - Genesis 13:11-13, Genesis 20:2

Isaac denied his marriage to Rebekah - Genesis 26:6-10

Jacob feared Esau because of his past sin - Genesis 32:7-8

Saul acted foolishly because of fear - I Samuel 13:8-14

Peter denied that he knew Christ - Matthew 26:69-75

The disciples hid in the upper room for fear of the Jews - John 20:19

Peter also showed prejudice because of fear - Galatians 2:11-12

Saul persecuted Christians because of fear - Acts 7:58-8:1

Illustrations of the effects of guilt

When Adam and Eve sinned, their lives became controlled by guilt. Today people find that their lives are controlled by their guilt. Look at the following Biblical illustrations of how guilt affected people for many years:

Reuben did not know how to face his father because of guilt - Genesis 37:29-30

The sons of Jacob had guilt for years - Genesis 42:21, Genesis 50:18

David tried to hide his guilt by anger at others - II Samuel 12:1-9

Judas committed suicide because of his guilt - Matthew 27:3-5

Illustrations of the effects of shame

When Adam and Eve sinned, they saw themselves as naked before God. However, they did what people do today to cover their shame. Instead of dealing with the spirit or inner man, they tried to cover their outward appearance so that they could hide their shame from others. This is exactly what people do today in their attempt to cover their shame. They focus on some outward thing that they feel makes them inadequate. Look at the following Biblical illustrations:

Adam and Eve focused on their physical nakedness - Genesis 3:7, 10

Moses focused on his inability to speak - Exodus 4:10

The ten spies focused on their lack of height - Numbers 13:33

Saul focused on his tribal background - I Samuel 9:21

Many people focus on their appearance (height or lack of it, etc.) - Matthew 6:27

Martha focused on her inadequacy as a hostess - Luke 10:40

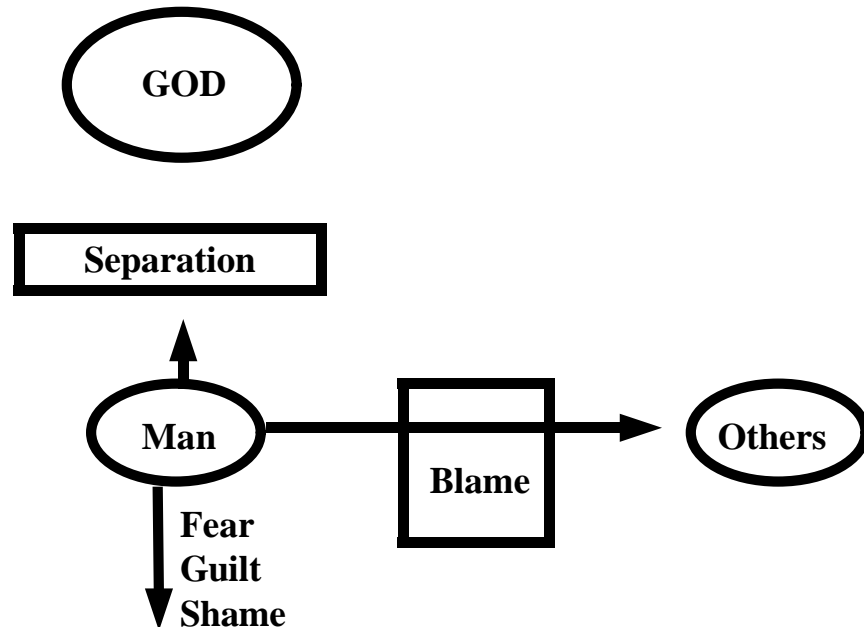
Philip focused on their inadequate finances - John 6:5-7

Peter focused on his failure - John 21:1-3

3. Effects on our relationship with others - blame

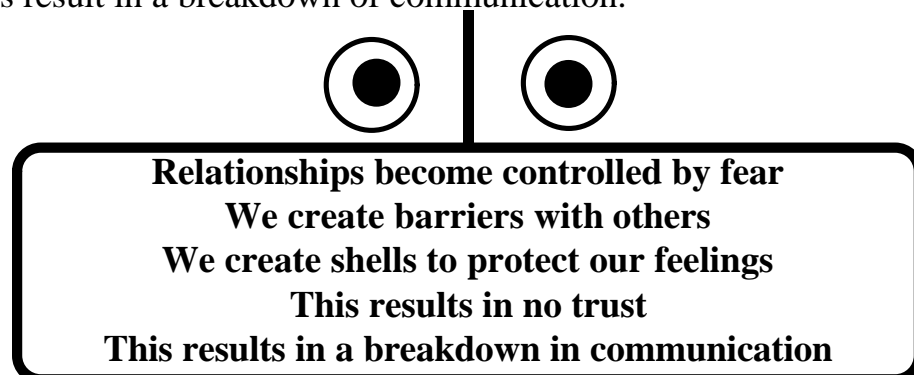
Genesis 3:12-13

Then the man said, "The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate." And the LORD God said to the woman, "What *is* this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." (NKJV)



Adam was not ready to take the personal responsibility for his sin. As a result, he handled it like a man and blamed Eve. Of course Eve was not ready to take personal responsibility for her sin and so she blamed the snake. That is the way people have handled their fear, guilt and shame ever since. They blame others for the choices that they have made. Of course that blame only causes greater separation between people. The separation between people only gets worse as people become more sinful.

As a result of blame, people create barriers between themselves and others. In most relationships, since both sides are blaming the other person, each person puts a shell around themselves to try to protect themselves from being hurt. These fear based relationships result in a breakdown of communication.



D. Reversing the effects of original sin

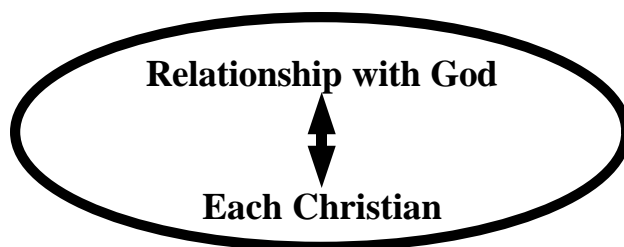
1. reversing the effects of separation (relationship and fellowship)

a. developing relationship

Romans 8:14-17

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs -- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.

We want the new Christian to realize that at the moment we placed our trust in Christ we established a relationship with God. We became the sons of God. We had the Holy Spirit come into our spirit to testify to us that we are the children of God. We became a part of those who will share the inheritance of God with Christ.

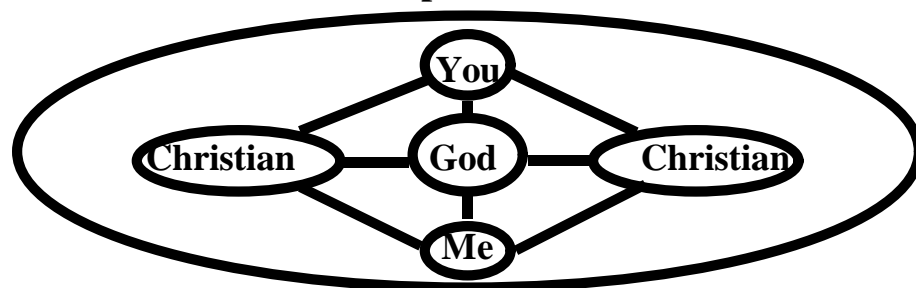


Ephesians 2:19

Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, (NKJV)

We also want them to understand that when we placed our trust in Christ we became a part of the family of God. This created a new relationship with all Christians as we were changed from strangers and foreigners to fellow citizens with other Christians. In fact, God also made all Christians members of the family of God. This means that in addition to having a relationship with God, we also are now related to all other Christians. They become a part of our family and we become a part of their family.

Relationship because of God



b. developing fellowship

developing fellowship with God

I John 1:3

That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. (NKJV)

Just as we want to help a new Christian understand their relationship with God and their relationship to other Christians, we also want to help them learn to enjoy the benefits of those relationships through fellowship. True fellowship with God happens as we yield ourselves to God (Romans 6:13-16). This results in fellowship with the Father (Romans 8:15), power from the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49) and the love of Christ filling our lives (Ephesians 3:17-19).

We yield to God



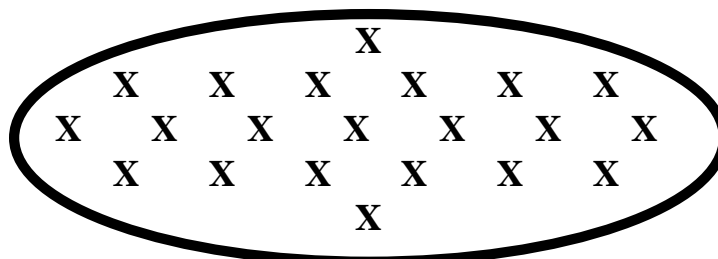
developing fellowship with other Christians

I John 1:7

But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. (NKJV)

When we are walking in fellowship with God because we are yielding to God, we are actually walking in the light because God is light. We will also experience fellowship with all other Christians who are yielding to God because they are also walking in the light.

Fellowship with God and with other Christians (all Christians who are walking in the light)



2. reversing the effects of fear (love)

a. learning to take root in the love of Christ

learning to take root in Christ

Colossians 2:6-7

As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving. (NKJV)

We want to help the new Christian learn to take root in Christ and in His love. People begin to take root in Christ as they have someone show them how to begin walking in Christ. We help the new Christian learn to walk in Christ by sharing with them how we learned to walk in Christ instead of walking in our own strength. Just like a loving parent, we spend time with the new Christian to show them how we do the things listed in these verses.

We take time to show them how to walk in Christ

We take time to help them learn how to take root in Christ

We take time to help them learn how to be built up in Christ

We take time to help them become established in the faith

We take time to help them learn to become thankful

learning to take root in the love of Christ

Ephesians 3:17-19

That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the width and length and depth and height -- to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (NKJV)

New Christians need to learn how to take root in the love of Christ as well as taking root in Christ. This happens as we help them begin to learn to understand the greatness of the love of Christ. We need to help them understand that Christ will always deal with Christians in love because the barrier of sin has been removed. We need to help them understand the difference between worldly love (satisfying self), family love (great care and concern but sometimes conditional) and Christ's love (demonstrated by His self sacrifice for our sake) from which we can never be separated- Romans 8:31-39.

b. learning to act out of love

we learn to act out of love as we grow in Christ's perfect love

I John 4:18

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. (NKJV)

Before we became Christians, our human spirit was separated from the Holy Spirit so our decisions always went through the changed relationship that we had with ourselves because of sin (fear, guilt and shame). That meant that because we could only depend on ourselves we acted out of fear rather than love. Now that the Holy Spirit has come into our human spirit, we have a choice. We can depend on ourselves and act out of fear or we can yield to the Holy Spirit and act out of love. In fact we have to make that choice two or three hundred times every day. As we learn to yield to the Holy Spirit more frequently, we will be moving from fear toward love.



we act out of love as we yield our spirit to the Holy Spirit

Romans 6:13, 16

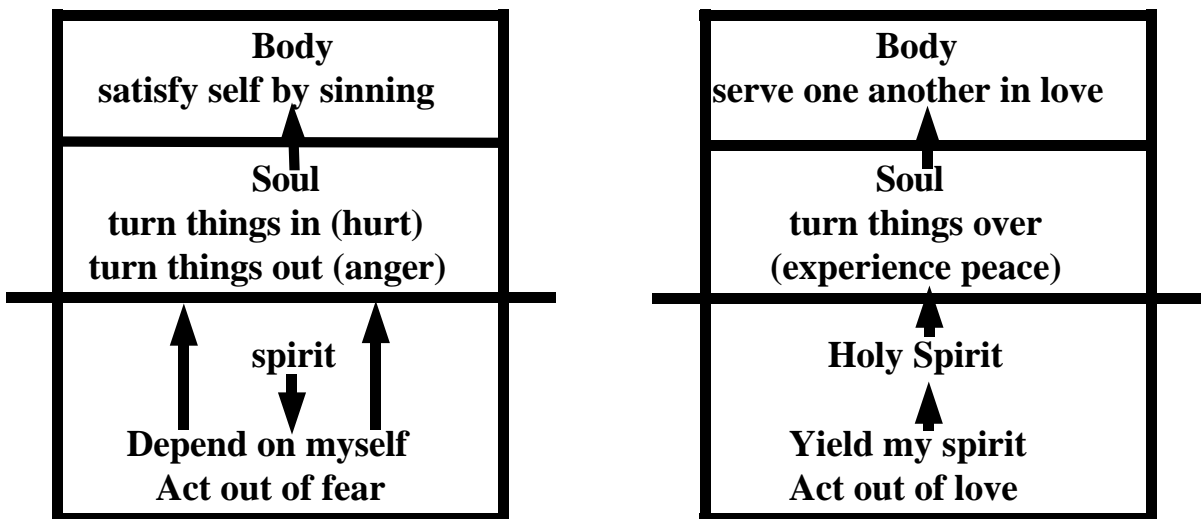
And do not present your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God... Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading* to death, or of obedience *leading* to righteousness? (NKJV)

We will act out of fear when we depend on our own strength

We will act out of love when we present ourselves to God

Romans 7:14-25

Romans 8:1-39



3. reversing the effects of guilt (forgiveness, cleansing, forgiving)

a. learning to experience forgiveness

I John 2:12

I write to you, little children, Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. (NKJV)

The sins of a Christian have already been forgiven at the moment we placed our trust in Christ. However, most new Christians do not have a clear understanding of what that means. The following verses are key verses to help a new Christian begin to understand the blessing that we have because our sins are forgiven.

Psalm 103:12

As far as the east is from the west, *So* far has He removed our transgressions from us. (NKJV)

Micah 7:19

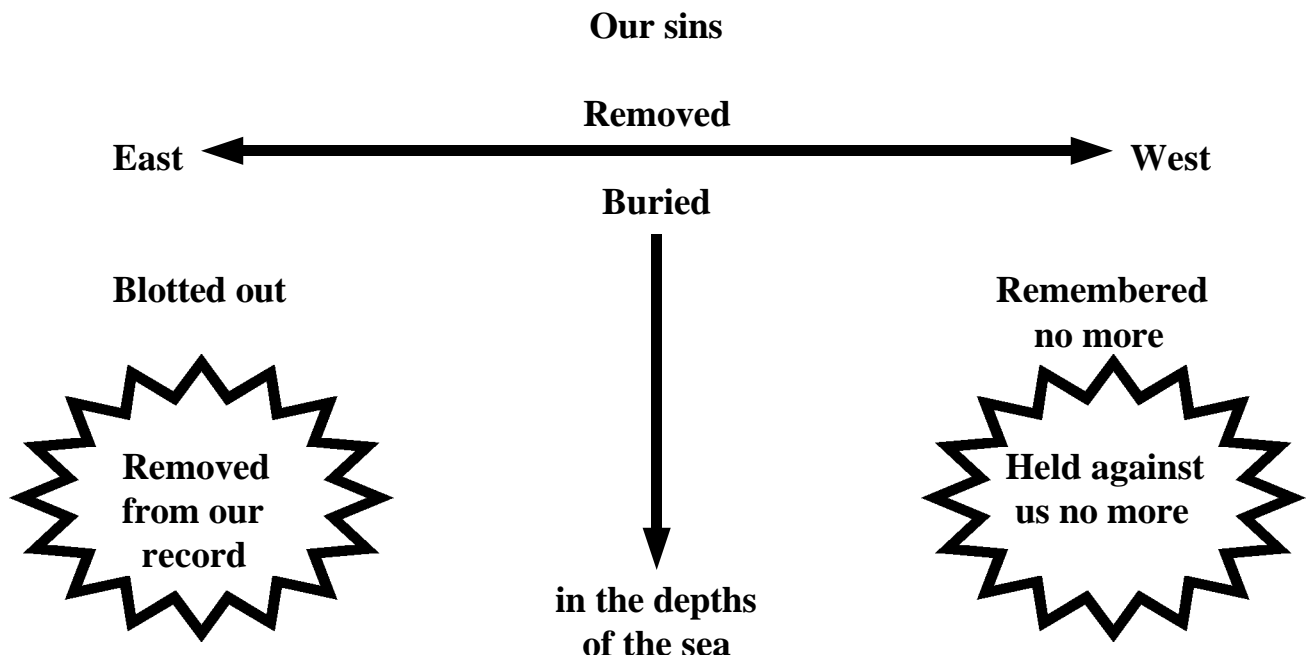
He will again have compassion on us, And will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins Into the depths of the sea. (NKJV)

Isaiah 43:25

I, *even I, am* He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins. (NKJV)

Hebrews 10:17-18

then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more." Now where there is remission of these, *there is* no longer an offering for sin. (NKJV)

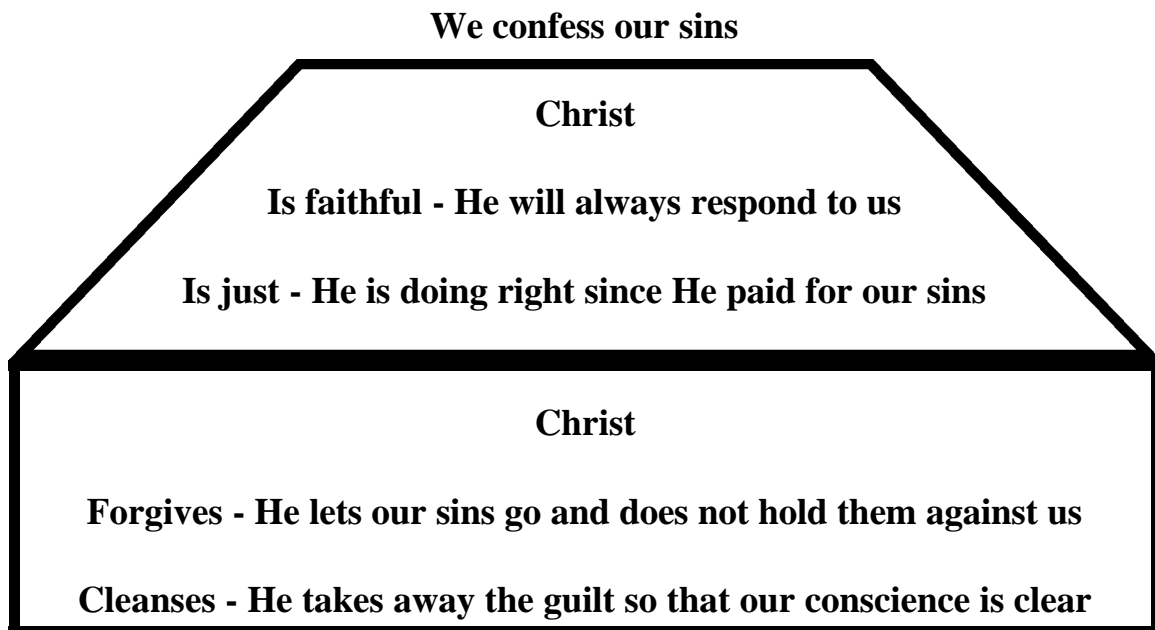


b. learning to experience cleansing

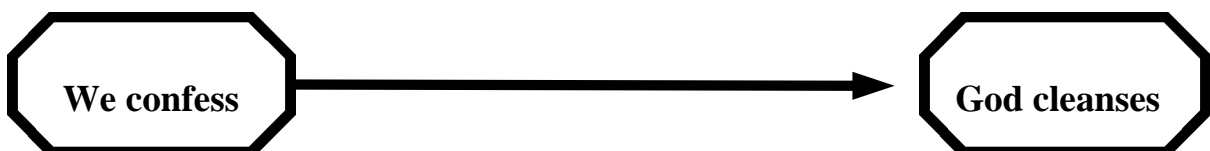
Christ used a very important illustration in John 13:10 to help Christians understand the need for daily cleansing from sins that we commit day by day. “Jesus said to him, He who is bathed needs only to wash *his* feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.” Christ compares our salvation to a bath that has removed our sins. However, we continue to commit other sins daily and we need to confess those sins daily so that we experience daily cleansing from the guilt of sin. When we confess our sins, Christ gives us the following promise.

I John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (NKJV)



Most new Christians need to have it explained to them that when they sin again they will definitely feel guilt because their conscience was renewed at the time they placed their trust in Christ. However, they need to have it clearly explained that the purpose of guilt is not to burden them down but rather to remind them to confess their sins so that they can experience the cleansing that Christ promises. We need to help them understand that confession of sin is like a spiritual bath. We confess our sins and God causes us to feel clean in our inner person.



c. learning to forgive others

Forgiving others is not a natural response for us. It is only as we understand that we are forgiven that we desire to forgive others. Then we see that we will only forgive others as we depend on the strength of Christ to forgive instead of our strength.

Reasons why we are to forgive

Ephesians 4:32

And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you. (NKJV)

Colossians 3:13

Bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. (NKJV)

God forgave us because we are in Christ

Christ forgave us and we are to follow His example

Receiving the power to forgive

John 15:5

"I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. (NKJV)

Luke 24:49

"Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high." (NKJV)

Romans 6:16

Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading* to death, or of obedience *leading* to righteousness? (NKJV)

Philippians 4:13

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. (NKJV)

We are powerless to forgive in our own strength

We have been given power by the Holy Spirit

We have that power as we yield to God in obedience

We are able to forgive through Christ's strength

4. reversing the effects of shame (self-respect, self-acceptance)

a. learning to experience our new creation

We are new creations in Christ

II Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. (NKJV)

Adam experienced shame because he was naked before God. However, instead of dealing with his inward shame before God, Adam tried to deal with his outward appearance. People have focused on their outward appearance ever since in their efforts to try and deal with inadequacy and shame. People focus on their outward appearance and say that they are too short, too fat, too little hair on their head, their nose is not perfect or a thousand other things about their appearance. However, they do not deal with their appearance before God as sinners and God looks at the heart. God makes us a new creation at the moment we place our trust in Christ.

Christ makes us a new creation

Christ says the old has passed away

Christ says the new has come

We are made sufficient through Christ

II Corinthians 3:5-6

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as *being* from ourselves, but our sufficiency *is* from God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. (NKJV)

We do not need to focus on ourselves any longer

We can realize that our sufficiency is from God

We can realize that God has made us adequate

We can be effective ministers of the new covenant

We have been given true life by the Spirit

b. learning to change from the inside out

The reason why people experience shame

Proverbs 28:13

He who covers his sins will not prosper, But whoever confesses and forsakes *them* will have mercy. (NKJV)

**The person who tries to cover his sins will not prosper
because his fear, guilt and shame are destroying from within**

The true remedy for dealing with our sins

We are to confess our sins

We are to forsake our sins

Many Christians find that their lives are still controlled by shame. This happens because they have hidden their sins from others but they have not hidden their sins from God. A common way to try to deal with this shame is by trying to become busy with Christian activities with the hope that the busyness will cause the shame to go away. The problem that we face if we try this approach is that the shame is still there when we finish our activities because the activities have been substituted for confession and forsaking the sin. Instead we need to focus on renewing the inner man by confessing and forsaking sin.

The way to be renewed

II Corinthians 4:16

Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day. (NKJV)

Philippians 2:12-16

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure. Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain. (NKJV)

**We renew the inward man daily
We work out what is happening with us
We shine as lights in the world**

5. reversing the effects of blame (responsibility, choices)

a. learning to take responsibility for our choices

Sin has lost it's dominion (power) over us

Romans 6:9

Knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. (NKJV)

Romans 6:14

For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace. (NKJV)

Christ defeated death when He rose from the dead

Christ defeated the power of sin over our lives and placed us under grace

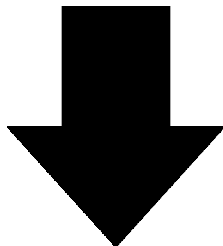
At the moment we placed our trust in Christ, sin lost it's power over us because we are now in Christ. We are now under grace instead of sin and we are now free to make right choices. When a Christian sins, it is due to the fact that he depends on himself. As a result, we now have to make the choice whether to depend on ourselves or to yield to Christ. Once we begin to fully understand this, we realize that we can no longer blame others for our choices because we now have the power to make right choices.

Sin now happens when we depend on our own strength

I Corinthians 10:12-13

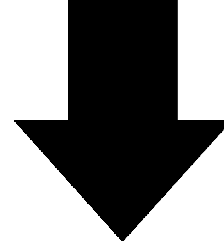
Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*. (NKJV)

We depend on our own strength



We fall and commit sin

We yield to a faithful God



He makes a way of escape

b. learning to have the power to carry out our choices

It is one thing to realize that we can now make right choices. However, the thing that is even more exciting is that we now have the power to carry out those choices. That power is not our own power. Instead that power is the power of the Holy Spirit working in our lives to give us the power to carry out the choices that we have made. A person who is a new Christian has probably made resolutions many times but never had the power to carry out those resolutions. That is why it is important to help him understand that he will only be able to carry out right choices as he depends on the power of the Holy Spirit working in his life.

We make wise choices as we yield to God

Isaiah 55:8-9

"For My thoughts *are* not your thoughts, Nor *are* your ways My ways," says the LORD. "For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts. (NKJV)

**The thoughts of God are higher than our thoughts
The ways of God are higher than our ways**

We are able to put on the new man as we yield to God

Colossians 3:10-14

And have put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave *nor* free, but Christ *is* all and in all. Therefore, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. (NKJV)

**The new man is renewed in knowledge
The new man is able to show proper attitudes toward others
The new man is able to act out of love**

We have the power to carry out wise choices as we yield to God

Luke 24:49

"Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high." (NKJV)

We Yield → We Have Power to Obey

Questions to ask myself about original sin and how to changes its effects

1. Questions about my understanding of the effects of original sin

- a. Explain how original sin changed the relationship of man to God.
- b. Explain how original sin changed the relationship of man to himself.
- c. Explain how original sin changed the relationship of man to others.

2. Questions about changing our relationship with God

- a. Explain what makes it possible for us to develop a relationship with God and with others.
- b. Explain how we help new Christians develop fellowship with God and with others.

3. Questions about changing our relationship with ourselves

- a. Explain how we learn to take root in Christ and His love.
- b. Explain how we learn to act out of love.
- c. Explain how we learn to experience forgiveness.
- d. Explain why it is important to experience daily cleansing.
- e. Explain how we can have the power to forgive others.
- f. Explain how we learn to act as new creations in Christ.
- g. Explain how the process of daily renewing happens in a Christian.

4. Questions about changing our relationship with others

- a. Explain what happens when we depend on our own strength even though sin has lost its power over the Christian.
- b. Explain what makes it possible for a Christian to carry out wise choices.

E. The four calls and commission of Christ to the disciples

1. Call One “Come and See”

John 1:39

He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour). (NKJV)

Christ invited the disciples to spend time with Him

Christ invited the disciples to get to know Him

If we are going to develop healthy reproducing disciples, we will need to follow the example of Christ as we see how He developed healthy reproducing disciples. We already saw that spiritual growth happens best when people have spiritual parents. In actual fact Christ became a spiritual parent to the disciples to help them in their spiritual growth. In each of the four calls, we will see that Christ asked the disciples to make a greater commitment. In exchange Christ also committed Himself to spend more time with the disciples as He asked for greater commitment. The goal of this first call was:

**Evangelism and Follow-up
(this period lasted for about a year)**

During this period:

**Christ invited the disciples to spend time with Him
John 1:35-51**

**Christ invited the disciples to travel some with Him
John 2:1-12, John 4:1-45**

**Christ began to share His vision with the disciples
John 4:35**

“Life up your eyes and look on the fields”

**Christ wanted them to see the needs of relatives - John 1:40-42
Christ wanted them to see the needs of friends - John 1:43-46
Christ wanted them to see the needs of co-workers - Mark 2:13-17
Christ wanted them to see the needs of others - John 4:32-35**

Today we want to do these same things with those at this level of commitment!

2. Call Two “Come and Grow”

Mark 1:16-20

And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." They immediately left their nets and followed Him. When He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also *were* in the boat mending their nets. And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him. (NKJV)

Christ invited the disciples to follow Him

Christ promised to help them become fishers of men

We see in these verses that Christ invited the disciples to make a greater commitment to Him. At the same time Christ also promised to spend more time with them. In these verses Christ gave the disciples an invitation to come and grow and begin to learn to serve. Christ invited the disciples to go with Him so that they could learn from Him. However, he had a second reason which was equally important for taking the disciples with Him. Christ wanted them to see from His example that He loved them. The goal of this second call was:

Edification (growth)

(this period lasted six to nine months)

During this period:

Christ continued to expand the vision of the disciples

Mark 1:38

But He said to them, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth." (NKJV)

Christ wanted to give the disciples a vision of the needs of other areas

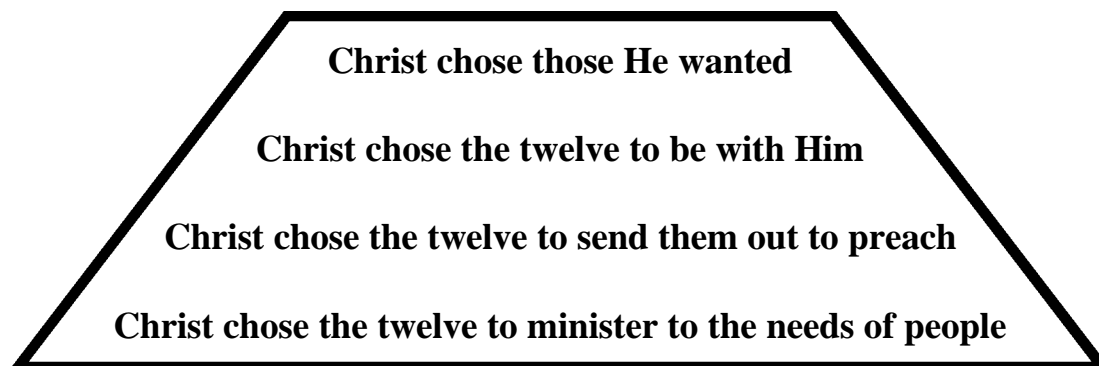
Christ wanted to show the disciples how to make contacts

Christ wanted the disciples to understand His purpose

Today we want to do these same things with those at this level of commitment!

**3. Call Three “Come and Serve”
(Come and Be With Me)
Mark 3:13-15**

And He went up on the mountain and called to *Him* those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons: (NKJV)

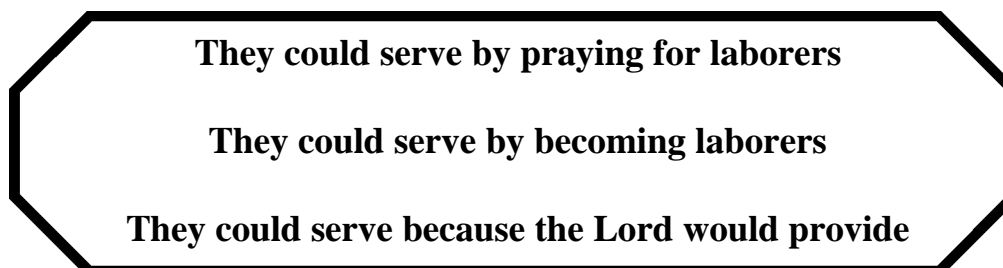


At this point Christ invited the twelve to a greater level of commitment. He invited them to become a part of a small leadership training group who would spend their time with Him. Christ also had two objectives during this period. First, Christ wanted the disciples to observe His example even more closely so that they would learn how much He loved them. Second, He wanted them to begin to serve Him by sharing the Gospel and ministering to the hurting. The goal of this third call was:

**Equipping for ministry
(this period lasted until after the resurrection)**

During this period:

**Christ continued to expand the vision of the disciples
(Christ taught the disciples how to serve)
Matthew 9:36-10:10**



Today we want to do these same things with those at this level of commitment!

4. Call Four “Come and Shepherd”

John 21:15-17

So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, *son* of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs." He said to him again a second time, "Simon, *son* of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, *son* of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep. (NKJV)

Christ said the basic requirement for shepherding was loving Him

Christ said that true shepherds feed the new Christians

Christ said that true shepherds provide for the care of the sheep

Christ said that true shepherds continue to feed maturing Christians

The commitment that the disciples were asked to make at this point was to love Christ. That is the basic requirement for all effective spiritual leaders. The depth and the breadth of our ministry will be directly related to our love for Christ. Christ also told the disciples that He would provide the power for ministry through the Holy Spirit in Luke 24:49, “Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.” (NKJV) The goal of this fourth call was:

Expansion of leadership

During this period:

Christ focused on loving each other - John 13:34-35

Christ focused on the indwelling Holy Spirit - John 14:16-18

Christ focused on the guidance of the Holy Spirit - John 14:26

Christ focused on sharing His plans - John 15:15-16

Christ focused on praying for them - John 17:4-19

Christ focused on loving Him - John 21:15-17

Today we need to do these same things with those at this level of commitment!

5. The commission “As you are going, Make Disciples”

Matthew 28:19-20

"As you are going therefore, Make Disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age." Amen.



Christ gave the disciples the commission to make other disciples. They were to exactly the same things that Christ did to help them become disciples. Today we are also to do exactly what Christ did as we obey this commission to make disciples. The goal of this commission was:

Extension (reproduction)

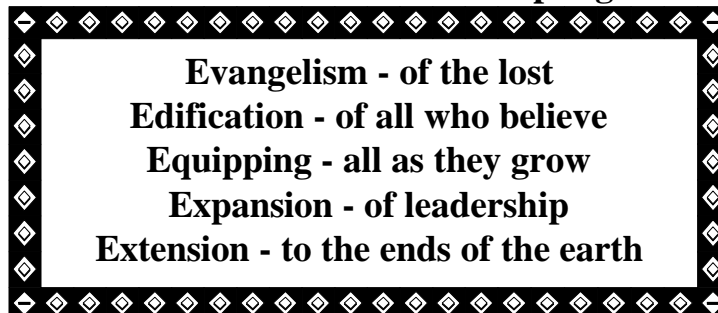
At this point:

Christ empowered the disciples and gave them a vision for the world

Acts 1:8

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." (NKJV)

Five E's for effective discipling



II.

Helping spiritual new born babes and toddlers begin healthy growth (new borns want food, spiritual toddlers are self centered)

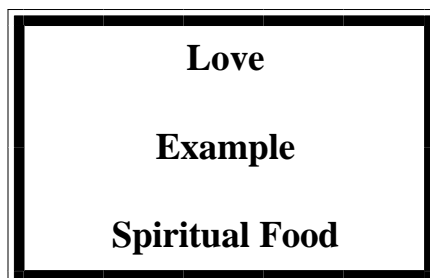
Just like a physical infant or a physical toddler, the spiritual new born or the spiritual toddler does not know what he or she needs for proper spiritual growth. That is why it is very important for every new Christian to have a spiritual parent who will love them and guide them in their growth. A child who grows up in a Christian home may have parents who are both physical and spiritual parents. However, for an adult who becomes a Christian or for a child who does not have Christian parents, there is a great need for spiritual parents who will help the new Christian experience proper development.

In order to know how to help people in their spiritual growth, we need to understand their needs at each level in their spiritual development. First, new Christians and spiritual toddlers need love. I Thessalonians 2:7-8 says, “But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing *mother* cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us.” (NKJV)

Second, new Christians and toddlers need an example to follow. I Corinthians 11:1 says, “Imitate me, just as I also *imitate* Christ.” (NKJV) Paul emphasizes this same thought to the Corinthians in I Corinthians 4:16 when he says, “Therefore I urge you, imitate me. (NKJV)

Third, new Christians need food to help them in their spiritual growth. However, many new Christians find it very difficult to understand the Bible. For that reason they need a spiritual parent who will explain the Bible to them and answer their questions. Aquila and Priscilla give us a beautiful example of this in Acts 18:26, “So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. (NKJV)

Three needs of new Christians and spiritual toddlers



A. Understanding how we help spiritual newborns and toddlers become spiritual children

1. the profile of a spiritual newborn

Just as there are certain characteristics of a physical newborn, there are also certain characteristics of a spiritual newborn. True spiritual birth will always provide an attitude of repentance toward God, an attitude of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and evidence of possessing new life. The fact that the conscience of a person has been renewed will cause a new Christian to feel that he is even more sinful than he used to be. If you ask him if he has started committing new sins, he will often say, “No, I am not committing new sins but things that never used to bother me now bother me.” I assure the new Christian that his conscience is now working properly so that he can confess those sins and be forgiven and cleansed - I John 1:9.

The spiritual newborn has an attitude of repentance toward God

Acts 20:21

Testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. (NKJV)

The spiritual newborn has an attitude of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ

Acts 20:21

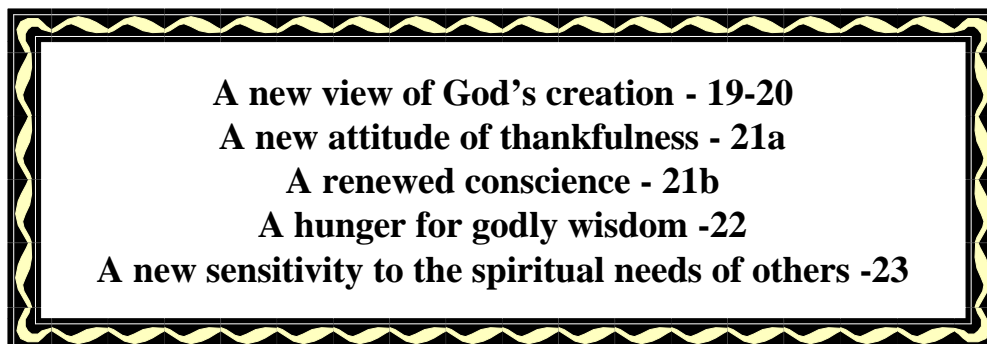
Testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. (NKJV)

The spiritual newborn gives evidence of possessing new life

II Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. (NKJV)

**Some evidences of possessing new life
(reversing the effects of Romans 1:19-23)**



2. the profile of a spiritual toddler

The spiritual toddler also has certain characteristics. However, the characteristics of a spiritual toddler are negative rather than positive because a spiritual toddler is a Christian who started to grow but then stopped growing or even went backward in his spiritual growth. Many of the following characteristics are commonly found among spiritual toddlers:

1. He acts like one who is not a Christian - I Corinthians 3:1
2. He is not able to understand difficult teachings from the Word of God - I Cor. 3:2
3. He experiences, envying, strife and divisions - I Corinthians 3:3
4. His talk, understanding and thinking of spiritual things is limited - I Cor. 13:11
5. He is tossed to and fro by every false teaching - Ephesians 4:14
6. He is easily deceived by false teachers - Ephesians 4:14
7. He is dull of hearing to spiritual truth - Hebrews 5:11
8. He needs to be retaught the basics of Christianity - Hebrews 5:12
9. He is unskillful in the word of righteousness - Hebrews 5:13
10. His senses are not developed to recognize good and evil - Hebrews 5:14

The problems of a spiritual toddler

A spiritual toddler usually lacks a spiritual parent

I Corinthians 4:14-17

I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn *you*. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *you do not have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me. For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church. (NKJV)

A spiritual toddler usually hears but does not obey

James 1:22

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. (NKJV)

A spiritual toddler usually depends on his own strength

Romans 7:19

For the good that I will *to do*, I do not do; but the evil I will not *to do*, that I practice. (NKJV)

3. objectives to help a person move from spiritual birth to a spiritual child

a. growth in character and attitude

We see in Exodus 18:20 that Moses was told to teach the people ordinances and laws (growth in the Word of God), he was to show the people the way to walk (growth in character and attitude) and he was to show the people the work to do (growth in ministry). We are to do those same three things to help people grow if we want to see them become healthy reproducing Christians.

Our goal is a transformed spirit

Our spirit is being transformed as we learn to submit to the righteousness of God

**Know that our old man was crucified with Christ - Romans 6:6
Reckon (Act) on the fact that we are now dead to sin - Romans 6:11
Yield ourselves to the righteousness of God - Romans 6:13, 16**

Our spirit is being transformed as we move from fear toward love

I John 4:18

There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. (NKJV)

Our spirit is being transformed as we learn to live by faith

Galatians 2:20

"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. (NKJV)

Our spirit is being transformed as we learn to walk in the Spirit

Galatians 5:13-16

For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another! I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. (NKJV)

**We understand that we have been set free
We realize that we are not to use our freedom to sin
We realize that we have been given power to walk in the Spirit**

b. growth in knowledge

Our goal is a transformed mind, emotions and will

Our mind is being transformed as we grow in our knowledge of God

Romans 12:1-2

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (NKJV)

We grow in our knowledge of the Word of God by:

Hearing the Word of God - Romans 10:17
Reading the Word of God - Revelation 1:3
Studying the Word of God - Acts 17:11, II Timothy 2:15
Memorizing the Word of God - Psalm 119:9, Psalm 119:11
Meditating of the Word of God - Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1:1-3

Our emotions are transformed as we take root in the love of God

Ephesians 3:17-19

That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the width and length and depth and height -- to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (NKJV)

I John 4:10-11

In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. (NKJV)

We take root in the love of God
We grow in experiencing the love of God

Our will is transformed as we submit our will to the will of God

Matthew 26:39

He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You *will*." (NKJV)



c. growth in ministry

Our goal is a transformed relationship with others

- A transformed relationship with God - The great command - Matt. 22:37-38**
- A transformed relationship with our neighbor-The second command-Matt. 22:39**
- A transformed relationship with Christians - The new command - John 13:34-35**

Transforming our relationship with God

(The great commandment - Love God with our whole heart, soul and mind)

John 17:20-23

"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; "that they all may be one, as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. "And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: "I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. (NKJV)

Transforming our relationship with God involves:



Love for God - I John 4:10-11, 19

Obedience to God - John 14:15, Matthew 7:24-27

Transforming our relationship with our neighbor (the world)

(The second commandment - Love our neighbor as we love self)

Luke 15:3-7

So He spoke this parable to them, saying: "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he loses one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost until he finds it? "And when he has found *it*, he lays *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing. "And when he comes home, he calls together *his* friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!' "I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance. (NKJV)



Seeking - Making contacts

Finding - Sharing the Gospel and leading a person to Christ

Bringing - Basic follow-up

Transforming our relationship with other Christians
(The new commandment - Love one another as Christ loves us)
John 13:34-35

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (NKJV)**John 15:12,17, Rom. 13:8, I Thess. 1:3, I Thess. 4:9-10, II Thess. 1:3, I Pet. 1:22, I Pet. 4:8, I John 3:11,23, 4:7, 11, 12, II John 5**

We show love to one another as we yield to the Holy Spirit to give us power to practice the positive One Anothers (31) and avoid the negative One Anothers (12)

Accept One Another - Romans 15:7
Admonish One Another - Romans 15:14, Colossians 3:16
Bear One Another's Burdens - Galatians 6:2
Bear with One Another - Ephesians 4:2, Colossians 3:13
Build Up One Another - Romans 14:19, I Thessalonians 5:11
Care for One Another - I Corinthians 12:25
Comfort One Another - I Thess. 4:18, 5:11, Hebrews 3:13, 10:25
Be Comforted Together through Faith in One Another - Romans 1:12
Have Compassion One of Another - I Peter 3:8
Confess your Sins to One Another - James 5:16
Be Devoted to One Another - Romans 12:10
Fellowship with One Another - I John 1:7
Forgive One Another - Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:13
Seek what is Good for One Another and for All Men - I Thess. 5:15
Greet One Another - Rom. 16:16, I Cor. 16:20, II Cor. 13:12, I Pet. 5:14
Be Hospitable to One Another - I Peter 4:9
Clothe Yourselves with Humility toward One Another - I Peter 5:5
Be Kind to One Another - Ephesians 4:32
Be Members One of Another - Romans 12:5, Ephesians 4:25
Be of the Same Mind One to Another - Romans 12:16, 15:5
Be at Peace with One Another - Mark 9:50, I Thess. 5:13
Pray for One Another - James 5:16
Regard One Another as More Important than self - Philippians 2:3
Serve One Another as a Slave - Galatians 5:13
Employ your gift in Serving One Another - I Peter 4:10
Stimulate One Another to love and good deeds - Heb. 10:24-25
Submit to One Another - Ephesians 5:21
Teach One Another - Colossians 3:16
Wait for One Another - I Corinthians 11:33
Wash One Another's Feet - John 13:14

B. Helping spiritual new borns and toddlers build their relationship with God

1. learning about God (Bible study)

The key in helping spiritual new borns and toddlers learn how to build their relationship with God is not to tell them to study their Bible. Instead the key is to have Bible study with them so that they can get their questions answered. Christ took the disciples with Him so that He could answer the questions that were in their minds. Before people become Christians they lack spiritual understanding. (Many people also lack reading comprehension). For this reason, a new Christian will have many of the same questions whether he has never been to school or has multiple doctor's degrees from one of the best universities in the world.

Learning about God through the Bible happens in five ways:

We learn by hearing the Word of God

Romans 10:17

We learn by reading the Word of God

Revelation 1:3

We learn by studying the Word of God

II Timothy 2:15

We learn by memorizing the Word of God

Psalms 119:11

We learn by meditating on the Word of God

Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1:1-3

Most people first get involved in learning about God by hearing someone else read the Bible. Those who become Christians and begin to grow usually start to read, some start to study and some begin to memorize. However, all four of these ways of learning about God through the Bible have one common problem. People learn to know about God but they do not really get to know God. We usually only start to get to really know God as they learn to meditate on the Word of God along with the following responses to our meditation:

Learn to practice daily cleansing from sin - John 13:9-10

Learn to obey the commands of Christ - John 13:12-17

Learn to love one another - John 13:34-35

Learn to yield to the Holy Spirit - John 14:13-27

Learn to abide in Christ - John 15:1-8

Learn to take root in the love of Christ - John 15:9-17

2. learning to talk to God (prayer)

The key to helping spiritual new borns and toddlers learn how to pray is not to teach a class on prayer. Instead the key is to pray for them and with them. Many people have learned how to say prayers but they haven't the slightest idea what it actually means to pray. Paul told people what he prayed for them many times. One of the great examples of Paul's prayer for Christians is given in **Ephesians 3:14-21**.

For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the width and length and depth and height -- to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (NKJV)

Paul included the following things in his prayer for the Ephesians:

That they would be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man

That Christ would dwell in their hearts by faith

That they would become rooted and grounded in love

That they would know the love of Christ which passes knowledge

That they would be filled with all the fullness of God

We need to help new Christians learn to pray that the Holy Spirit would give strength to their human spirit (this happens as they learn to yield to God instead of depending on their own strength). We need to help them learn to share their lives with Christ by praying in faith. We need to help them understand how to begin to take root in the love of Christ (this happens as they ask Christ to give them His love for others). We need to help them begin to know the love of Christ which is greater than any human love (this happens as they pray for spiritual understanding of the love of Christ rather than human understanding). Then they need to pray that God will help them to understand how He fills their lives as they yield to Him (this happens as they learn to pray at any time about any thing so that they have Christ's power flowing through them).

3. learning to know God (fellowship)

The key to helping spiritual new borns and spiritual toddlers learn to experience fellowship with God is not to teach a class on fellowship. Instead the key is to invite them to share fellowship with you so that they will be able to observe your fellowship with God. As you spend time together sharing how you are applying Biblical principles to your daily life, they will begin to learn those principles and how to apply them in their daily lives. John shared some key principles for fellowship with God in **I John 1:3-7**.

That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write to you that your joy may be full. This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. (NKJV)

John shared the following principles about fellowship

We can only share with others what we have experienced ourselves

True fellowship is with both the Father and the Son

**True fellowship will produce joy rather than happiness
(happiness is based on what is happening around us,
joy is based on what is happening within us)**

True fellowship is based on the fact that God is light

True fellowship will not happen if we are walking in darkness

True fellowship will happen as we learn to walk in the light

**True fellowship happens both with God and with other Christians
(we cannot have one without the other)**

True fellowship requires daily cleansing from our sins

Fellowship is a life shared not a topic taught!

4. learning to serve God (obedience)

Spiritual new borns and spiritual toddlers do not have a history of obedience to God. The spiritual new born has not had a history of obedience because he did not even know God to obey Him. The spiritual toddler has not had a history of obedience and that is why he has remained a spiritual toddler. Obedience is caught rather than taught. Christians will only learn to obey and serve God as they have the opportunity to see by personal observation how to obey and serve God. Paul made this clear by the principles he shared in **I Thessalonians 2:10-12**.

You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father *does* his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. (NKJV)

Principles for learning to obey and serve God

New Christians learn to obey by the example of other Christians

New Christians need examples that are devout, just and blameless

New Christians need examples that spend time with them

New Christians need examples that will encourage them

New Christians need examples that with comfort them

New Christians need examples that will urge them to do right

New Christians need a caring spiritual father and mother

New Christians need to be shown a worthy walk to follow

From these principles we see that new Christians learn how to serve God and be obedient to His commandments as they see spiritual parents giving them an example to follow. The only way they can have an example to follow is if Christians will become spiritual parents who spend time with them. As new Christians spend time with you, they will become what you are whether that is good or bad.

Obedience and service are caught not taught!

5. learning to yield to the Holy Spirit (power for change)

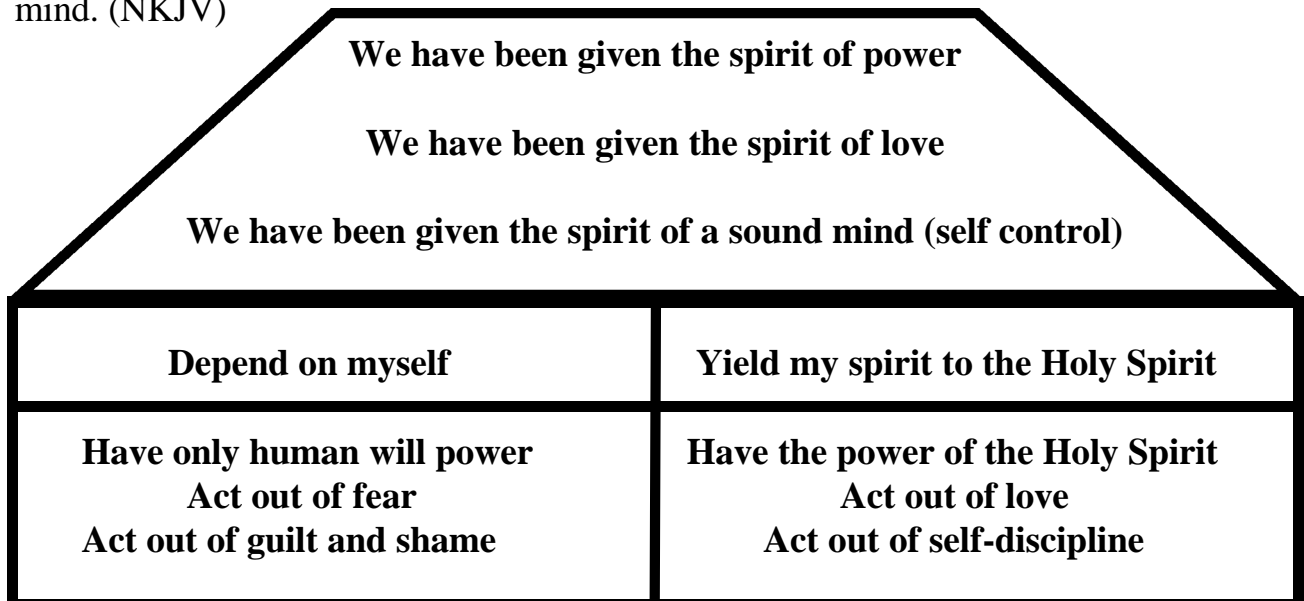
Most spiritual new borns and spiritual toddlers have a great desire for change but they have no idea how to change. They have tried at different times to change and have always failed. What they are experiencing is described perfectly in **Romans 7:18-20**.

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will *to do*, I do not do; but the evil I will not *to do*, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not *to do*, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. (NKJV)

Non-Christians	Christians who depend on self	Christians who yield to God
No desire to change	Desire to change	Desire to change
No power to change	No power to change	Power to change

The sin that dwells in us is the sin of depending on self (acting independent of God) instead of yielding to God and asking Him to give us His strength to change. Christ told the disciples in John 15:5 that they could do nothing without Him. He told them in Luke 24:49 to wait in Jerusalem until they were clothed with power from on high. Then He promised them in Acts 1:8 that they would have power to be witnesses to Him as they yielded to the Holy Spirit. We are given the following promises in **II Timothy 1:7**.

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. (NKJV)



C. Helping spiritual new borns and toddlers build their relationship with a spiritual parent

1. developing trust (love)

We want to help those who are spiritual new borns and toddlers build a relationship of trust with spiritual parents. Relationships between parents and young children are developed by what the parents say and do. The same is true for the building of relationships between spiritual parents and those who are spiritual new borns and toddlers. Spiritual parents are told how to develop these in **I Thessalonians 2:7-9**.

But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing *mother* cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. (NKJV)

Characteristics of a spiritual parent who wants to develop trust

An attitude of gentleness

The tender love of a nursing mother

A strong desire to show that love

A sharing of their life with the spiritual new born

Treating the spiritual new born as worthy of love

A willingness to sacrifice for the spiritual new born

A willingness to be available and serve

Trust is something that the spiritual parent chooses to develop or fail to develop by their own choice. Those who are spiritual new borns and toddlers do not even know what they need in order to develop effectively in their spiritual lives. As a result, they do not even know that they need someone who will show tender love and care to them. That is why it is the responsibility of spiritually mature Christians to take the responsibility to become spiritual parents and help new Christians in their growth and spiritual development.

2. modeling (example)

Most of what spiritual new borns and toddlers will learn during this period of their spiritual development will be learned from what they see instead of from what they are taught. That is why they need spiritual parents who can provide them with an example to follow. If the examples they have to follow are controlled by inner fear, guilt and shame, they will become Christians who are controlled by external rules rather than becoming Christians who are taking root in the love of Christ. That is why Paul said in **I Corinthians 4:14-17:**

I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn *you*. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *you do not have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me. For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church. (NKJV)

New borns and toddlers do not need additional shame

New borns and toddlers do need warnings from spiritual parents

New borns and toddlers need those who commit to be spiritual parents

New borns and toddlers need examples that they can imitate

New borns and toddlers need reminders of the way we walk

Paul also told Timothy the areas of our example as spiritual parents which will have the greatest impact on others in their spiritual development. This instruction was given in **I Timothy 4:12.**

Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. (NKJV)

We are to be an example by the way we speak

We are to be an example by the way we act

We are to be an example in our love

We are to be an example in our spirit

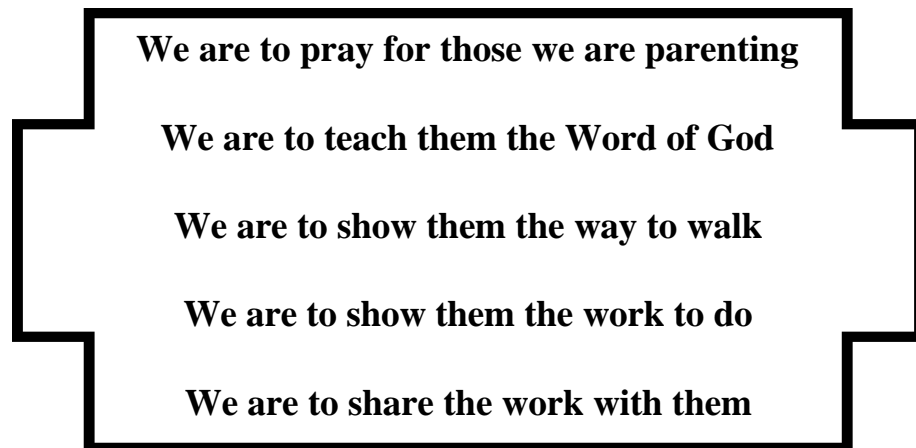
We are to be an example in our faith

We are to be an example in our purity

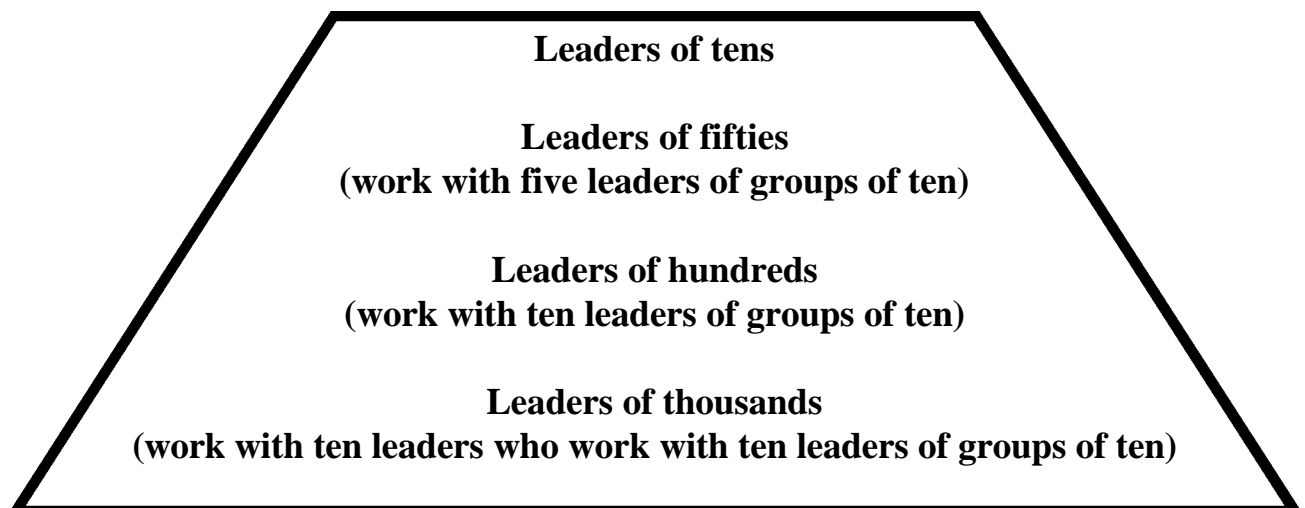
3. five things a spiritual parent does to help a spiritual child grow

In addition to develop trust in the spiritual new born or toddler and providing an example for them to follow, Jethro told Moses five other things that would help people develop in their spiritual lives. These same five things are important if we want to help people grow and develop. These are given for us in **Exodus 18:19-21**.

"Listen now to my voice; I will give you counsel, and God will be with you: Stand before God for the people, so that you may bring the difficulties to God. "And you shall teach them the statutes and the laws, and show them the way in which they must walk and the work they must do. "Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place *such* over them *to be* rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens. (NKJV)



Jethro also recognized that the maximum number of people that most people could help to develop is about ten at a time (many may be only able to help one or two at a time depending on their own level of spiritual development). Some can only exercise direct leadership while others can lead other leaders (indirect leadership). As a result, Jethro suggested to Moses that they appoint:



Questions to ask myself about how to help new born babes and toddlers begin healthy growth

1. Questions about my understanding of spiritual babes and toddlers

- a. Describe the spiritual profile of a newborn babe.
- b. Describe the spiritual profile of a spiritual toddler.
- c. Explain why a spiritual toddler has difficulty in growing spiritually.

2. Questions about helping a new Christian grow and become a spiritual child

- a. Explain how we help a new Christian grow in character and attitude
- b. Explain how we help a new Christian grow in knowledge.
- c. Explain how we help a new Christian grow in their ministry to others.

3. Questions about helping new Christians grow in their relationship to God

- a. Explain how we help people learn about God through Bible study.
- b. Explain how we help people learn to really pray.
- c. Explain how we help people learn to really fellowship with God.
- d. Explain how we help people learn to serve God.
- e. Explain how we help people learn to have the power to change.

4. Questions about helping new Christians build a relationship to a spiritual parent

- a. Explain how we help a new Christian develop trust in a spiritual parent.
- b. Explain why an example to follow is so important for a new Christian.
- c. Explain five things a spiritual parent can do to help a new Christian in their spiritual growth.

III.

Helping spiritual children continue to experience proper development (spiritual children want to grow)

Just like a physical child wants to grow physically, the spiritual child wants to grow in his spiritual life. The person who has become a spiritual child has already learned many lessons about building his relationship with God, his relationship with other Christians and his relationship with those who are not yet Christians. However, for proper growth to continue, he still needs spiritual parents. In addition, he also needs spiritual brothers and sisters who now become more important in his development.

During this stage of a person's spiritual development, he needs to become strong in spirit. Luke 1:80 describes the development of John the Baptist by saying, "So the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel." (NKJV) A person becomes strong in spirit as he learns to submit the control of his human spirit to the Holy Spirit so that the power of the Holy Spirit flows through his life.

Just like the spiritual new born and toddler, the spiritual child continues to need encouragement and an example to follow. Paul told the Christians in I Thessalonians 2:10-12, "You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father *does* his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory." (NKJV)

A key part of the development of a spiritual child is the development of healthy relationships with a growing number of other Christians. John 13:34-35 says, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (NKJV) In order to develop healthy relationships with a growing number of other Christians, the spiritual child needs to be in at least one small group to develop a healthy relationship with the others in that group. Christ modeled this principle when it tells us in Mark 3:14, "Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach," (NKJV) They spent time with Him and with each other.

Three needs of spiritual children

<p>They need to become strong in spirit They need to have encouragement and an example to follow They need to build healthy relationships with other Christians</p>
--

B. Understanding how we help spiritual children become spiritual young men

1. the profile of a spiritual child

Like the spiritual new born and the spiritual toddler, the spiritual child also has certain characteristics. A spiritual child is one who is growing in the same way that Christ grew as a child. The following characteristics are developing in a spiritual child.

Luke 2:40-52

And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him. His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast. When they had finished the days, as they returned, the Boy Jesus lingered behind in Jerusalem. And Joseph and His mother did not know *it*; but supposing Him to have been in the company, they went a day's journey, and sought Him among *their* relatives and acquaintances. So when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, seeking Him. Now so it was *that* after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously." And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them. Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. (NKJV)

- 1. He is becoming strong in spirit - Luke 2:40
(development of godly attitudes and character) - Gal. 5:16, 22-23**
- 2. He is increasing in godly wisdom - Luke 2:40, James 3:17**
- 3. He is growing in grace - Luke 2:40, II Peter 3:18
this is the reproduction by the indwelling Holy Spirit of the graciousness of God in the life and service of the believer (Christian growth)**
- 4. He has the attitude of a learner - Luke 2:46**
- 5. He is growing in ministry - Luke 2:47**
- 6. He is growing in his relationship with the Father - Luke 2:49**
- 7. He is growing in his application of submission - Luke 2:51**
- 8. He is developing a proper family relationship - Luke 2:51**
- 9. He knows that his sins are forgiven because of Christ - I John 2:12**
- 10. He is growing in His knowledge of the Father - I John 2:13**

2. the objectives for helping a spiritual child become a spiritual young man

a. growth in character and attitude

Our goal is to help each Christian continue to grow in the development of godly character and attitude. In order for this to happen, we need to know what will help them continue to develop and we need to show them how these things develop in their lives. This means that the importance of spending time with a spiritual parent is equally important at this stage of development so that growing Christians can be shown how to grow in godly character and attitude. To become strong in spirit, a growing Christian needs to be shown how to:

♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥
♥ **Live in the Spirit** ♥
♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

Galatians 5:25

If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. (NKJV)

♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥
♥ **Walk in the Spirit** ♥
♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

Galatians 5:16-18

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. (NKJV)

♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥
♥ **Be led by the Spirit** ♥
♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

Romans 8:12-14

Therefore, brethren, we are debtors -- not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. (NKJV)

♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥
♥ **Be filled with the Spirit** ♥
♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

Ephesians 5:18

And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, (NKJV)

growth in character and attitude (continued)

In addition to becoming strong in spirit by learning to submit to the Holy Spirit, there are some other key areas where we want to help a spiritual child in his development as he grows to help him develop and become a spiritual young man. Again, the growing Christian needs to be taught these things by example as he observes the life of one or more spiritual parents. A spiritual child that is growing:

Is developing a good reputation

Acts 16:2

He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. (NKJV)

Is becoming an example to others

I Timothy 4:12

Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. (NKJV)

Is becoming a person of godly wisdom

James 1:5, James 3:13-18

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him...Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct *that* his works *are done* in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, demonic. ¹For where envy and self-seeking *exist*, confusion and every evil thing *are* there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. (NKJV)

Is developing the attitude of a servant

Mark 10:42-45

But Jesus called them to *Himself* and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. "Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. "And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." (NKJV)

b. growth in knowledge

Our goal is to help each Christian continue to grow both in his or her knowledge of the Word of God and also the application of that Word to their daily living. Many Christians grow in knowledge but they do not know how to put into practice what they are learning. That is why we also want to help Christians learn to put into practice what they are learning. During this period of development in the life of the growing Christian, we want to help them focus on at least three things. A spiritual child that is growing:

Is becoming familiar with the entire Word of God

II Timothy 3:14-17

But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (NKJV)

Is having effective meditation become a basic part of life

Joshua 1:8

"This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. (NKJV)

Psalms 1:1-3

Blessed *is* the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. (NKJV)

Is developing a clear commitment to the doctrines of the Word of God

I Timothy 4:16

Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you. (NKJV)

Are we growing in our own knowledge and application of the Word?

c. growth in ministry

Our goal is to help each Christian grow and develop an effective and balanced ministry. Effective ministry is based on developing healthy relationships with others. A spiritual child that is growing is developing a healthy ministry:

Is developing an effective ministry of submission to spiritual leaders

Titus 2:4-8, I Peter 5:5-6

That they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. Likewise exhort the young men to be sober-minded, in all things showing yourself *to be* a pattern of good works; in doctrine *showing* integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you... Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your* elders. Yes, all of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, (NKJV)

Is developing an effective ministry in the home

Colossians 3:17-21

And *whatever* you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them. Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. (NKJV)

Is developing an effective ministry of service to the body

Acts 16:1-2

Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, *the* son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father *was* Greek. He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. (NKJV)

Is developing an effective ministry of evangelism to the lost

Acts 8:4

Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word. (NKJV)

Acts 11:19-21

**B. Helping spiritual children develop a godly relationship within their family
(developing the one another within the family)**

The New Testament gives us 43 different relationships that talk about our relationship and ministry to one another. Thirty one of these are positive and twelve are negative. These are best developed within the family by those members of the family that are Christians. Many times when we reach a person for Christ, part of their family are not Christians. In that case we need to help the new Christian learn to develop these relationships within a spiritual family so that they will be shown by example how to develop a godly relationship with family members whether those family members are Christians or not. This is very important if we are going to reach their family and their extended family for Christ.

1. developing their relationship with their parents

the relationship to develop if still in the home

Ephesians 5:21

Submitting to one another in the fear of God. (NKJV)

Ephesians 6:1-3

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth." (NKJV)

Children are to be taught to submit to their parents

Children are to be taught to obey their parents

Children are to be taught to honor their parents

the relationship if an adult and married

Genesis 2:24

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. (NKJV)

Ephesians 6:2-3

"Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth." (NKJV)

Married children are to be taught how to leave their parents

Married children are to be taught to still honor their parents

2. developing their relationship with their birth family (or adopted family)

In addition to parents, the birth or adopted family will also include brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins and other members of their extended family. We also want to help spiritual children learn to practice the one anothers of Scripture in relation to their extended family. If part of the members of the extended family are Christians, developing the one another relationships commanded by Scripture are often most easily developed within the extended family first. If part of the extended family are not Christians, practicing the one anothers in our relationships with those family members will often give us opportunities to share the Gospel with them and lead them to Christ.

If we are an older male relative, we are to lead by our example and teaching

Titus 2:1-2

But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; (NKJV)

If we are an older female relative, we are to lead by our example and teaching

Titus 2:3-5

The older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things -- that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. (NKJV)

If we are a younger relative, we are to minister to our older relatives

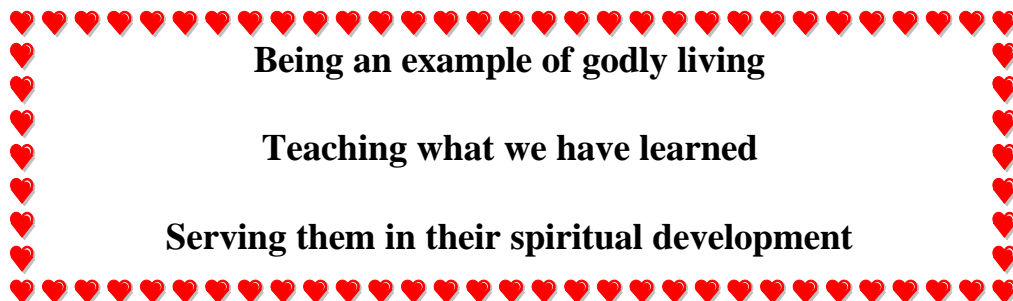
I Timothy 4:12

Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. (NKJV)

I Timothy 5:4

But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God. (NKJV)

We serve our extended families by:



3. developing their relationship with their partner

Ever since Adam and Eve sinned, there has been a great deal of conflict between husbands and wives. Husbands and wives often do not have any idea how to move from the conflict that was present before they became Christians to the point where they have a godly marriage. God gave Adam and Eve three principles for building a godly marriage. Once they sinned, God chose the areas where couple have the greatest trouble as the areas to focus on to develop a godly relationship

The original plan for building a godly marriage

Genesis 2:24

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. (NKJV)

leave - move decision making from the old family to the new family

cleave (be joined) - become joined together in their decision making

become one - learned to think “us and our” instead of “me and my”

The areas where couples often need the most help

Colossians 3:16-19

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And *whatever* you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them. (NKJV)

Couples need help in learning to apply the Word in their relationships

Couples need help in learning to live with grace in their hearts

Couples need help in learning to develop a thankful attitude

**Wives need help in learning to submit to their husbands
(Eve made her decision without talking with Adam)**

**Husbands need help in learning to love their wives
(Adam placed blame on Eve - the first step to bitterness)**

4. developing their relationship with their children

When parents did not had godly Christian parents as they were growing up, they have no idea how to function as godly parents themselves. Instead they will tend to parent their own children the same way that their parents raised them. As a result, they need help in learning how to be godly parents to their children. Scripture points out that there are certain areas where most parents need help because of wrong examples they experienced as they were growing.

The areas where parents most often need help

Colossians 3:21

Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. (NKJV)

Ephesians 6:4

And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. (NKJV)

Parents often have problems provoking their children
Parents often have problems discouraging their children
Parents need help learning to train their children
Parents need help learning to admonish their children

Paul gave us a model of things that parents need to learn

I Thessalonians 2:7-12

But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing *mother* cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father *does* his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. (NKJV)

Parents need to be taught how to be gentle with their children
Parents need to learn how to share their lives with their children
Parents need to learn how to sacrifice for their children
Parents need to learn how to be an example to their children
Parents need to learn how to encourage their children
Parents need to learn how to help their children develop a worthy walk

C. Helping spiritual children develop a godly relationship with a spiritual family

1. spiritual parent - spiritual child relationship

One of the key reasons why so many Christians remain as spiritual toddlers for many years is due to the fact that they never become a part of a spiritual family. The most important relationship in a physical child's development is their relationship with their parents. The same thing is true for a spiritual child. A person who becomes a Christian as an adult has never seen a Christian family modeled. Unfortunately, even many who have grown up in Christian homes have not been given good models as their examples. That is why it is very important for every new Christian to have spiritual parents (In some cases this will also be their physical parents.)

Keys for spiritual parents to develop healthy relationships

I Corinthians 4:14-17

I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn *you*. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *you do not have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me. For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church. (NKJV)

Spiritual parents do not shame spiritual children

Spiritual parents treat them as beloved spiritual children

Spiritual parents warn spiritual children

Spiritual parents treat them as their own beloved children

Spiritual parents provide an example to imitate

Spiritual parents remind children of their ways

Spiritual parents are consistent wherever they are

Spiritual parents urge spiritual children to follow them as they follow Christ

I Corinthians 11:1

Imitate me, just as I also *imitate* Christ. (NKJV)

2. spiritual family relationship (a small group)

Just as new Christians need spiritual parents, growing Christians need a spiritual family to help them in their development. Christ formed a spiritual family when He chose the twelve to be with Him. They had to learn to relate to one another and learn to accept one another because Christ chose some very diverse disciples - a tax collector and a Zealot (the tax collectors worked for the Romans and the Zealots were trying to overthrow the Romans). In the early church we see that the Christians met in small groups so that they could share their lives.

Keys to develop healthy relationships in small groups

Focus on glorifying God - I Corinthians 10:31

Focus on accepting one another - Romans 14:1-3

Focus on strengthening the weak - Romans 15:1-2

Focus on restoring and bearing burdens - Galatians 6:1-2

Focus on encouraging one another - Hebrews 10:24-25

Focus on praying for one another - James 5:16-20

Common activities of small groups

Acts 2:42, 45-47

And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers...And sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. (NKJV)

Bible study

Fellowship

Breaking of Bread

Prayer

Meeting needs

Sharing meals

Praising God

Questions to ask myself about how to help spiritual children continue healthy development and become spiritual young men

1. Questions about my understanding of how to recognize spiritual children

- a. Describe the spiritual profile of a spiritual child.
- b. Explain how to help a spiritual child continue to grow.

2. Questions about helping a spiritual child grow and become a young man

- a. Explain how to help a person grow in dependence on the Holy Spirit.
- b. Explain how to help a person develop godly wisdom.
- c. Explain how to help a person develop the attitude of a servant.
- d. Explain how to help a person grow in applying the Word to daily living.
- e. Explain how to help a person develop in their service to Christ.

3. Questions about helping a person develop godly family relationships

- a. Explain how to help a person strengthen the relationship with their parents.
- b. Explain how to help a person strengthen their relationship with their extended family.
- c. Explain how to help a person strengthen their relationship with their partner.
- d. Explain how to help a person strengthen their relationship with their children.
- e. Explain how to help a person strengthen their relationship with their spiritual parents.
- f. Explain how to help a person strengthen their relationship with their spiritual family.

IV.

Helping spiritual young men develop an effective ministry - Titus 2:4-8 (spiritual young men want to serve)

Just as a physical young man enjoys learning how to help others, the spiritual young man wants to learn how to serve the Lord and serve others. A spiritual young man or woman is one who has already learned how to develop a healthy relationship with God, with his family and with a spiritual family. Now they want to learn how to serve God, serve their physical and spiritual family and learn how to reach others for Christ and help them grow.

We have some Biblical examples of young men who grew quickly and became spiritual young men who wanted to serve the Lord. In fact we can learn some key lessons from two of those young men.

Saul demonstrated two key characteristics of a person who wants to grow Acts 9:4-6

Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It *is* hard for you to kick against the goads." So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord *said* to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." (NKJV)

**A learner's attitude - Who are you Lord?
A servant's heart - Lord, what do you want me to do?**

Timothy was one of the FAT people Acts 16:2-3, 16:6-10

He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. Paul wanted to have him go on with him. And he took *him* and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek...Now when they had gone through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia. After they had come to Mysia, they tried to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them. So passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." ¹Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them. (NKJV)

**Faithful - well reported of - Acts 16:2
Available - willing to go with Paul - Acts 16:3
Teachable - learning to be led by the Holy Spirit - Acts 16:6-10**

A. Understanding how to help a spiritual young man become a spiritual parent

1. the profile of a spiritual young man

Just like the other levels of spiritual maturity, the spiritual young man also has certain characteristics. The following characteristics are developing in a spiritual young man:

a. He is strong in spirit I John 2:13-14, Ephesians 3:16-19

I John 2:13-14 - I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning. I write to you, young men, Because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, Because you have known the Father. I have written to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one. (NKJV)

Ephesians 3:16-19 - That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what *is* the width and length and depth and height -- to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. (NKJV)

b. He has the Word of God abiding in him - I John 2:14 (above) **1). this includes knowledge of the whole Word of God - Acts 20:20, 27** **2). this includes effective meditation - Joshua 1:8, Psalm 1:1-3**

Acts 20:20 - How I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, (NKJV)

Acts 20:27 - For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. (NKJV)

Joshua 1:8 - This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. (NKJV)

Psalm 1:1-3 - Blessed *is* the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. (NKJV)

c. He has overcome the wicked one - I John 2:13-14

1) he practices separation from sin - I John 2:15-17

2) he practices separation from false teaching - I John 2:18-24

1 John 2:13-24 ¹³ I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning. I write to you, young men, Because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, Because you have known the Father. ¹⁴ I have written to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one.

¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that *is* in the world -- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life -- is not of the Father but is of the world. ¹⁷ And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

¹⁸ Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour. ¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but *they went out* that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us. ²⁰ But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. ²¹ I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth. ²² Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. ²³ Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.

²⁴ Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. (NKJV)

d. He is continuing to experience balanced growth and development - Luke 2:52

Christ gives us an example because He continued to experience:

**growth in wisdom
growth in spiritual as well as physical stature
growth in favor with God
growth in favor with man**

Luke 2:52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. (NKJV)

5. He is an example to other Christians - I Timothy 4:12

Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. (NKJV)

6. He has an effective ministry - Acts 16:1-2

Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, *the* son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father *was* Greek. He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. (NKJV)

The priorities of a spiritual young man (or woman)

Growth will happen best as he:

Continues to:

Talk to God each day - prayer
Let God talk to him each day - though Bible study, memorization and meditation
Obey each day what he learns from the Word of God
Walk in the Spirit, be led by the Spirit and be filled with the Spirit

Is Learning to:

Be an example
Teach the Word of God
Exercise his spiritual gift (s)
Demonstrate a wholehearted commitment to personal growth
Always be faithful to the Word of God

I Timothy 4:11-16

These things command and teach. Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you. (NKJV)

2. the objectives to help a spiritual young man become a spiritual parent

a. growth in character and attitude

Our goal is to develop the attitude which Christ showed in Philippians 2:5-8

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. (NKJV)

This attitude produces a desire to become a spiritual parent

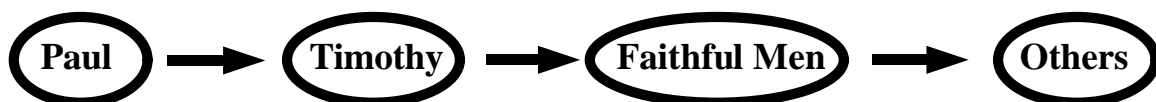
1 Thessalonians 2:7-12 But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father does his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. (NKJV)

1 Corinthians 4:15-17 For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me. For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church. (NKJV)

This attitude produces a concern to develop to one or more spiritual Timothys

II Timothy 2:1-2 You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. (NKJV)

(this is what produces godly reproducing spiritual leadership)



Who is your Timothy or Timothys?

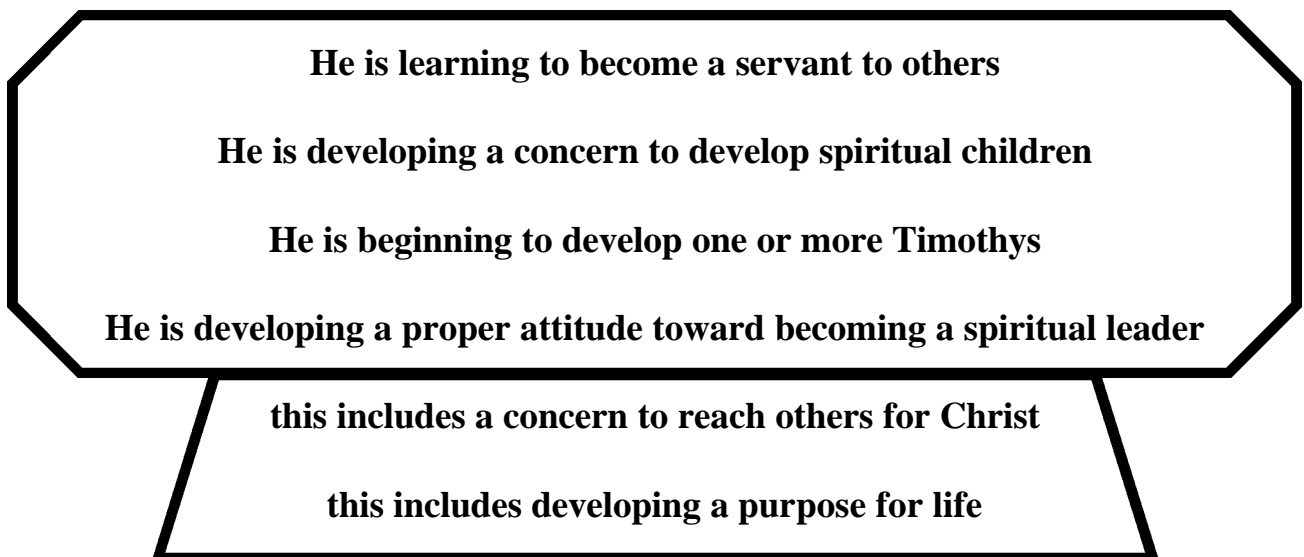
**This attitude produces a proper attitude toward becoming a spiritual leader
an attitude of sacrifice to reach others for Christ**

1 Corinthians 9:19-27 For though I am free from all *men*, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those *who are* under the law, as under the law, that I might win those *who are* under the law; to those *who are* without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those *who are* without law; to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all *men*, that I might by all means save some. Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with *you*. Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes *for the prize* is temperate in all things. Now they *do it* to obtain a perishable crown, but we *for* an imperishable *crown*. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as *one who* beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring *it* into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified. (NKJV)

an attitude which develops a seriousness of purpose in life

Titus 2:6-8 Likewise exhort the young men to be sober-minded, in all things showing yourself *to be* a pattern of good works; in doctrine *showing* integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you. (NKJV)

Characteristics of a spiritual young man growing in godly attitude and character



b. growth in knowledge

**we want to help him learn become advanced in his knowledge of God
I John 2:13-14**

I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning. I write to you, young men, Because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, Because you have known the Father. I have written to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one. (NKJV)

**As a person grows and becomes a spiritual young man,
that growth happened because he got to know the Word of God**

**Here we see that to become a spiritual parent,
a person needs to get to know the God of the Word**

**we want to help him learn how to be ready at all times to share his faith
I Peter 3:15**

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always *be* ready to *give* a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; (NKJV)

**we want to help him learn to become an example to others
I Timothy 4:12**

Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. (NKJV)

**we want to help him learn how to answer false teachers
Titus 1:9**

Holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict. (NKJV)

c. growth in ministry

we want to show him how to share the Gospel with others

Mark 1:16-17

And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." (NKJV)

Acts 11:12

"Then the Spirit told me to go with them, doubting nothing. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. (NKJV)

we want to show him how to minister to other Christians

Acts 20:2-4

Now when he had gone over that region and encouraged them with many words, he came to Greece and stayed three months. And when the Jews plotted against him as he was about to sail to Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia. And Sopater of Berea accompanied him to Asia -- also Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia. (NKJV)

we want to show him how to teach the Word of God

Acts 20:20

And how I kept back nothing that was profitable *unto you*, but have shown you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house.

Here is an example of why a church leadership team is very valuable for the development of spiritual young men to equip them

Ephesians 4:11-13

And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; (NKJV)

**Evangelists will be most effective at showing young men how to:
How to share the Gospel with others**

**Pastors will be most effective at showing young men how to:
Minister to other Christians**

**Teachers will be most effective at showing young men how to:
Teach the Word of God**

B. Helping spiritual young men build their relationship with the body

1. building spiritual extended family relationships (one anothers)

The focus in helping the spiritual babe and toddler is helping them build relationships with spiritual parents. The focus in helping the spiritual child is helping them build relationships with a spiritual family (the small group). Now as we come to the spiritual young man we want to help him learn to build relationships with the entire body (the church). This is of key importance because the desire of the spiritual young man is to serve others. In order to be able to effectively serve others, the spiritual young man or woman needs to know how to build healthy relationships with all Christians.

The Lord did not leave us in the dark about how to build healthy relationships. In the New Testament we see that there are 43 one anothers. These 43 things tell us how we build healthy relationships with others. Twelve are things that we are told to avoid. Thirty-one are things that we are told to do to build healthy relationships between Christians.

If we depend on our own strength, we will act out of fear and do the things that destroy relationships. We will do the things we are told to avoid and fail to do the things that we are told to do. However, each time that we yield to the Holy Spirit and depend on His power, the love of Christ will flow through us and we will build healthy relationships with other Christians.

Twelve things we are to avoid to build healthy relationships

- 1. Let us not judge one another any more - Romans 14:13**
- 2. Do not go to law against one another - I Corinthians 6:7**
- 3. Stop depriving one another (in marriage) - I Corinthians 7:5**
- 4. Do not bite one another (to wound the soul) - Galatians 5:15**
- 5. Do not devour one another (to make it a habit) - Galatians 5:15**
- 6. Do not consume one another (the last act of swallowing)- Galatians 5:15**
“bite-devour-consume” speaks of the process which destroys a relationship
- 7. Do not challenge one another (to call forth as a contest) - Galatians 5:26**
- 8. Do not envy one another - Galatians 5:26**
- 9. Do not lie to one another - Colossians 3:9**
- 10. See that no one repays another with evil for evil - I Thess. 5:15**
- 11. Do not speak against one another (to slander) - James 4:11**
- 12. Do not complain against one another - James 5:9**

Thirty-one things we are to do to build healthy relationships

1. **Accept one another - Romans 15:7**
2. **Admonish one another - Romans 15:14, Colossians 3:16**
3. **Bear one another's burdens - Galatians 6:2**
4. **Bear with one another - Ephesians 4:2, Colossians 3:13**
5. **Build up one another - Romans 14:19, I Thess. 5:11**
6. **Care for one another - I Corinthians 12:25**
7. **Comfort one another - I Thess. 4:18, 5:11, Hebrews 3:13, 10:25**
8. **Be comforted together through faith in one another - Romans 1:12**
9. **Have compassion one of another - I Peter 3:8**
10. **Confess your sins to one another - James 5:16**
11. **Be devoted to one another - Romans 12:10**
12. **Fellowship with one another - I John 1:7**
13. **Forgive one another - Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:13**
14. **Seek what is good for one another and for all - I Thess. 5:15**
15. **Greet one another - Rom. 16:16, I Cor. 16:20, II Cor. 13:12, I Pet. 5:14**
16. **Be hospitable to one another - I Peter 4:9**
17. **Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another - I Peter 5:5**
18. **Be kind to one another - Ephesians 4:32**
19. **Be members one of another - Romans 12:5, Ephesians 4:25**
20. **Be of the same mind one to another - Romans 12:16, 15:5**
21. **Be at peace with one another - Mark 9:50, I Thess. 5:13**
22. **Pray for one another - James 5:16**
23. **Regard one another as more important than self - Philippians 2:3**
24. **Serve one another as a slave - Galatians 5:13**
25. **Employ your gift in serving one another - I Peter 4:10**
26. **Stimulate one another to love and good deeds - Hebrews 10:24-25**
27. **Submit to one another - Ephesians 5:21**
28. **Teach one another - Colossians 3:16**
29. **Wait for one another - I Corinthians 11:33**
30. **Wash one another's feet - John 13:14**
31. **Love one another - John 13:34-35, John 15:12, 17, Romans 13:8, I Thess. 1:3, I Thess. 4:9-10, II Thess. 1:3, I Peter 1:22, I Peter 4:8, I John 3:11, 23, I John 4:7, 11, 12, II John 5**

John 13:34-35

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (NKJV)

2. becoming an example to others

One of the very important things about a spiritual young man is that he is becoming an example to others. This means that he is learning to show by his life that Christ is the one who changes and transforms a life. Because a spiritual young man or woman is becoming a leader of others, people are beginning to watch their example very closely.

Many things in the Christian life are caught rather than taught. This means that people must be shown by the example of others how to grow in the Christian life. The list of one another's that we have just looked at have to be shown for a person to really begin to practice them in his own life. Paul shared with Timothy six ways that he should be an example to other Christians.

I Timothy 4:12

Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. (NKJV)

We need to help spiritual young men learn to be an example in:

word - (what they say)
conduct - (what they do)
love - (how they love)
spirit - (yielding to the Holy Spirit)
in faith - (what they believe)
in purity - (their moral character)

Spiritual young men are able to become an example for others to follow because they are learning to follow Christ as a pattern of life. Both Christ and Paul focused on training by example and not just by what they taught. In the same way we need to show people by our example and train them to be an example.

John 13:15

"For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. (NKJV)

I Peter 2:20-21

For what credit *is it* if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this *is* commendable before God. For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: (NKJV)

I Corinthians 11:1

Imitate me, just as I also *imitate* Christ. (NKJV)

C. Helping spiritual young men build their ministry

1. developing a ministry of service to the body

One of the characteristics of young men is that they like to serve. We see this illustrated in a very interesting way in the early church. A passage that talks about the service of physical young men shows the desire of spiritual young men. In Acts 5:6, 10 we see the service of a group of young men in the early church.

Acts 5:6

And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried *him* out, and buried *him*. (NKJV)

Acts 5:10

Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying *her* out, buried *her* by her husband. (NKJV)

In these verses we see that the young men in the early church were ready and eager to serve in any way possible including taking the responsibility for burials. Spiritual young men have a strong desire to serve the Lord if the leaders of the church will give them the opportunity to serve. In order to help them learn how to serve most effectively, we need to help them discover their **SHAPE**.

Spiritual gifts - Romans 12:3-8, I Cor. 12:4-31, I Pet. 4:7-11

Hearth (passion in life) - example of Paul - Romans 15:15-20

Abilities - I Peter 4:11

Personality - (Peter liked crowds - Acts 2:14-41, Andrew - individuals)

Experiences in life - II Cor. 11:21-33

When Barnabas and Paul were sent out by God from the church at Antioch, they took John Mark with them so that he could learn to minister by assisting them as they traveled. That is a key way that we help spiritual young men in their spiritual development and prepare them to become healthy reproducing Christians.

Acts 13:5

And when they arrived in Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews. They also had John as *their* assistant. (NKJV)

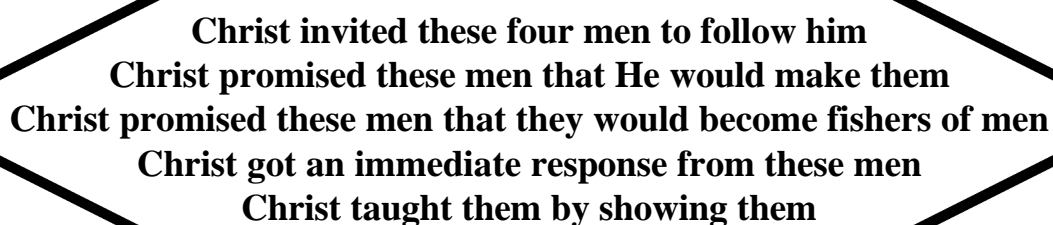
2. developing a ministry of service to the world (evangelism)

Spiritual young men have a desire to serve those who are not Christians as well as those who are Christians. They are eager to have someone show them how to share the Gospel with those who are not Christians. About a year after Christ first met the disciples in John 1, Christ gave those same men an invitation to learn how to serve by sharing the Gospel with those who were not Christians. We see that Christ got an immediate positive response from those men because they had been growing in their relationship with Christ over that year.

Matthew 4:18-22

And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." They immediately left *their* nets and followed Him. Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him. (NKJV)

Spiritual young men want to learn how to lead others to Christ



Christ invited these four men to follow him
Christ promised these men that He would make them
Christ promised these men that they would become fishers of men
Christ got an immediate response from these men
Christ taught them by showing them

In these verses we see that the Biblical way to teach people how to share the Gospel with others is to take people with you and show them how to share the Gospel. The principle of **showing** spiritual young men how to share the Gospel and **showing** them how to minister to other Christians is a principle that we see throughout the New Testament. However, most Christians today try to tell others how to serve the Lord (sermons, seminars, classes, etc.) instead of showing them how to serve the Lord. Spiritual young men will learn best how to serve the Lord if we **take them with us and show them**.

Acts 20:4

And Sopater of Berea accompanied him to Asia -- also Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia. (NKJV)

Questions to ask myself about how to help spiritual young men continue healthy development and become spiritual parents

- 1. Questions about my understanding of how to recognize spiritual young men**
 - a. Describe the spiritual profile of a spiritual young man.
 - b. Explain how you can help a spiritual young man continue to grow.

- 2. Questions about helping a spiritual young man become a spiritual parent**
 - a. Explain why developing a learner's attitude and a servant's heart are keys to the development of a spiritual young man.
 - b. Explain what areas of attitude and character development are important for a spiritual young man to continue to mature.
 - c. Explain what areas of growth in knowledge are important to help a spiritual young man continue to mature.
 - d. Explain what areas of growth in ministry are important to help a spiritual young man continue to mature.

- 3. Questions about helping a spiritual young man develop a ministry**
 - a. Explain how we help a spiritual young man develop his relationship to the entire church.
 - b. Explain how we help a spiritual young man become an example to others.
 - c. Explain how we help a spiritual young man understand the particular **SHAPE** that God has given him to help him learn to serve more effectively.
 - d. Explain how we help spiritual young men learn to become effective in the ministry of evangelism.
 - e. Explain why it is very important to take spiritual young men with us as we minister so that they can be shown how to serve the Lord.

V.

Helping spiritual parents develop an effective ministry (spiritual parents love, sacrifice and provide an example)

Just as a physical parent enjoys learning how to become a more effective parent, a spiritual parent has an even greater desire to learn how to become an effective spiritual parent. A spiritual parent has already learned how to develop a healthy relationship with God, with his family, with a spiritual family and with the church as a whole. Now they want to learn how to become an effective spiritual parent who can show others how to grow in their spiritual lives by becoming a spiritual parent to them.

We have some excellent Biblical examples of people who became spiritual parents to help others in their spiritual growth. Paul, Silas and Timothy provide some of the best examples of spiritual parents other than Christ.

Key characteristics of spiritual parents

I Thessalonians 2:7-12

But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father *does* his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. (NKJV)

Spiritual parents provide the tender care of a nursing mother

Spiritual parents provide the godly example of a godly father

I Corinthians 4:15-17

For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *you do not have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me. For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church. (NKJV)

Spiritual parents can be imitated because they:

Walk the walk not just talk the talk!

A. Understanding how we help a spiritual parent minister to spiritual children

1. the profile of a spiritual parent

Just like each of the other levels of spiritual maturity, Scripture also gives us a profile of a spiritual parent. Of course the very definition of the word parent means that there has to be one or more children. A spiritual parent is one who has taken the personal responsibility to help one or more children in their total spiritual development not just in their growth in knowledge. The following characteristics will be seen in a spiritual parent:

He is advanced in his knowledge of God

I John 2:13-14

I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, Because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, Because you have known the Father. I have written to you, fathers, Because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one. (NKJV)

He demonstrates true care for his spiritual children

I Thessalonians 2:7-12

But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing *mother* cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father *does* his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. (NKJV)

He has one or a few Timothys that he is bringing to spiritual maturity

II Timothy 2:1-2

You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. (NKJV)

He has become a mature disciple

Matthew 13:52

Then He said to them, "Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure *things* new and old." (NKJV)

From this verse we see that a mature disciple has the following characteristics:

- 1. He is instructed concerning the kingdom of God**
- 2. He is the head of a spiritual household**
- 3. He has a treasure (the Word of God)**
- 4. He shares from his treasure things that are new
(he is continuing to study the Word and grow)**
- 5. He shares from his treasure things that are old
(he is able to share basic teachings from the Word of God)**

The priorities of a spiritual parent

To know Christ

Philippians 3:10 That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, (NKJV)

To be motivated by the love of Christ

II Corinthians 5:14 For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; (NKJV)

To serve Christ as a bondservant

II Timothy 2:24-25 And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, (NKJV)

To finish the race well by keeping the faith

II Timothy 4:7-8 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing. (NKJV)

2. the objectives of a spiritual parent to develop a spiritual family

a. growth in character and attitude

a spiritual parent wants to be an example to follow

I Corinthians 4:14-17

I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn *you*. For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *you do not have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me. For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church. (NKJV)

I Corinthians 11:1

Imitate me, just as I also *imitate* Christ. (NKJV)

I Thessalonians 1:6

And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, (NKJV)

a spiritual parent wants to provide love

I Thessalonians 2:7-9

But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing *mother* cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. (NKJV)

a spiritual parent wants to provide encouragement

I Thessalonians 2:10-12

You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father *does* his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. (NKJV)

a spiritual parent wants to provide instruction from the Word of God

Acts 20:20

"How I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, (NKJV)

b. growth in knowledge

spiritual parents need to learn what to teach those who are younger

Titus 2:4-8

That they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. Likewise exhort the young men to be sober-minded, in all things showing yourself *to be* a pattern of good works; in doctrine *showing* integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you. (NKJV)

spiritual parents need to learn how to teach those who are younger

Most parental teaching is done in informal situations. The same is true for much of the teaching done by spiritual parents. It happens because the spiritual parent and the spiritual child are spending time together. As a result, the model for teaching spiritual children is the same as the model for teaching physical children.

Deuteronomy 6:6-9

And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. "You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. "You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. NKJ

spiritual parents must have the Word in their hearts
spiritual parents need to help people become sharp in the Word
spiritual parents need to share the Word in informal situations
spiritual parents need to model the Word by their actions
spiritual parents need to have the Word in their thoughts
spiritual parents need to share the Word in their homes

spiritual parents need to learn when to teach those who are younger

I Thessalonians 2:9

For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. (NKJV)

Acts 19:9

But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in

c. growth in ministry

ministry grows as we spend time with spiritual children

John 139

He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour). (NKJV)

Mark 1:16-20

And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Then Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." They immediately left their nets and followed Him. When He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also *were* in the boat mending their nets. And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him. (NKJV)

ministry grows as we help spiritual children develop priorities

Mark 1:38-39

But He said to them, "Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also, because for this purpose I have come forth." And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and casting out demons. (NKJV)

ministry grows as we show spiritual children how to minister

Mark 3:13-15

And He went up on the mountain and called to *Him* those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons: (NKJV)

ministry grows as we help spiritual children learn to minister

Mark 6:7

And He called the twelve to *Himself*, and began to send them out two *by* two, and gave them power over unclean spirits. (NKJV)

Mark 6:30-31

Then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught. And He said to them, "Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while." For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat. (NKJV)

B. Helping spiritual parents develop their relationship with a spiritual child

I Thessalonians 2:7-9

But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing *mother* cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. (NKJV)

1. demonstrating love to a spiritual child

Christ called the disciples to love only after He had shown them love

John 13:34-35

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (NKJV)

Paul called the Thessalonians to love only after He had shown love

I Thessalonians 2:7

But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing *mother* cherishes her own children. (NKJV)

I Thessalonians 4:9-10

But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; ¹⁰ and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more; (NKJV)

John called people to love only after he had shown love

II John 1

THE ELDER, To the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all those who have known the truth, (NKJV)

II John 5

And now I plead with you, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment to you, but that which we have had from the beginning: that we love one another. (NKJV)

We call people to love because God has loved us

I John 4:11

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. (NKJV)

2. demonstrating sacrifice to a spiritual child

One of the keys to effective spiritual parenting is helping spiritual parents learn to make sacrifices for their spiritual children. The various kinds of sacrifice that we make will be determined by the needs of spiritual children as they grow. As a result, we want to help spiritual parents begin to understand some of the areas where they will learn to sacrifice in order to be effective spiritual parents.

Sacrifice our time and sleep when that is needed

I Thessalonians 2:9

For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. (NKJV)

Sacrifice our plans to share times of joy or sorrow

Romans 12:15

Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. (NKJV)

Sacrifice our liberty to serve others in love

Galatians 5:13-14

For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not *use* liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (NKJV)

Sacrifice our finances to share in needs

II Corinthians 8:1-2

Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. (NKJV)

Suffer in order to provide an example to follow

I Peter 2:20-21

For what credit *is it* if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this *is* commendable before God. For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: (NKJV)

C. Helping spiritual parents develop their ministry with spiritual children

I Thessalonians 2:10-12

You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father *does* his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory. (NKJV)

1. becoming an example to a spiritual child

spiritual parents provide an example to imitate

I Corinthians 4:15-17

For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *you do not have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me. For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church. (NKJV)

spiritual parents provide an example of how to glorify God

I Corinthians 10:31-11:1

Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God, just as I also please all *men* in all *things*, not seeking my own profit, but the *profit* of many, that they may be saved. Imitate me, just as I also *imitate* Christ. (NKJV)

spiritual parents provide an example of how to walk

Philippians 3:17

Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. (NKJV)

spiritual parents provide an example so people become an example

I Thessalonians 1:6-7

And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. (NKJV)

People learn to follow the Lord by following the Lord's people!

2, becoming an encourager to a spiritual child

spiritual parents encourage those who are fainthearted

I Thessalonians 5:14

Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all. (NKJV)

spiritual parents encourage people to love and good works

Hebrews 10:24-25

And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. (NKJV)

**we stir up love and good works by getting together
we stir up love and good works by encouraging each other**

spiritual parents encourage people when they are troubled and fearful

John 14:27

"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (NKJV)

spiritual parents encourage people by taking risks

Acts 9:26-27

And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought *him* to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. (NKJV)

spiritual parents encourage people by developing their ministry

Acts 11:25-26

Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul. And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. (NKJV)

3. becoming a role model to a spiritual child

show spiritual children how to share the Gospel

Matthew 9:9-10

As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him. Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, *that* behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. (NKJV)

show spiritual children how to develop their dependence on God

John 6:5-6

Then Jesus lifted up *His* eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do. (NKJV)

show spiritual children how they can serve and minister

John 6:11

And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed *them* to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted. (NKJV)

show spiritual children how they can minister to the grieving

John 11:16, 34-36

Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him."...And He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, "See how He loved him!" (NKJV)

show spiritual children how to become partners in ministry

John 15:15-17

"No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. "You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. "These things I command you, that you love one another. (NKJV)

Questions to ask myself about how to help spiritual parents develop an effective ministry to spiritual children

1. Questions about my understanding of how to help a spiritual parent minister to spiritual children

- a. Describe some of the key characteristics of spiritual parents.
- b. Describe the spiritual profile of a spiritual parent.
- c. Explain the Biblical description of a mature disciple in Matthew 13:52.
- d. Explain the key priorities of a spiritual parent.
- e. Explain the key areas of attitude and character where a spiritual parent is continuing to grow.
- f. Explain some of the things a person needs to learn in order to be an effective spiritual parent.
- g. Explain how spiritual parents multiply their ministry.

2. Questions about my understanding of how to help spiritual parents develop their relationships with spiritual children

- a. Explain how we help spiritual parents learn how to show love to spiritual children.
- b. Explain how we help spiritual parents learn how to make sacrifices for their spiritual children.

3. Questions about my understanding of how to help spiritual parents develop their relationships with spiritual children

- a. Explain why it is very important that a spiritual parent become an example to a spiritual child.
- b. Explain why it is very important that a spiritual parent become an encourager to a spiritual child.
- c. Explain why becoming a role model to a spiritual child is very important.

A Look at Myself

As we come to the conclusion of this manual, this might be a good time to look at ourselves. It might be good to ask ourselves the question, "Does the Biblical definition of a disciple in Matthew 13:52 describe my life?"

Matthew 13:52

Then He said to them, Therefore every scribe instructed (*who has become a disciple*) concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old." (NKJV)

**Am I a disciple who has become the head of a spiritual household?
(this means that I have become a spiritual parent to one or more spiritual children that I am spending time with regularly to help them grow)**

**Am I a disciple who has a treasure (the Word of God)?
(this means that the Word of God guides my life)**

**Am I a disciple who brings out of my treasure things that are new?
(this means that I am continuing to learn, grow and share)**

**Am I a disciple who brings out of my treasure things that are old?
(this means that I am teaching the basics of Christianity to others)**

Second, am I being obedient to the Biblical command to Make Disciples?

Matthew 28:19-20

"As you are going therefore, **make disciples** of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, "teaching them to observe (*obey*) all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age." Amen.

Am I going to the lost to share the Gospel with them?

**Am I helping those who become Christians identify with Christ
and a local church?**

**Am I showing those who become Christians how to obey all that
Christ commanded by my own example?**