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# **You Can Grow to Spiritual Maturity**

by  
**Duane L. Anderson**



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# You Can Grow to Spiritual Maturity

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# You Can Grow To Spiritual Maturity

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# I. Understanding the Levels of Spiritual Maturity

## A. The Spiritual Newborn Babe

**Spiritual growth is compared to physical growth**

**1 Peter 2:2**

“...as newborn babes...”

### **Other uses of the word “babe” in the New Testament**

used of John the Baptist before birth - Luke 1:41, 44

used of Christ immediately after birth - Luke 2:12, 16

used of infants that were brought to Christ - Luke 18:15

used of infants who were killed in the time of Moses - Acts 7:19

used of Timothy being taught right from birth - 2 Timothy 3:15

### **Physical use 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

**Needs of a newborn baby  
in the physical life - needs a physical parent  
in the spiritual life - needs a spiritual parent**

### **1 Corinthians 4:15**

“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.”

### **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.”



### **Spiritual food**

#### **1 Peter 2:2**

“...as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby...”

### **Needs to know the love of God**

#### **1 John 4:10**

“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.”

### **Needs to know the love of Christ**

#### **Romans 8:35-39**

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

### **Needs to know the love of other Christians**

#### **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.”



**1. The importance of spiritual parents**

- a. spiritual parents provide an example - 1 Corinthians 4:14-17
- b. spiritual parents provide love - 1 Thessalonians 2:7-9
- c. spiritual parents provide encouragement - 1 Thessalonians 2:10-12
- d. spiritual parents provide instruction - Ephesians 6:4

**2. Five ways we grow through the Word of God**

- a. we grow by hearing the Word of God read - Romans 10:17
- b. we grow by reading the Word of God - Revelation 1:3
- c. we grow by studying the Word of God - 2 Timothy 2:15
- d. we grow by memorizing the Word of God - Psalm 119:11
- e. we grow by meditating on the Word of God - Psalm 1:1-3; Joshua 1:8

**3. Learning to talk to God in prayer - Matthew 6:9-13**

- a. prayer begins by recognizing our relationship with God - **Our Father**
- b. prayer recognizes that God is over all - **in heaven**
- c. prayer recognizes that God is holy - **Hallowed be Your name**
- d. prayer looks forward to God's rule - **Your kingdom come**
- e. prayer for the will of God to be done - **Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven**
- f. prayer for our daily needs - **Give us this day our daily bread**
- g. prayer for forgiveness from sin - **And forgive us our debts (sins), as we forgive our debtors (those who have sinned against us)**
- h. prayer for victory over temptation - **And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one**
- i. prayer recognizes God is the source of power - **For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

**4. Learning to fellowship (share your life) with God - 1 John 1:3-7**

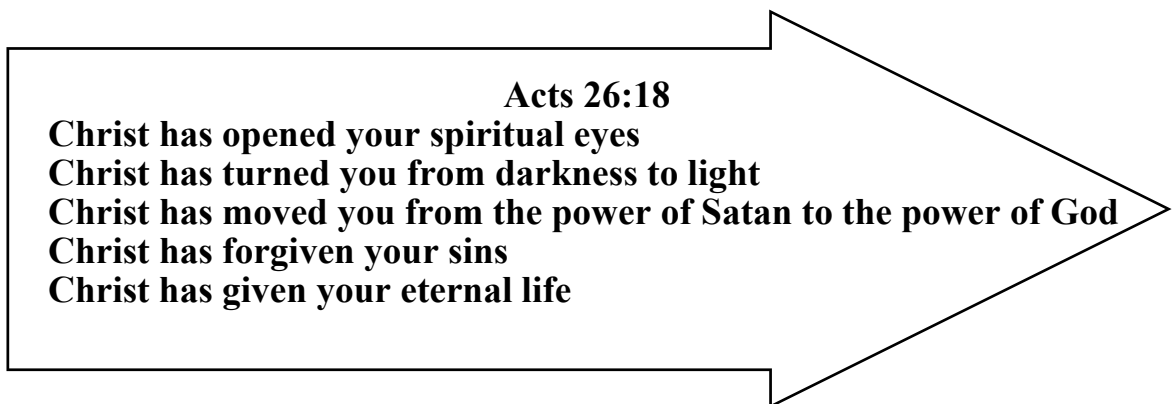
- a. fellowship must begin with God (we have fellowship when sin is confessed) - 1 John 1:3, 9
- b. fellowship causes us to experience great joy - 1 John 1:4
- c. fellowship is with God who is light - 1 John 1:5
- d. fellowship cannot happen if we are walking in darkness - 1 John 1:6
- e. fellowship will happen as we walk in the light because the blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin - 1 John 1:7, 9

**5. Learning to share Christ with others - Mark 5:19**

- a. begin by going to your family and friends
- b. tell your family and friends what great things Christ has done for you

- 1. you had committed sin - Romans 3:23**
- 2. your sin meant that you were facing death - Romans 6:23 (eternal separation from God)**
- 3. Christ paid the penalty for your sin by dying - Romans 5:8**
- 4. God showed He was satisfied with Christ's payment by raising Christ from the dead - Acts 2:23-24**
- 5. you repented of your sin and turned from following sin to follow Christ - Acts 3:19**
- 6. you placed your faith in Christ and recognized Him as your new Master instead of sin - Romans 10:9-10**

- c. tell your family and friends how Christ has had compassion on you



**6. Learning to be obedient to Christ - James 1:22**

- a. one who hears and does not obey deceives himself
- b. one who hears and obeys enjoys fellowship with God

## B. 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”  
it is used ten times in the New Testament  
four uses help us to understand the spiritual toddler

the “spiritual toddler” is one who started to grow and  
then stopped growing in his or her spiritual life

### 1 Corinthians 3:1-3

“And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual *people* but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able *to receive it*, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. For where *there are* envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like *mere men*?”

### 1 Corinthians 13:11

“When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”

### Ephesians 4:14

“That we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting...”

### Hebrews 5:11-14

“Of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. 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. For everyone who partakes *only* of milk *is* unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, *that is*, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”



**The spiritual child, spiritual young man and  
spiritual parent are all described in  
1 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.”

**C. The Spiritual Child**

**The Greek word (teknion) that is translated “little children” speaks of a little child. In the New Testament, it is a term of kindness used by teachers to speak of their disciples**

**D. The Spiritual Young Man**

**The Greek word (neaniskos) that is translated “young men” speaks of a youth between the approximate ages of 12 to 25. In the New Testament, it is a term used to speak of a Christian who knows the Word of God and is approaching spiritual maturity - 1 John 2:12-14**

**E. The Spiritual Parent**

**A spiritual parent is one who:  
has taken the responsibility for the development of spiritual children  
1 Corinthians 4:14-17  
shows tender love and care  
1 Thessalonians 2:7-9  
provides example, guidance and encouragement  
1 Thessalonians 2:10-12  
knows the God of the Word  
1 John 2:12-14**

## II. Understanding the Process of Spiritual Growth

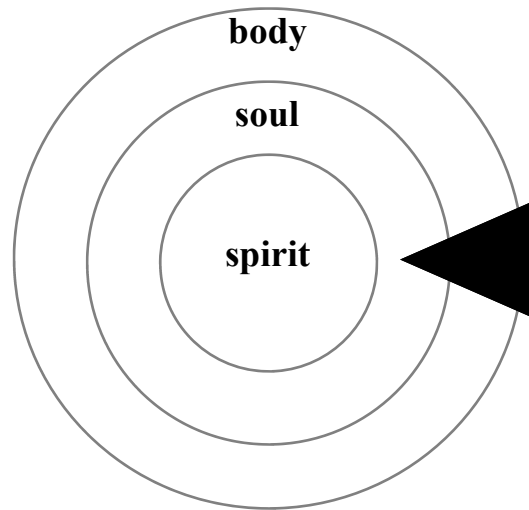
### A. Spiritual Growth Happens from the Inside Out

At the moment of salvation, we:

are born of the Holy Spirit - John 3:5-6

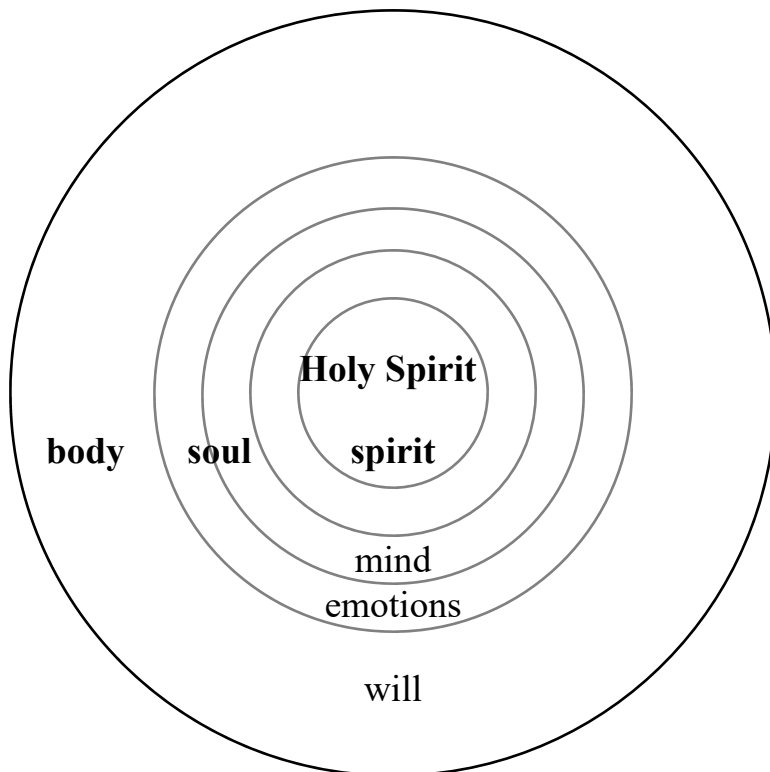
are baptized with the Holy Spirit - Matthew 3:11; Acts 1:8

receive the gift of the Holy Spirit - Acts 2:38



**Holy Spirit**  
 “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.”  
 Romans 8:16

#### The Holy Spirit ministers to our spirit



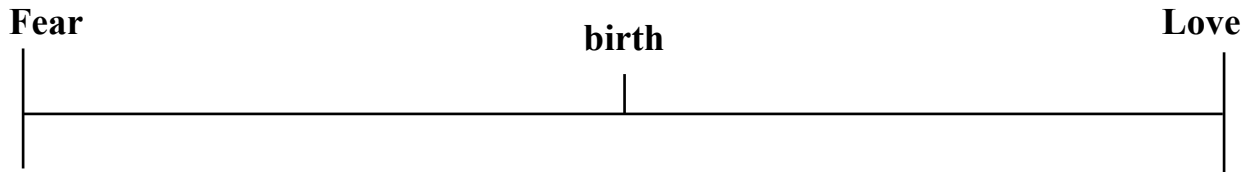
#### Changing from the inside

1. The Holy Spirit comes into our spirit - Romans 8:16
2. The Holy Spirit fills our spirit as we confess sin, yield to God and obey Him - Ephesians 5:18; Romans 6:11-13, 16
3. The Holy Spirit transforms our minds as we study and obey the Word of God - Romans 12:2
4. The love of Christ changes our emotions and gives us love for others - 2 Corinthians 5:14
5. The will of the Father becomes our greatest desire as we follow the example of Christ - Matthew 26:39; John 6:38
6. We use our body and our entire being to carry out the will of God - Galatians 2:20; Philippians 1:21

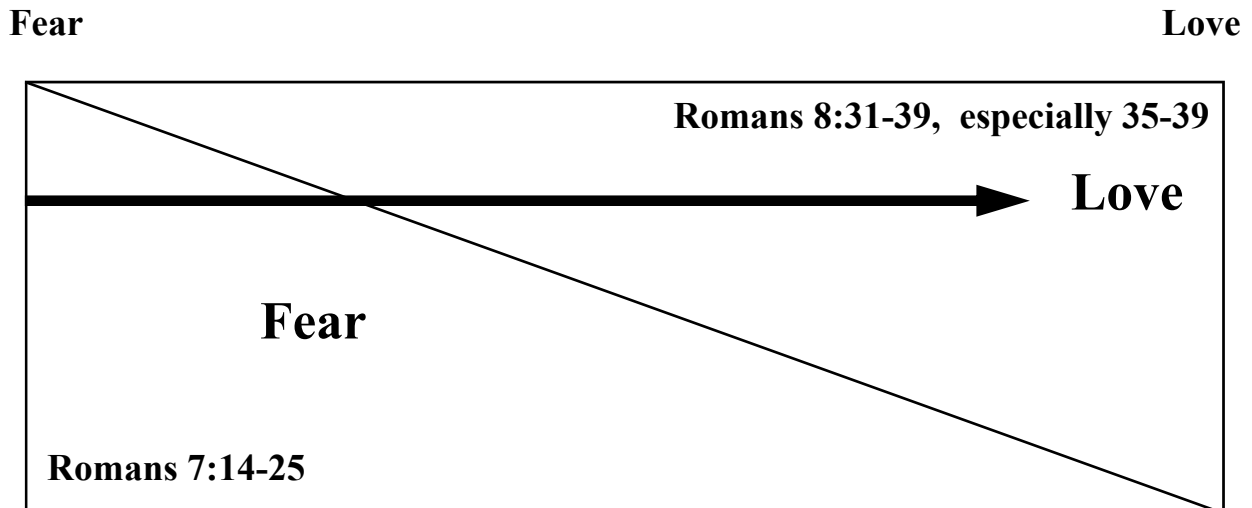
## Spiritual growth results in moving from fear toward love

### 1 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.”



At birth, we knew neither fear nor love. However, because of our sins and the sins of others we quickly began moving toward fear. The longer we did not know Christ, the greater the fear that was developing in our lives.



### Hebrews 2:14-15

“Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”

A Christian who tries to grow in his own strength will continue to live in fear because he has no power in his own strength. However, as he begins to grow in his understanding of the love of Christ and learns to yield to the Holy Spirit moment-by-moment, fear is gradually replaced by love and he begins moving back toward love. The more we grow in Christ, the more we understand His love for us. 2 Corinthians 5:14-15

## **B. Spiritual Growth Happens Best When We Have Spiritual Parents**

### **A spiritual parent provides an example**

#### **1 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.”

### **A spiritual parent provides love**

#### **1 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.”

### **A spiritual parent provides encouragement and guidance**

#### **1 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.”

### **A spiritual parent provides instruction**

#### **Ephesians 6:4**

“And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the

### **A spiritual parent helps you grow by providing:**

<b>example</b>	<b>love</b>	<b>encouragement</b>	<b>guidance</b>	<b>instruction</b>
<b>and many other things that will help you grow toward spiritual maturity</b>				

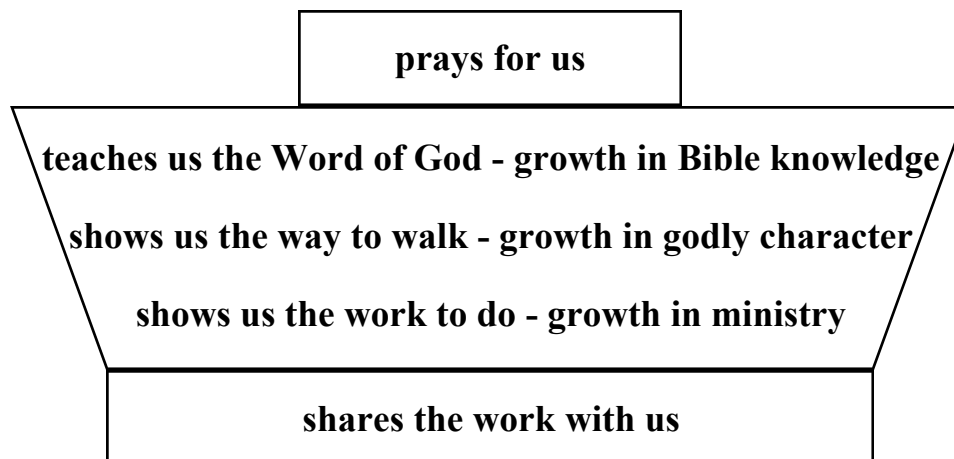
## C. Spiritual Growth Produces Changes in Knowledge, Character and Ministry

Moses was given five priorities of a spiritual parent

### 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.”

### A spiritual parent:



### We respond by growing in:

#### Knowledge

##### 2 Peter 3:18

“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him *be* the glory both now and forever. Amen.”

#### Godly Character

##### 1 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.”

#### Ministry

##### Colossians 3:17

“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.”

### **III. Understanding the Spiritual Newborn Babe**

#### **A. The Profile of a Spiritual Newborn Babe**

1. His or her attitude is repentance toward God - Acts 20:21
2. His or her attitude is faith in our Lord Jesus Christ - Acts 20:21
3. He or she gives evidence of possessing new life - 2 Corinthians 5:17

##### **Acts 20:21**

“...testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”

##### **2 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.”

#### **B. The Priorities of a Spiritual Newborn Babe**

**Growth will happen best if you:**

**talk to God each day - prayer**

##### **1 Thessalonians 5:17**

“...pray without ceasing...”

**let God talk to you each day - Bible study**

##### **2 Timothy 2:15**

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

**obey what you learn each day from the Word of God**

##### **Matthew 7:24-27**

“Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”

## IV. Understanding the Spiritual Toddler

### A. The Profile of a Spiritual Toddler

A spiritual toddler is a person who became a Christian and started to grow but then stopped growing and continues to show the following characteristics:

1. He acts like one who is not a Christian - 1 Corinthians 3:1
2. He is not able to understand difficult teachings from the Word of God - 1 Corinthians 3:2
3. He experiences envying, strife and divisions - 1 Corinthians 3:3
4. His talk, understanding and thinking of spiritual things is limited - 1 Corinthians 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

### B. The Problems of a Spiritual Toddler

**A spiritual toddler usually lacks a spiritual parent**

#### 1 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.”

**A spiritual toddler usually hears but does not obey**

#### James 1:22

“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”

**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.”

**A spiritual toddler may experience roots that hinder spiritual growth**

**We often struggle with surface symptoms and surface causes and never learn how to deal with root symptoms and the root cause of sin**

<b>body</b>	<b>surface symptoms</b>	<p><b>surface symptoms</b> although we are Christians, we may struggle with some of our past sinful actions and habits - Romans 7:15-25; Galatians 5:19-21</p>
<b>soul</b>	<b>surface causes</b>	<p><b>surface causes of sin</b> our outward actions show that we have inner attitudes that still need changing - 1 John 2:15-17; James 1:19-20; Ephesians 5:20-32</p>
<b>spirit</b>	<b>root symptoms</b>	<p><b>root symptoms of sin</b> Scripture lists two root symptoms of sin bitterness - Hebrews 12:15 love of money - 1 Timothy 6:10</p>
	<b>root causes</b>	<p><b>root cause of sin</b> failure to submit to Christ - Romans 6:12-13, 16 we love the world and submit to sin instead of submitting to Christ - 1 John 2:15-17</p>

**Learning to deal with roots**

**Understand the roots**

**Hebrews 12:15**

“Looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled...”

**1 Timothy 6:10**

“For the love of money is a root of all *kinds of* evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

**Yield the roots to God**

**Romans 6:12-13**

“Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. 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.”



## V. Growing from a Babe or Toddler to a Spiritual Child

### A. Growing in Attitude and Character Our goal is a transformed spirit

**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.”

**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.”

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



**KNOW - Romans 6:6**  
**RECKON - Romans 6:11**  
**YIELD YOURSELVES TO GOD - Romans 6:13, 16**

#### **Romans 6:6**

“...knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.”

#### **Romans 6:11**

“Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

#### **Romans 6:13**

“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.”

#### **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?”

**B. Growing in Knowledge**  
**Our goal is a transformed mind, emotion and will**

**Our mind is being transformed as we grow in our knowledge of the Word 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.”

**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**  
**MEMORIZING THE WORD OF GOD - Psalm 119:9, 11**  
**MEDITATING ON THE WORD OF GOD - Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:1-3**

**Romans 10:17**

“So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

**Revelation 1:3**

“Blessed *is* he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time *is* near.”

**Acts 17:11**

“These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily *to find out* whether these things were so.”

**Psalm 119:9**

“How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.”

**Psalm 119:11**

“Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You!”

**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.”

**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.”

## **Our mind is being transformed as we grow in experiencing the love of God**

### **1 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.”

### **We grow in experiencing the love of God through:**

**FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD - 1 John 1:3-7**  
**FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHER BELIEVERS - John 13:34-35; Hebrews 10:24-25**

### **1 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.”

### **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.”

### **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.”

## **Our mind is being transformed as we grow in submission to the will of God**

### **Matthew 26:39**

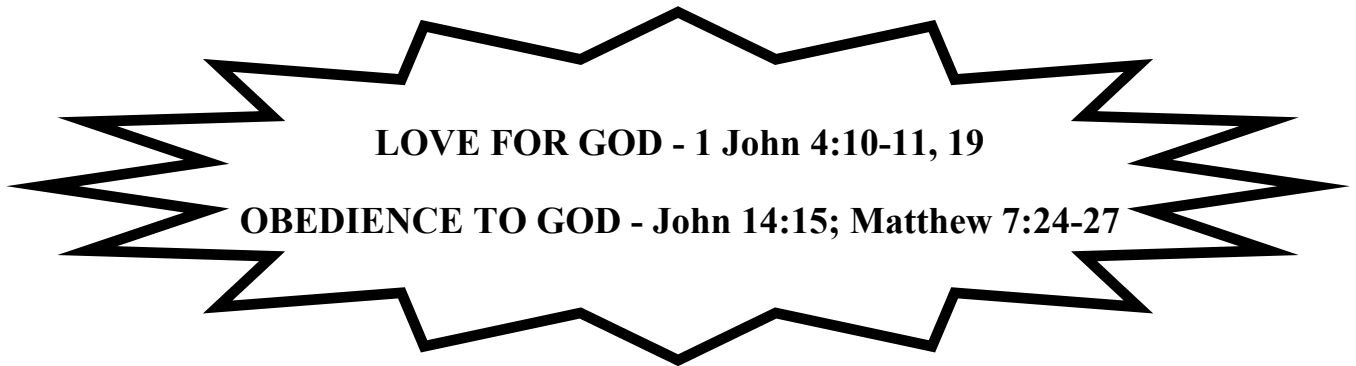
“He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, ‘O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You *will*.’”

**C. Growing in Ministry**  
**Our goal is a transformed relationship with others**

**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.”

**Transforming our relationship with God involves:**



**1 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.”

**1 John 4:19**

“We love Him because He first loved us.”

**John 14:15**

“If you love Me, keep My commandments.”

**Matthew 7:24-27**

“Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”

**Am I showing my love for Christ by my obedience to Christ?**

**Transforming our relationship with other Christians involves:  
(learning how to practice the “one anothers” of Scripture  
in our relationship to each other)**

**There are 31 positive “One Anothers”**

**Love One Another -  
John 13:34-35, 15:12, 17; Romans 13:8; 1 Thessalonians 1:3, 4:9-10;  
2 Thessalonians 1:3; 1 Peter 1:22, 4:8;  
1 John 3:11, 23, 4:7, 11-12; 2 John 5  
Accept (Receive) 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; 1 Thessalonians 5:11  
Care For One Another - 1 Corinthians 12:25  
Encourage One Another - 1 Thessalonians 4:18, 5:11; Hebrews 3:13, 10:25  
Be Encouraged Together Through Faith In One Another - Romans 1:12  
Have Compassion One Of Another - 1 Peter 3:8  
Confess Your Sins To One Another - James 5:16  
Be Devoted To One Another - Romans 12:10  
Fellowship With One Another - 1 John 1:7  
Forgive One Another - Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13  
Seek What Is Good For One Another And For All Men - 1 Thessalonians 5:15  
Greet One Another - Romans 16:16, 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12;  
1 Peter 5:14  
Be Hospitable To One Another - 1 Peter 4:9  
Clothe Yourselves With Humility Toward One Another - 1 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; 1 Thessalonians 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 - 1 Peter 4:10  
Stimulate One Another To Love And Good Deeds - Hebrews 10:24-25  
Submit To One Another - Ephesians 5:21  
Teach One Another - Colossians 3:16  
Wait For One Another - 1 Corinthians 11:33  
Wash One Another’s Feet - John 13:14**

**There are 12 negative “One Anothers” that destroy relationships**

**Let Us Not Judge One Another Anymore - Romans 14:13**  
**Do Not Go To Law With One Another - 1 Corinthians 6:7**  
**Stop Depriving One Another - 1 Corinthians 7:5**  
**Do Not Bite One Another - Galatians 5:15**  
**Do Not Devour One Another - Galatians 5:15**  
**Do Not Consume One Another - Galatians 5:15**  
**Do Not Challenge (Provoke) One Another - Galatians 5:26**  
**Do Not Envy One Another - Galatians 5:26**  
**Do Not Lie To One Another - Colossians 3:9**  
**See That No One Repays Another With Evil For Evil - 1 Thessalonians 5:15**  
**Do Not Speak Against One Another - James 4:11**  
**Do Not Complain Against One Another - James 5:9**

**Transforming our relationship with the world**  
**(This involves learning to practice the three phases of evangelistic ministry)**

**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.”*

**SEEKING - making contacts**

**FINDING - sharing the Gospel and leading a person to Christ**

**BRINGING - basic follow-up**

**Are You Sharing The Gospel With Others?**

## VI. Understanding the Spiritual Child

### A. The Profile of a Spiritual Child

A spiritual child is one who is growing in the same way that Christ grew as a child - Luke 2:40-52. The following characteristics are developing in his or her life:

1. He is becoming strong in spirit - Luke 2:40  
development of godly attitudes and character - Galatians 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; 2 Peter 3:18  
this is 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 fellowship 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 - 1 John 2:12
10. He is growing in his knowledge of the Father - 1 John 2:13

#### 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.”

## 1 John 2:12-13

“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.”

### B. The Priorities of a Spiritual Child

Growth will happen best as you:

continue to:

**talk to God each day - prayer**  
**let God talk to you each day - Bible study**  
**obey what you learn each day from the Word of God**

are learning to:

**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.”

**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.”

**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.”



## **VII. Growing from a Spiritual Child to a Spiritual Young Man**

### **A. Growing in Attitude and Character**

**Our goal is continuing growth in depth of attitude and character**

#### **Developing a good reputation**

**Acts 16:2**

“He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium.”

**Acts 6:3**

“Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of *good* reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business...”

#### **Learning to be filled with the Spirit as a basic pattern of life**

**Ephesians 5:18**

“And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit...”

#### **Becoming an example to others**

**1 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.”

#### **Becoming a person of godly wisdom**

**James 1:5**

“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.”

**James 3:13-18**

“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. For 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.”

#### **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.’”

## **Are you growing in godly attitude and character?**

**developing a good reputation  
learning to be filled with the Spirit as a basic pattern of life  
becoming an example to others  
becoming a person of godly wisdom  
developing the attitude of a servant**

### **B. Growing in Knowledge**

**Our goal is continuing growth in knowledge and application of the Word**

#### **Becoming familiar with the entire Word of God**

**2 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.”

#### **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.”

**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.”

#### **Developing a clear commitment to the doctrines of the Word of God**

**1 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.”

## **Are you growing in your knowledge and application of the Word of God?**

**becoming familiar with the entire Word of God  
having effective meditation become a basic part of your life  
developing a clear commitment to the doctrines of the Word of God**

## **C. Growing in Ministry**

**Our goal is the development of an effective and balanced ministry**

### **Developing an effective ministry of submission to spiritual leaders**

**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.”

**1 Peter 5:5-6**

“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...”

### **Developing an effective ministry in the home, if married**

**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.”

### **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.”

### **Developing an effective ministry of evangelism to the lost**

**Acts 8:4**

“Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.”

**Acts 11:19-21**

“Now those who were scattered after the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to no one but the Jews only. But some of them were men from Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they had come to Antioch, spoke to the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord.”

## Are you developing an effective and balanced ministry?

developing an effective ministry of submission to spiritual leaders  
developing an effective ministry in the home, if married  
developing an effective ministry of service to the body  
developing an effective ministry of evangelism to the lost

examples of young men who quickly became spiritual young men

### Saul

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

#### 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.’”

### Timothy

Timothy was one of the “F” “A” “T” people

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

#### Acts 16:2-3

“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.”

#### Acts 16:6-10

“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.’ Now 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.”

## VIII. Understanding the Spiritual Young Man

### A. The Profile of a Spiritual Young Man

#### 1. He is strong in spirit

##### 1 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.”

##### 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.”

#### 2. He has the Word of God abiding in him - 1 John 2:14 (see verses above)

- a. this includes knowledge of the whole Word of God - Acts 20:20, 27
- b. 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...”

##### Acts 20:27

“For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.”

##### 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.”

##### 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.”

**Are you becoming strong in spirit by learning to  
yield the control of your spirit to the Holy Spirit?  
Is it your goal to really know the Word of God?**

**3. He has overcome the wicked one - 1 John 2:13-14**

- a. he practices separation from sin - 1 John 2:15-17**
- b. he practices separation from false teaching - 1 John 2:18-24**

**1 John 2:13-24**

“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. 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. 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. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever. 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. 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. But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. 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. Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also. 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.”

**4. 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.”

**5. He is an example to other Christians**

**1 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.”

**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.”

**B. The Priorities of a Spiritual Young Man**

**Growth will happen best as you:**

**continue to:**

**talk to God each day - prayer  
let God talk to you each day - through Bible study, memorization and meditation  
obey what you learn each day from the Word of God  
walk in the Spirit, are led by the Spirit, and are filled with the Spirit**

**are learning to:**

**be an example  
teach the Word of God  
exercise your equipping gift  
demonstrate a wholehearted commitment to personal growth  
always be faithful to the Word of God**

**1 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.”

# IX. Growing from a Spiritual Young Man to a Spiritual Parent

## A. Growing in Attitude and Character

**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.”

**This attitude produces true care for spiritual children**

**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.”

**1 Corinthians 4:15-17**

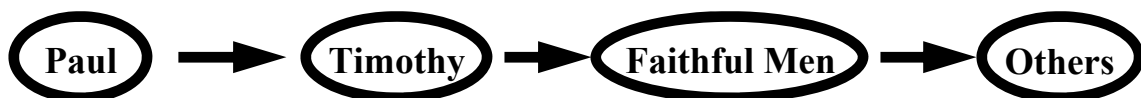
“For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me. For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you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

**This attitude produces a true commitment to one or more spiritual Timothys**

**2 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.”

**(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**  
**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.”

**1 Timothy 3:1**

“This *is* a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.”

**Are you growing in godly attitude and character?**

**an attitude that produces true care for spiritual children**  
**an attitude that produces a true commitment to one or more Timothys**  
**an attitude that produces a proper attitude toward becoming a spiritual leader**

**B. Growing in Knowledge**

**C. Our goal is to know Christ the way Paul wanted to know Christ**  
**in Philippians 3:7-14**

“But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

## **Growth in knowledge happens by:**

### **Becoming advanced in our knowledge of God**

**1 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.”

In our earlier growth we got to know the Word of God.  
As we continue to grow, our desire is to  
**know the God of the Word (Him who is from the beginning).**

### **Learning to answer false teachers from the Word of God**

**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.”

### **Becoming more and more like 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...”

becoming more and more like Christ involves four things:

**that I may know Him  
that I may know the power of His resurrection  
that I may know the fellowship of His sufferings  
that I may be conformed to His death**

### **Keeping our eye on the goal**

**Philippians 3:14**

“I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

## **C. Growing in Ministry**

**Our goal is to become an effective spiritual parent who is reproducing himself or herself in the lives of others by:**

### **An effective ministry of spiritual development in our own family**

#### **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.”

#### **1 Timothy 3:4-5**

“...one who rules his own house well, having *his* children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?)...”

### **An effective ministry of helping new Christians grow**

#### **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.”

### **A reproducing ministry with a few faithful men**

#### **2 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.”

### **Ministering with a servant’s heart**

#### **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.’”

**Do you have a servant’s heart or do you seek recognition?**

**Being an example of faithfulness**

**1 Corinthians 4:2**

“Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.”

**a person who is growing from a spiritual young man to a spiritual parent is developing in at least the following ways:**

**Character and Attitude**

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

- an attitude of true care for spiritual children**
- an attitude of a true commitment to one or more spiritual Timothy's**
- an attitude that demonstrates a proper attitude toward becoming a spiritual leader**

**Knowledge**

Our goal is to know Christ the way Paul wanted to know Christ in Philippians 3:7-14

- becoming advanced in our knowledge of God**
- learning to answer false teachers from the Word of God**
- becoming more and more like Christ**
- keeping our eye on the goal**

**Ministry**

Our goal is to become an effective spiritual parent who is reproducing himself or herself in the lives of others

- an effective ministry of spiritual development in our own family**
- an effective ministry of helping new Christians grow**
- a reproducing ministry with a few faithful men**
- a ministry with a servant's heart**
- an example of faithfulness**


**Are you growing and becoming a spiritual parent?**

# X. Understanding the Spiritual Parent

## A. The Profile of a Spiritual Parent

Which of the following things describe your life?

### 1. He is advanced in his knowledge of God

#### 1 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.”

### 2. He demonstrates true care for his spiritual children

#### 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.”

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

#### 2 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.”

#### 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.”

#### 4. 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.’”

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

- a. he is instructed concerning the kingdom of God
- b. he is the head of a spiritual household
- c. he has a treasure ( the Word of God)
- d. he shares from his treasure things that are new (he is continuing to study the Word of God so that his growth continues)
- e. he shares from his treasure things that are old (he is able to help his spiritual children understand the basic teaching of the Word of God)

### B. 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...”

**to be motivated by the love of Christ**

#### 2 Corinthians 5:14

“For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died...”

**to serve Christ as a bondservant**

#### 2 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...”

**To finish the race well by keeping the faith**

#### 2 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.”

## **C. The Practices of a Spiritual Parent**

### **A spiritual parent provides an example**

**1 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.”

**1 Corinthians 11:1**

“Imitate me, just as I also *imitate* Christ.”

**1 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...”

### **A spiritual parent provides love**

**1 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.”

### **A spiritual parent provides encouragement**

**1 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.”

### **A spiritual parent provides instruction in 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...”

**Acts 20:27**

“For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.”

### **As a spiritual parent, are you providing:**

