

**ACTS**

**GROW TRACK**

**Spanish Eastern District**

**Leader Guide**



**WELCOME**

*We are honored to have you join us as we begin a journey of faith, hope, and love. Over the next few weeks, we will explore three defining areas in our development of faith in Christ and gain a greater understanding of how we can fulfill God’s plan in our lives. Our journey begins by meeting and building healthy relationships with our church family. And, we are committed to assist you as you begin to process through these three areas: CONNECT (to God and others), GROW (in Christ, personally and relationally), and SERVE (to God and others).*

*During our time together, we want you to find your journey to spiritual growth and fulfillment. Each time we are together please know that your voice is vitally important and we encourage your questions, comments, and thoughts.*

*Your story is very unique and personal. Understanding how God has changed you, why God wants you to grow, and where God desires you to serve is vital to you and those around you.*

*We look forward to these moments and we’re excited about your future.*

**Pastor/Leader Note:** The objective of this resource is to help you lead new believers and guests on three distinct spiritual tracks towards assimilation into your church. It is divided into three primary sessions, although you can adapt it for a longer timeframe. These sessions will help participants develop personal relationships with other believers, explore opportunities to grow in their walk with God, and find their place serving in the church and community. As the pastor/leader, you are encouraged to be creative and tailor this curriculum to suit your teaching style and your church environment.

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KJV is the abbreviation for King James Version of the Bible

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**CONNECT**

### Objective of This Section

This session is designed to help us understand how we CONNECT to God, our church, and to other followers of Jesus. We will discover why God has an incredible desire to connect to each one of us, why He created a place for us to have a spiritual home and family, and how He has uniquely created and purposed each one to serve in a way that best fits their personally and attributes.

### CONNECT Steps

* Surrender your heart to Jesus to be saved.
* Declare your relationship with Jesus publicly by being baptized in water.
* Learn about your church, its story, and its leadership.
* Meet someone from the class and share your story.
* Commit to share your testimony for the first time this week.
* Attend the Acts Grow Track sessions.

### OUTLINE of This Section

#### Connect to God

* The Bible Is God’s Word
* Jesus Christ Is the Son of God
* Salvation Is the Starting Point to a Relationship with God through Jesus Christ
* How Do I Become a Follower of Christ?
* After Salvation—Water Baptism

#### Connect to My Church

* The Church Gives Me a Place I Can Call Home
* The Church Gives Me a Spiritual Family
* Share Our Church’s Story

#### Connect to My World

* God Wants Me to See My World through His Eyes

**CONNECT TO GOD**

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**God Desires to Have a Relationship with Us**

Our greatest desire is for you to begin and grow in your relationship with God through Jesus Christ. We believe a relationship with Christ is the single most important relationship you can ever develop.

#### The BIBLE Is God’s Word.

The Bible is God’s way of building a continuing relationship with us. It is the primary tool God will use to speak to us. The Holy Spirit gave the supernatural guidance to each author and they wrote

as instructed by the Holy Spirit. The Bible is divided into two primary sections–the Old and New Testaments. The Old Testament gave direct communication from God to people by way of laws. The New Testament gives direction through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for humanity to follow. The Bible is the ultimate reference point for every believer. And since the Bible is the inspired Word given to people from God, it is the errorless, timeless truth for humanity.

**2 Timothy 3:16–17** “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.”

##### See also 2 Peter 1:20–21.

1. **Jesus Christ Is the SON of GOD.**

God the Father expressed Himself in human form through His Son Jesus.

* + Jesus was born of the virgin Mary (Matthew 1:18–23).
  + Jesus lived a sinless life (Hebrew 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22; 1 John 3:4–5).
  + Jesus was crucified for the sins of all people (1 Corinthians 15:4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24).
  + Jesus was buried, rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven (Matthew 27:45–56; 28:1–10: Acts 1:9–11).

#### SALVATION Is the Starting Point to a Relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

* + Our sin **SEPARATES** us from God.

**Romans 3:23** “For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.”

Adam and Eve separated themselves from God from the moment sin entered the earth by their initial voluntary act of disobedience (sin) (Genesis 3:6). This first sin had several repercussions which we must deal with even today.

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» Through Adam and Eve’s disobedience, there was a separation between God and people (Genesis 3:14–19).

» The process of physical death began (Genesis 2:17).

» This action left humanity in a fallen or sinful condition (Romans 3:23).

* + God offers **FORGIVENESS** through His Son Jesus.

**Acts 4:11–12** “For Jesus is the one referred to in the Scriptures, where it says, ‘The stone that you builders rejected has now become the cornerstone.’ There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.”

##### See also Romans 6:23; 10:13.

By receiving Jesus Christ as our Savior, we begin our new life in Him.

» Our sins are forgiven and forgotten (Hebrews 8:12).

» We are born-again (John 3:3).

» We become a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17).

» Our name is written in the Lamb’s Book of Life (Revelation 3:5).

» The Holy Spirit dwells inside us (1 Corinthians 6:19).

» We are adopted and become a child of God (Galatians 4:4–7).

» We become citizens of heaven (Philippians 3:20–21).

» We are given eternal life (John 3:16).

* + Salvation comes through the **GRACE** of God alone.

**Ephesians 2:8–9** “God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.”

#### How Do I Become a Follower of Christ?

1. **ACCEPT** that sin has separated you from a real relationship with Jesus.

**1 John 1:9** “But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.”

1. **BELIEVE** that Jesus died for your sins and that He rose from the dead and is alive today.
2. **CONFESS** Jesus Christ in prayer as your Lord and Savior and ask Him to come into your life.

**Romans 10:9–10** “If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved.”

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##### See also Acts 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 4:14; Revelation 3:20.

If you have not asked Jesus into your life, this moment is for you. By believing in your heart and confessing Jesus with your voice, you can start your new life in Christ right now. Just pray the prayer below and accept Jesus’ salvation for you today.

“Dear Jesus, thank You for creating me and for loving me. Thank You for dying on the cross for me even when I did not want to accept Your place in my life or in the world. I now know that You are the Son of the Living God. I understand how sin has destroyed my relationship and my connection to You. I accept You today as my Lord and Savior. I surrender my life to You now and ask You to forgive me. Amen.”

##### See also Romans 10:13.

1. **After Salvation—Water Baptism**

**Illustration: Signs for the Times**

Signs are important. They give directions, instructions, warnings, opportunities, and destinations. With each sign, we move closer to the objective. This is exactly why Jesus gave the commandment of water baptism. He wants us to get closer to His objective for our life. Just like a wedding ring is an outward sign of a commitment to a spouse, water baptism is a sign of Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection.

* + Water **BAPTISM** makes our faith in Christ public.

**Acts 2:38** “Peter replied, ‘Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’ ”

* + Water baptism is a **PUBLIC** declaration of a **PERSONAL** transformation.
  + Baptism is an **OUTWARD** sign of an **INWARD** commitment.
  + Water baptism allows the opportunity for me to **FOLLOW** Jesus’ teaching.
  + Every person who has **BELIEVED** in Christ should be baptized.
  + You should be baptized soon after you have **BELIEVED**.

**Pastor/Leader Note:** Address and explain the significance of being rebaptized. Announce the date of the next water baptism service:

**See Appendix 1:** Our church is deeply committed to the Scriptures, and we derive our core beliefs from God’s Word. A full list of our beliefs can be found in Appendix 1.

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**CONNECT TO MY CHURCH**

**ACTS**

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#### The Church Gives Me a Place I Can Call HOME.

God designed the church home to be a place where we can feel protected and provided for as we grow in our daily life. This place is called the local church. As we spend time together, learn from each other, find our place, and allow the Holy Spirit to lead our life, our local church home becomes more important to us.

**Pastor/Leader Note:** Be mindful that not everyone comes from a healthy home.

* 1. The church gives me a place to **BELONG.**

**Ephesians 2:19** “So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God’s holy people. You are members of God’s family.”

##### See also Romans 12:5; Galatians 6:10.

* 1. The church gives me a place to be personally **ENCOURAGED.**

“What if we saw the church as a way of bringing people who are far away from Him closer to Jesus, in whose presence we are healed, accepted, loved, and nurtured— often through human hands, feet, and smiles” (Alton Garrison, *A Spirit-Empowered Church*, Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2015) 150.

“A church isn’t supposed to be a social club or a common meeting place; it’s supposed to be a family—a loving, living community The people we worship

and fellowship with are uniquely qualified to bear us up during times of trouble and to encourage our relationship with God” (Garrison, *A Spirit-Empowered Church*, 153).

**Hebrews 10:24** “Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works.”

##### See also Ecclesiastes 4:9–10,12.

* 1. The church gives me a place for spiritual **ACCOUNTABILITY**.

“When people understand they’re supposed to be contributors and not consumers, everything changes” (Garrison, *A Spirit-Empowered Church,* 51).

**Galatians 6:1** “Dear brothers and sisters, if another believer is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself.”

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##### See also Proverbs 27:17; Hebrews 3:13; 10:24.

1. **The Church Gives Me a Spiritual FAMILY.**

The power of every home is found in the strength of each family member. We understand that families are not perfect, however, they are family. Families encourage the strength, successes, and opportunities of each family member. They also understand that there are times when struggles come into our home, sickness overtakes and weakens one of the family members, and even times when someone in the family falls deeply back into sin. However, families are still family. The differences in families are measured by their love for each other, the joy they find, the hope they share, and the faith they live by every day. Regardless of what kind of family background I came from, I can be part of God’s family (Romans 8; Galatians 4). As a member of God’s family, I do the following:

* 1. I accept others based on **CHRIST’S** acceptance and treat them as **FAMILY**.

**Romans 15:7** “Therefore, accept each other just as Christ has accepted you so that God will be given glory.”

##### See also 1 Peter 1:18–19.

* 1. I will not judge others according to their **PAST**.

1. **Corinthians 2:11** “No one can know a person’s thoughts except that person’s own spirit, and no one can know God’s thoughts except God’s own Spirit.”

##### See also Galatians 6:1; Philippians 3:13–14.

1. **Share Our Church’s Story.**

**Pastor/Leader Note:** As time permits, this is where you share your church’s story. Remember, the longer you talk about the past, the less time you will have for casting vision for the future and how people can become a vital part of the future. Here is a suggested outline for this section.

1. Share **3 minutes** about the past.
2. Share **3 minutes** about your pastorate.
3. Share **3 minutes** about the church’s passion.

**CONNECT TO MY WORLD**

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1. **God Wants Me to See My World through HIS Eyes.**

As you start your new life in Christ you will feel the need to share Christ with your friends. Don’t worry, this is a good thing. When Jesus forgave you, He placed a new love in you, a new purpose for your world of influence. God loves people and He looks on them with compassion; it is His will that none perish. You are God’s plan to reach the world you influence. Your world of influence includes those with whom you have a relationship and have the ability to influence their lives. These are people such as your family, friends, coworkers, neighbors and acquaintances. Those relationships are where you can begin living out the Great Commission. So, how do we do that?

* 1. Recognize that Jesus will give you the opportunity to bring a richer dimension of life to others. Your friends should see the change in you. Be prepared when someone asks

you about what happened to you. This is when you can be what Jesus said you could be:

##### SALT.

**Matthew 5:13** “You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.”

* 1. Acknowledge that not only are you “salt,” but you now have a clearer sightline to see the hurting, pain, suffering, and hopeless of others through the gift of **LIGHT** Jesus gave you. This gift of compassion will guide you to have the courage needed to speak, pray, and encourage when you see the struggles in your world.

**Matthew 5:14** “You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden.”

* 1. Listen to **THEIR** stories.

**Luke 6:45** “A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. What you say flows from what is in your heart.”

* 1. Learn to tell **YOUR** story.

**John 9:25** “I don’t know whether he is a sinner,” the man replied. “But I know this: I was blind, and now I can see!”

* 1. Learn to tell **GOD’S** story.

**John 5:24** “I tell you the truth, those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life.”

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* 1. Pray for them and follow the promptings from the **HOLY SPIRIT**. **Romans 8:14** “For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.” **See also 2 Corinthians 4:4.**
  2. If possible, ask them to **GO WITH** you to church.

##### See also Luke 14:16–23.

**Appendix 1 – CONNECT**

**WHAT WE BELIEVE**

**Sixteen Fundamental Doctrines of the Assemblies of God**

#### THE SCRIPTURES INSPIRED

**1.**

The Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, is inspired by God. It is the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct ( 1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15–17;

2 Peter 1:21).

#### THE ONE TRUE GOD

**2.**

There is one true God who has revealed Himself as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43:10–11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22).

#### THE DEITY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

**3.**

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:

1. His virgin birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31,35).
2. His sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22).
3. His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38).
4. His substitutionary work on the cross (1 Corinthians 15:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21).
5. His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Corinthians 15:4).
6. His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9, 11; Philippians 2:9–11; Hebrews 1:3).

#### THE FALL OF MAN

**4.**

Man was created good and upright, but by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred physical and spiritual death, which is separation from God (Genesis 1:26–27; 2:17; 3:6; Romans 5:12–19).

#### THE SALVATION OF MAN

**5.**

Man’s only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

1. **Conditions to Salvation.** Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Romans 10:13–15; Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11; 3:5–7).
2. **The Evidences of Salvation.** The inward evidence is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and holiness (Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2:12).

**Appendix 1 – CONNECT**

# 6.

**7.**

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**11.**

#### THE ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH

1. **Baptism in Water.** Baptism in water by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. This declares to the world that they have died with Christ and been raised with Him to walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47–48; Romans 6:4).
2. **Holy Communion.** Holy Communion, or the Lord’s Supper, consists of the elements— bread and the fruit of the vine. It is a symbol of our sharing the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4); a reminder of His suffering and death (1 Corinthians 11:26); and a prophecy of His second coming (1 Corinthians 11:26).

#### THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the baptism in the Holy Spirit. With it comes enduement of power for life and service (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4, 8; 1 Corinthians 12:1–31). It is distinct from and subsequent to the new birth (Acts 8:12–17; 10:44–46; 11:14–16; 15:7–9).

#### THE INITIAL PHYSICAL EVIDENCE OF THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4).

#### SANCTIFICATION

Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication to God (Romans 12:1–2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12). Scriptures teach a life of “holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14, KJV).

#### THE CHURCH AND ITS MISSION

The Church is the body of Christ of which each believer is a part (Ephesians 1:22–23; 2:22; Hebrews 12:23).

#### THE MINISTRY

A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry is for the threefold purpose of leading the church in: evangelizing the world (Mark 16:15–20); worshipping God (John 4:23–24); building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4:11, 16); and meeting human need with ministries of love and compassion (Psalm 112:9; Galatians 2:10; 6:10; James 1:27).

**Appendix 1 – CONNECT**

# 12.

**13.**

**14.**

**15.**

**16.**

#### DIVINE HEALING

Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel, provided for in the Atonement, and is the privilege of all believers (Isaiah 53:4–5; Matthew 8:16–17; James 5:14–16).

#### THE BLESSED HOPE

The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their rapture together with those who are alive at the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church (Romans 8:23; 1 Corinthians 15:51–52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16–17; Titus 2:13).

#### THE MILLENIAL REIGN OF CHRIST

The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of all Christians, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christi with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:15; Matthew 24:27, 30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11–14; 20:1–6).

#### THE FINAL JUDGMENT

There will be a final judgment of the wicked dead according to their works. Whoever is not found written in the Book of Life will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake of fire (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9:43–48; Revelation 19:20; 20:11–15; 21:8).

#### THE NEW HEAVENS AND THE NEW EARTH

“We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (2 Peter 3:13 KJV; Revelation 21, 22).

Adapted from *Bible Doctrines* by William Menzies and Stanley M. Horton (Springfield, MO: Logion Press, 1993).

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**GROW**

**Objective of This Section**

This session will help us look at the exciting ways in which we can GROW as believers in Jesus. Our spiritual growth will never end. It is a constant, marvelous journey toward being more like Jesus.

How do I grow in Christ? What do I do? What is my place in the family of God, the Church? What does it mean to “grow in my world”? All these questions are answered here. Enjoy.

### GROW Steps

* Read your Bible.
* Spend time in prayer.
* Sign up to be baptized in water.
* Begin seeking the baptism in the Holy Spirit.
* Pray and ask God to strengthen the gifts and abilities inside you.
* Complete your ACTS assessment.
* Attend the Acts Grow Track sessions.

### OUTLINE of This Section

#### Grow in Christ

* Read My Bible Daily
* Ministry of the Holy Spirit in My Life

» Who Is the Holy Spirit?

» Understanding the Baptism in Holy Spirit

» Steps to Receiving the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

* Learn to Pray

#### Grow in My Church

* Characteristics of a Spiritually Healthy Church Home and Family
* God Has Uniquely Made and Gifted Me to Grow in Christ through My Local Church

#### Grow in My World

* Look for Opportunities to Share My Faith

**GROW IN CHRIST**

**ACTS**

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**GROW**

Our spiritual growth in Christ begins by understanding that we must become **MORE**

**DEPENDENT** upon Christ. Growth can only take place when we realize that we need and depend on Christ. As believers growing in Christ, we will discover His presence in every aspect of our life. It is this realization that causes us to trust the grace of God and stay committed to this discipleship lifestyle.

Our spiritual growth is not a **DESTINATION**, but is a **PROCESS**. This process requires us to develop constant, spiritual practices. If these practices become a pattern of life, our life will become more stable and the Holy Spirit will lead us through our current realities. As we continue in this process of growing in Christ, we will begin to establish ourselves as new creation; our thought life will begin to change, and our beliefs will begin to change. Also, the people around us will notice that our behaviors are different; the way we react, the way we speak, and our compassion levels in all areas will increase through Christ.

When we consider what it means to be a Christ-follower, we must embrace a holistic approach that focuses on spiritual formation and transformation. Spiritual maturity isn’t a destination; it’s a process. It requires time, commitment, and effort to grow spiritually . . . and there are no shortcuts” (Garrison, *A Spirit-Empowered Church*, 180-81).

There are three primary practices to enlist into our world as a baseline in Christ:

* 1. Our time in God’s **WORD**,
  2. Understanding the **MINISTRY** of the Holy Spirit in our life and our time with God in **PRAYER**, and
  3. **SHARING** our story of transformation through Christ.

The more time we spend developing these practices, the greater our spiritual growth will be.

#### Read My Bible DAILY.

1. **Timothy 3:16–17** “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.”

Reading God’s Word is transformational. The key to spending time in God’s Word is to recognize that the Bible is God’s story to us. In a world of instant satisfaction, God’s story is a picture of processed transformation. The goal to being transformed by God’s Word is to read His Word every day until we learn something, write down what we have learned, and then repeat the process the next day. It’s that simple. If we will commit to learning a new truth about God each day, we will grow in Christ.

* + God’s Word transforms us by the Holy Spirit to make His Word **ALIVE** to us. Therefore, we should ask the Holy Spirit to give us understanding of what we are reading.

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**1 Corinthians 3:6** “I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow.”

* God’s Word transforms us as **FAITH** is added by our reading. This causes us to believe what is written in God’s Word. Faith is simply a confident belief in the principles we receive and believe.

**Romans 10:17 (ESV)** “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”

* God’s Word transforms us as we **COMMIT** to reading His Word. Commitment brings a level of balance to our thought life and a stability to the words we say.

**Joshua 1:8** “Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do.”

* God’s Word transforms us as we **ACT** upon what we’ve read and learned. Action is different from commitment. Action is produced by the courage to act as Christ would act in every situation of life. It is one thing to know without action; it is entirely a different thing to act with the knowledge we are learning.

**Pastor/Leader Note:** Here are some suggested starting points for Bible reading. Share these with the group.

##### The One Year Bible Plan:

* Purchase a FireBible.
* Ask your pastor to share a reading plan with you.

##### S.O.A.P. Method:

* + - * **Scripture** = Choose a Scripture/section/passage or chapter reading. Write out the Scripture verse that spoke to you the most (could be the daily One Year Bible portion).
      * **Observation** = What did you observe about the Scripture that spoke to you? Write out why or how this spoke to you.
      * **Application** = How can you apply the observation so that it affects your life today? Write out an action point?
      * **Prayer** = Write out a prayer to God based on what you just learned and ask Him to help you apply this truth in your life.

**Appendix 2** contains a spiritual health assessment to measure spiritual growth. It is recommended that this assessment be completed annually to allow people to measure spiritual growth change.

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**Pastor/Leader Note:** Take this opportunity to share about your church’s discipleship opportunities.

#### Ministry of the HOLY SPIRIT in My Life

The Holy Spirit is God’s power working through us and is available to all believers. One of the functions of the Holy Spirit is to help us see our world through the eyes of God. The Holy Spirit helps us see our family, friends, and coworkers with His eyes. The Holy Spirit uses us to be creative in reaching our world and sharing our faith with others.

The Holy Spirit is so vital to us that Jesus said He had to go away so that the Holy Spirit would come.

It was the Holy Spirit that empowered the 120 believers in Jerusalem. From the initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit, Pentecostals and charismatic Christians together make up about 27 percent of all Christians and more than 8 percent of the world’s total population.1

“We must have His power, we must have what Jesus said the Holy Spirit would bring. We cannot go into all the world—we can’t even go across the street—without the power of God’s Holy Spirit within us” (Clarensau, *A Spirit-Empowered Life*, 95).

#### Who Is the Holy Spirit

* 1. He is **GOD**, the third member of the Trinity.

**Acts 5:3–4** “Then Peter said, ‘Ananias, why have you let Satan fill your heart? You lied to the Holy Spirit, and you kept some of the money for yourself. 4 The property was yours to sell or not sell, as you wished. And after selling it, the money was also yours to give away. How could you do a thing like this? You weren’t lying to us but to God!’”

* 1. He is just like **CHRIST**, sent to glorify Christ.

**John 14:16–17** “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn’t looking for him and doesn’t recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you.”

1 <http://www.pewforum.org/2011/12/19/global-christianity-movements-and-denominations/>(Accessed July 10, 2018).

#### Understanding the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

**ACTS**

**GROW TR ACK**

**GROW**

**Acts 1:4–5** “Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, ‘Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before. John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ ”

**Acts 1:8** “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

“Hear Jesus’ words for yourself as though he looked at you when He spoke them, ‘You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you . . .” (Acts 1:8). Yes, you’ve been given much needed forgiveness and an invite to the relationship of

a lifetime. But the focus has now shifted from within you to beyond you, and the mission that beats within His heart is learning to beat within yours” (Clarensau, *A Spirit-Empowered Life*, 81).

1. Jesus makes it clear that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a **SEPARATE** experience from salvation and water baptism.
   * In salvation, **EVERY** believer is born again by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit comes to live inside us.

**Ephesians 1:13** “And now you Gentiles have also heard the truth, the Good News that God saves you. And when you believed in Christ, he identified you as his own by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom he promised long ago.”

* + If we are saved, the Holy Spirit now **LIVES** and **DWELLS** inside us.
  + The baptism in the Holy Spirit is an experience that **EVERY** believer should seek.

**Acts 2:38–39** “Peter replied, ‘Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is to you, to your children, and to those far away—all who have been called by the Lord our God.’ ”

1. Jesus makes it clear that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a **GIFT** to us from the Father. “This gift wasn’t just for the 120 people in the upper room; God kept pouring

until the apostles realized this was His plan for all who would take up His cause”

(Clarensau, *A Spirit-Empowered Life*, 94).

* + The baptism in the Holy Spirit is one of many **GIFTS** that God has given us.
  + We should receive and partake of **EVERY** gift God has given us.

##### Different Gifts from God

**ACTS**

**GROW TR ACK**

**GROW**

» The gift of **SALVATION** (Ephesians 2:8)

» The gift of **RIGHTEOUSNESS** (Romans 5:17)

» The gift of eternal **LIFE** (Romans 6:23)

» The gifts of the **SPIRIT** (1 Corinthians 12:7–11)

» The fivefold **MINISTRY GIFTS** (Ephesians 4:11)

» The gift of the **HOLY SPIRIT** (Acts 1:4)

* + We do not have to be **AFRAID** of any gift that God wants to give us.

**James 1:17** “Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow.”

1. When we receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit, we receive a supernatural **LANGUAGE** and a supernatural **POWER**.

**Acts 2:1–4** “On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place. Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.”

##### See also Acts 4:32–33; 5:12–16; 19:1–7

1. The **BIBLE** gives several reasons why it is important for believers to pray in tongues.
   * When we pray in tongues, we pray **DIRECTLY** to God from our **SPIRIT**. This is our own personal prayer language in which we can pray and communicate with God.

**1 Corinthians 14:2** “For if you have the ability to speak in tongues, you will be talking only to God, since people won’t be able to understand you. You will be speaking by the power of the Spirit, but it will all be mysterious.”

* When we pray in tongues, we are **SPIRITUALLY** edified and strengthened.

**1 Corinthians 14:4** “A person who speaks in tongues is strengthened personally, but one who speaks a word of prophecy strengthens the entire church.”

* When we pray in tongues, we magnify and praise God from our **SPIRIT**. **Acts 10:46** “For they heard them speaking in other tongues and praising God.” **See also John 4:23–24.**
* When we pray in tongues, we pray **SPIRIT**-directed prayers. The Holy Spirit directs our prayers according to the perfect will of **GOD**.

**ACTS**

**GROW TR ACK**

**GROW**

**Romans 8:26–27** “And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don’t know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God’s own will.”

“This promise is for us, just waiting for our want and need to bring us to the place of receiving. Those who desire to take up Jesus’ mission, to give their best to His worldwide agenda, and raise their hands to His purposeful cry quickly realize their own limited capacity. Want meets clear need, for who can do the work of God besides God alone?” (Clarensau, *A Spirit-Empowered Life*, 94)

#### Steps to Receiving the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

* You must be **BORN** again.

**Acts 2:38–39** “Peter replied, ‘Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is to you, to your children, and to those far away—all who have been called by the Lord our God.’ ”

* You must **BELIEVE** that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is for you.

**Acts 2:17–18** “ ‘In the last days,’ God says, ‘I will pour out my Spirit upon all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions, and your old men will dream dreams. In those days I will pour out my Spirit even on my servants—men and women alike— and they will prophesy.’ ”

* You must **DESIRE** the gift of the Holy Spirit.

**John 7:37–39** “On the last day, the climax of the festival, Jesus stood and shouted to the crowds, ‘Anyone who is thirsty may come to me! Anyone who believes in me may come and drink! For the Scriptures declare, “Rivers of living water will flow from his heart.’ ” (When he said ‘living water,’ he was speaking of the Spirit, who would be given to everyone believing in him. But the Spirit had not yet been given, because Jesus had not yet entered into his glory.)”

* You must **ASK** for the Holy Spirit.

**Luke 11:13** “So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.”

* You must do the **SPEAKING**.

**Acts 2:3–4** “Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.”

**ACTS**

**GROW TR ACK**

**GROW**

##### See also Isaiah 28:11–12.

* There is a difference between the gift of tongues and a believer's **PERSONAL** prayer language.

**1 Corinthians 12:4, 8–11** “There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. To one person the Spirit gives the ability to give wise advice; to another the same Spirit gives

a message of special knowledge. The same Spirit gives great faith to another, and to someone else the one Spirit gives the gift of healing. He gives one person the power to perform miracles, and another the ability to prophesy. He gives someone else the ability to discern whether a message is from the Spirit of God or from another spirit. Still another person is given the ability to speak in unknown languages, while another is given the ability to interpret what is being said. It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.”

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **PRAYER LANGUAGE** | **GIFT OF TONGUES** |
| Speak directly to God | Speak to man |
| Speak mysteries | Message is understood with interpretation |
| Edify yourself | Edifies the Church |
| No interpretation needed | Interpretation needed |
| For believers | Sign to unbelievers |

The Holy Spirit doesn’t take over your body, mouth, and mind when you filled. You will do the speaking, you will sense the urgency to speak out even if you don’t know what to say, and you will have to trust the Lord that He is baptizing you. Remember, you may feel humbled as you seek the Baptism to the degree that you are afraid what you are hearing in your head isn’t from God. Here’s the good news: If you’re seeking the baptism in the Holy Spirit, evil is fleeing. It’s not the enemy that you are hearing. The Holy Spirit gives you the words to speak; however, you have to take a step of faith and say out loud what the Holy Spirit gives you in tongues. It may sound strange, but allow that supernatural language to flow out of you.

Remember that you cannot speak two languages at the same time. Begin to worship God from your heart in your own language aloud. Then stop speaking your native language and begin speaking in tongues. After you receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit, allow yourself to pray in the Holy Spirit daily during your prayer time.

#### Learn to PRAY

**ACTS**

**GROW TR ACK**

**GROW**

A third practice we should develop is prayer. Prayer is the primary way we communicate to God, and it allows God to communicate to us. How do we make prayer a part of our everyday life? We can learn from three things Jesus did.

**Mark 1:35** “Before daybreak the next morning, Jesus got up and went out to an isolated place to pray.”

* 1. Jesus devoted Himself to make **TIME** to pray.

Jesus devoted Himself each day to spend time and dialogue with His Heavenly Father. Prayer works in our life when we pray. Schedule a time each day to pray. Some days you may spend more time than others, but each day spend some time in prayer.

* 1. Jesus dedicated Himself to find a **PLACE** to pray.

Jesus found a place to pray. There were times when Jesus removed Himself from the crowds and there were times when Jesus prayed in the crowds. We should develop both places to pray in our lives.

Each day we should find a quiet place to pray where the noises of life fade away, so we can listen and learn what we’ve studied. It is in this place that we can pray. This allows us to pray out loud, listen to worship music, or just be in the presence of the Lord.

* 1. Jesus defined a **PLAN** for prayer.

Jesus not only had a defined prayer plan, He shared His plan with us. When Jesus taught His disciples to pray, He gave them a prayer plan. In our prayer time, we can use Scripture to enhance our prayer time and plant God’s Word deeper into our hearts. Here is one such plan adapted from a sermon from Dr. Jim Bradford:

* **Praise:** spend time worshipping Him
* **Repent:** ask for forgiveness of sin
* **Ask:** bring our needs and requests to Him
* **Yield:** express our desire to see His will done no matter what

**Pastor/Leader Note: Appendix 3** is a suggested prayer template from Scripture.

**GROW IN MY CHURCH**

**ACTS**

**GROW TR ACK**

**GROW**

In this section, we will begin to see how the Great Commission and the Great Commandment are woven together. As we continue to grow in our life, we will have a desire to grow in our church.

#### CHARACTERISTICS of a Spiritually Healthy Church Home and Family

It is always good to say we have a healthy home and family. However, what are we using to measure that state of being? Is it our opinion, feelings, or current circumstances? Or do we need a more clear and defined understanding of what a spiritually healthy church home is?

* 1. Our local church home and family has a **UNIFIED COMMITMENT** to the Great Commission.

**Matthew 28:19–20** “Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

* 1. Our church home and family have a **POWERFUL RESPONSIBILITY** to the Great Commandment.

**Matthew 22:36–40** “‘Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?’ Jesus replied, ‘You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.”

* 1. Our local church home and family understand the parameters of how we function as a home and family. These five parameters are measured in Acts 2:42–47:
* **CONNECT** through fellowship
* **GROW** through discipleship
* **SERVE** through personal giftings
* **GO** through evangelism
* **WORSHIP** through praise, prayer, and giving

#### God Has Uniquely MADE and GIFTED Each of Us to Grow in Christ through Our Local Church.

Every person in the world was intentionally created by God. Every talent and gift we have comes from God. We were created for God’s glory and we were created with unique gifts, abilities, and passions. God designed us with our destiny in mind.

Therefore, one of the best things we can do is understand the way God designed us. As we assume our place in the family, God is glorified and the church is strengthened. There are four things that help us understand the way God has designed us. They are our Abilities, our Calling, our Temperament, and our Spiritual gifts.

**ACTS**

**GROW TR ACK**

**GROW**

As you work through the ACTS Assessment in **Appendix 4**, you can begin to figure out where you may serve best in ministry. Your homework is to go to **Appendix 4** and complete the ACTS Assessment.

Bring the assessment back to the next session to discuss. You can use the ACTS Assessment to begin your journey to serve the church.

**Pastor/Leader Note:** Be aware that self-assessments often give people a sense of where they should use their gifts and an opportunity for a ministry assignment. This assessment resource gives you the ability to assist the participant to be involved in ministry.

**GROW IN MY WORLD**

**ACTS**

**GROW TR ACK**

**GROW**

#### Look for Opportunities to Share My Faith

As we continue to grow as a follower of Jesus, we should look for opportunities to influence the world around us. By sharing our faith, we give ourselves the ability to change the conversations we have, allow our thoughts about those around us to be transformed and, at times, stops the negative pressure from outside sources. Our BEST opportunity to make a difference is by sharing our faith with friends, family, and acquaintances and by serving the Lord through ministry in our daily life and with our church family.

* 1. When we find a place to serve at **CHURCH** we will have an opportunity to influence our world.

**Ephesians 4:16** “He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.”

* 1. When we find a place to serve in our **COMMUNITY**, we can make a difference in our world.

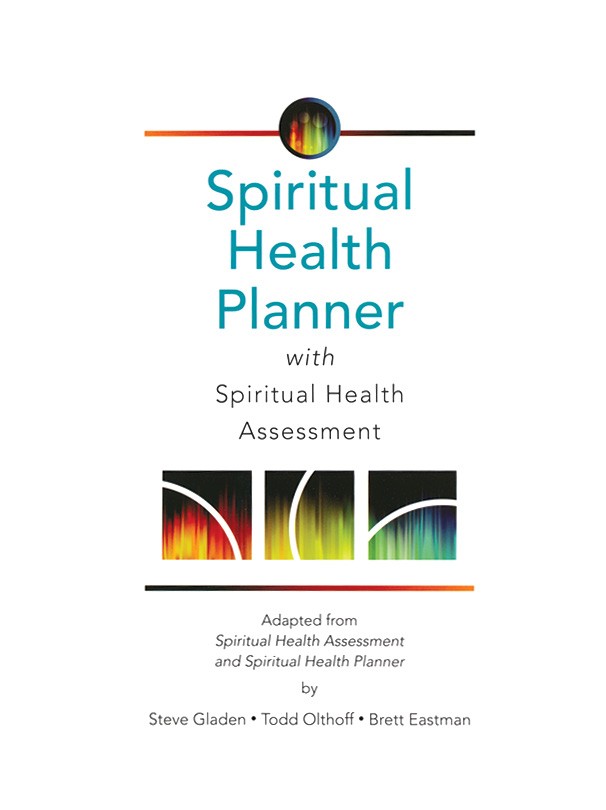
##### See Matthew 20:25–28.

**Pastor/Leader Note:** This is a good time to share about places to serve in your church and community.

**Appendix 2 – GROW**

**A Spiritual Health Assessment**

For an assessment of spiritual growth, go to MyHealthyChurch.com and purchase the **Spiritual Health Planner** with **Spiritual Health Assessment Leader Kit English** (08-8460).



**Appendix 3 – GROW**

**Praying Using the Lord’s Prayer as a Template**

**Matthew 6:9–13 (NIV)** “This, then, is how you should pray: “ ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one.”

##### “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,” (v. 9)

Praise God for who He is as revealed in His Name (The names of God reveal who He is: *Jehovah Jireh*, *El Shaddai*, Good Shepherd, Almighty God, Counselor, Prince of Peace, *Jehovah Shalom*, *El Elyon*, King of kings, etc.)

* + Righteousness—He makes me clean (*Jehovah Tsidkenu*)
  + Sanctifier—He has called me and set me apart
  + Healer—He heals all my diseases (*Jehovah Rapha*)
  + Banner of Victory—He has defeated my enemy
  + Shepherd—He speaks to me and leads me
  + Peace—He is my peace in every storm (*Jehovah Shalom*)
  + Provider—He supplies all of my needs (*Jehovah Jireh*)

##### See Proverbs 18:10.

1. **“your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.” (v. 10)**

*Ask God to establish His kingdom and reveal His priorities in the following domains:*

* + Family
  + Relationships
  + School
  + Church
  + Government

##### See Luke 12:31.

1. **“Give us today our daily bread.” (v. 11)**

*Ask God for what you need and trust Him to provide in the following areas:*

* + Family
  + School
  + Food

**Appendix 3 – GROW continued**

* + - Medical
    - Church
    - Job
    - Transportation
    - Insurance

##### See Psalm 121:1–2.

1. **“And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.” (v. 12)**

*Get your heart right with God and with people:*

* + Ask God to check your heart and motives.
  + Receive His forgiveness for any area that He brings to mind.
  + Forgive anyone who has offended you in any way. Ask God to bless the one who has offended you or hurt you.

##### “And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one. (v. 13)

*Ask God to lead you away from:*

* + Unhealthy friendships
  + Unedifying conversation
  + Past negative images
  + Temptation
  + Ungodly fantasies
  + Time wasters

*Ask God to deliver you from:*

* + Satanic thoughts
  + Unsuspecting temptations
  + Satanic attacks
  + Repetitive fears
  + Undesirable dreams
  + Unwholesome entertainment

**Jeremiah 32:17 (ESV)** “Ah, Lord God! It is you who have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm! Nothing is too hard for you.”

**Appendix 4 – GROW**

## ACTS Assessment

Welcome to the ACTS assessment. God created each person with unique Abilities, Calling, Temperament, and Spiritual Gifts. Together these areas can help you discover the best ways to serve

both in the church and in the community.

#### About Me

Name Address

Spouse’ Name Wedding Anniversary

Children Names, Ages, and Birthdates Phone Email Birthday How long have you been attending this church?

#### My current job/role is:

**My current church involvement is:**

**Appendix 4 – GROW ACTS Assessment cont’d**

**ABILITIES**

As you journey through life, you will discover and develop abilities. These are skills and talents that you have acquired through training and experience. Because some abilities that you have may be more enjoyable than others, please identify which of your abilities are most fulfilling to you.

**Directions:** Check every ability that you have training or experience in. Of those that you marked, check which ones are most enjoyable to you.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Training** | **Experience** | **Ability** | **Enjoyment** |
| ❏ | ❏ | Art/Graphic design | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Catering/Cooking for large groups | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Cleaning/Organizing | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Communications/Writing | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Counseling: adults kids/youth | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Decorating | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Drama/Dance/Creative Expression | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Hosting/Hospitality/Welcoming others | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Landscaping/Gardening | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Management/Leading others | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Marketing/Promotions | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Mechanical/Maintenance and Repair | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Media Production | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Mentoring: adults kids/youth | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Music: singing Instrument  Which Instrument? | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Preaching | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Public Relations | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Researching/Evaluating | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Social Media for an Organization | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Sports/Coaching | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Teaching: adults kids/youth | ❏ |
| ❏ | ❏ | Other: | ❏ |

**Appendix 4 – GROW ACTS Assessment cont’d**

I have taught a class or seminar on: Additional information:

#### CALLING

While some individuals may have a specific calling from God, every Christian is called to serve others. What is it that causes you to be passionate? When you discover what your calling or passion is, then another layer is added to the discovery of how God created you to serve others.

**Directions:** Circle all that apply to you.

#### The people I would like to serve most are:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Age Group and Gender** | **Life Stage** | **People Who Are** | **Other** |
| Babies/Toddlers | Singles | Disabled |  |
| Children | Young Marrieds | Divorced |  |
| Teens/Students | Parents | Homeless |  |
| College Students | Single Parents | Homebound |  |
| Adults | Empty Nesters | Hospitalized |  |
| Women | Teen Moms | Poor |  |
| Men | Retired | Prisoners |  |
|  | Elderly | Unemployed |  |
|  | Widowed |  |  |

**What motivates me most:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Acquire/Possess | Influence | Perform | Other: |
| Clean | Lead/Be in Charge | Pray | Other: |
| Design/Develop | Operate/Maintain | Repair | Other: |
| Excel | Organize | Serve/Help | Other: |

**Appendix 4 – GROW ACTS Assessment cont’d**

**The issues or causes I feel most strongly about are:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Abuse/Violence | Drug Abuse | Homelessness | Poverty/Hunger |
| Alcoholism | Education | Human Trafficking | Purity |
| At-Risk Children | Environment | Injustice Issues | Sanctity of Life |
| Compulsive Behavior | Ethics | Law/Justice System | Sexuality |
| Deafness | Finances | Marriage/ Family | Spiritual Apathy |
| Disabilities | Health/Fitness | Parenting | Purity |
| Divorce | HIV/AIDS | Policy/Politics | Other |

**Additional church issues, ministries, or possible needs in the community that excite me are:**

Your experiences can also be used to minister to others. Writing down what you have experienced in your life can help you discover how you have been uniquely prepared to meet the needs of others. Take a few moments to write down your thoughts to the following:

#### My Spiritual Journey

This is how and when I became a Christian:

Meaningful spiritual experiences, times when I have felt close to God:

**Appendix 4 – GROW ACTS Assessment cont’d**

#### My Painful Experiences

The illnesses, life situations, and other trials have you have faced that would help you to relate to and encourage other Christians in similar situations:

#### My Education Experiences

Where I attended school and what I studied:

#### My Ministry Experiences

**Directions:** Circle all that apply.

Where I have served in the past (if applicable):

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Auto Care | Food Ministry | Pastor | Usher |
| Band | Greeter | Pastor’s Spouse | Women’s Ministry |
| Board Member | Hospitality | Prayer/Intercession | Worship Team |
| Children’s Ministry | Media | Receptionist/Admin | Young Adult/College |
| Choir | Men’s Ministry | Security | Youth Ministry |
| Drama | Nursery/Preschool | Small Group Leader | Other |
| Elder | Nursing/Medical | Sports Ministry |  |
| Evangelism | Outreach | Teacher |  |

**Appendix 4 – GROW ACTS Assessment cont’d**

#### TEMPERAMENT

Your temperament or personality helps to reveal the special characteristics with which God has blessed you. It can help you more effectively express your abilities, calling, and spiritual gifts.

Use this as a simple guide for a better understanding of yourself and others, but keep in mind that temperament is complex. Remember, God intentionally creates each person with a unique personality.

**Directions:** Read each list and circle the words that describe you the best.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Choleric** | **Sanguine** | **Melancholy** | **Phlegmatic** |
| Ambitious | Sociable | Organized | Orderly |
| Problem solver | Carefree | Cautious | Structured |
| Self-motivated | Spontaneous | Invested in work | Predictable |
| Competitive | Cooperative | Compliant | Easygoing |
| Confident | Optimistic | Accurate | Shy |
| Accomplished | Motivator | Systematic | Submissive |
| Results oriented | Persuasive | Analytical | Humble |
| Authoritative | Enthusiastic | Diplomatic | Consistent |
| Accomplished | Giving/charitable | Efficient | Patient |
| Enjoys challenges | Respectful | Overachiever | Loyal |
| Decisive | Seeks excitement | Perfectionist | Dependable |
| Direct |  |  | Sensitive |
| Aggressive | People pleaser | Indecisive | Avoider |
| Critical | Impulsive | Avoids risk | Self-protective |
| Bossy | Difficulty saying no | Uncompromising | Dependent |
| High expectations | Ignores details | Avoids center of attention | Not spontaneous |
| Over-involved | Misses deadlines | Withdrawn | Avoids embarrassment |
| Controlling | Too lenient | Pessimistic | Doesn’t value creativity |
| Total | Total | Total | Total |

Count all the items circled in each column and write the TOTAL for each column. Each item circled equals one point. For example, if you circle six words in the Sanguine column, your total is six for Sanguine.

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**ACTS GROW TRACK**

**Pastor/Leader Note:** For a brief description of the four temperaments go to http:/ fourtemperaments.com/4-primary-temperaments.

**Appendix 4 – GROW ACTS Assessment cont’d**

Another important part of your personality is how you prefer to interact with others. Some people enjoy a lot of interaction while others prefer to serve behind the scenes.

**Directions:** Check the statements that fit you the best.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Extrovert (about 75% of people)** | **Introvert (about 25% of people)** |
| ❏ I am energized by spending time with others. | ❏ I am energized by spending time alone. |
| ❏ I like to have many friends. | ❏ I prefer to have a few close friends. |
| ❏ Others say that I am friendly and outgoing. | ❏ Others say I am quiet or maybe even shy. |
| ❏ Group discussions are a great way for me to learn new things. | ❏ Personal reflection is a great way for me to learn. |
| ❏ Initiating conversations with strangers is easy for me. | ❏ I avoid small talk when I can. |
| Total | Total |

#### SPIRITUAL GIFTS

A spiritual gift is different from a natural gift or ability. A spiritual gift is given by the Holy Spirit to enable you to serve others and strengthen the body of Christ. Circle any gifts that you think you may have.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Preaching | Discernment | Miracles |
| Evangelism | Helps | Intercession |
| Pastor/Shepherd | Hospitality | Deliverance |
| Teaching | Faith | Prophecy |
| Wisdom | Administration/Organization | Mentoring |
| Exhortation | Tongues | Leadership |
| Entrepreneur | Interpretation of Tongues | Compassion/Mercy |
| Other | Word of Knowledge | Generosity |
|  | Word of Wisdom | Healing |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **I am pretty sure I have these gifts:** | **I think I may have these gifts:** |
| 1. | 1. |
| 2. | 2. |
| 3. | 3. |

**Appendix 5 – GROW**

## Sample Team Descriptions

#### A-Team

Our team uses our gift of administration to support various teams by using computer skills, data entry, and attention to details.

#### Baptism Team

Our team prepares for and hosts the baptism experience.

#### Guest Services Teams

Our team brings a personal touch to our worship experiences by hosting in the parking lot, greeting people at the door, hosting in the sanctuary and at the information tent, and serving as ushers.

#### Care Team

Our team prepares food for families who are experiencing hospital stays or funerals.

#### Kids Team

Our team invests in the lives of children through worship, biblical teaching, Junior Bible Quiz, videos, small groups, and games.

#### Nursery/Preschool Team

Our team cares for children for all services and activities at church.

#### The Café

Our team serves God by serving others at the café before and after all services.

#### Homebound Visitation/Communion Team

Our team visits shut-ins to encourage and share Communion with them.

#### Celebrate Recovery

Our team offers hope to those battling hurts, habits, and hang-ups through worship, Bible teaching, and accountability support.

#### Food Pantry

Our team facilitates a full-service pantry, meeting physical needs and responding to spiritual needs.

#### Students

Our team helps high school and middle school students get connected to God and to one another.

**Appendix 5 – GROW continued**

#### Worship

Our team facilitates a powerful worship experience through vocals, instruments, and audio engineering.

#### Media/Production Team

Our team assists in the production of the overall worship experience, using lights, cameras, video, and other visual elements.

#### Group Leaders

We are trained to facilitate groups and equipped to build relationships while helping group members discover their next steps.

#### Prayer Teams

There are several teams that offer opportunities for prayer at our church (list the prayer teams times and places).

## Serving Roles

The church offers several ministry opportunities where we can serve. Each of these ministries is central to our vision and core values.

#### Auditorium Teams

* + Worship Team (instrument and/or vocal)
  + Production (audio/video/lights)
  + Communion Team
  + Prayer Team
  + Class Hosts
  + Baptism Team

#### First Impressions Teams

* + Parking Lot Hosts
  + Greeters
  + Ushers
  + Hospitality/Café
  + Next Steps

**Appendix 5 – GROW continued**

#### Groups

* + Community Groups
  + Sunday School Groups
  + Discipleship Groups

#### Next Gen

* + Kids (infants, 6 weeks to walking)
  + Kids (toddlers, 1–2 years)
  + Kids (preschool, 3–5 years)
  + Kids (elementary, grades 1–6)
  + Students (middle school and high school, grades 6–12)

#### Creative

* + Graphic Design
  + Social Media
  + Video
  + Theater/Writing
  + Stage Design

#### Other

* + Administrative Help
  + Events
  + Buildings and Grounds
  + First Responders
  + Nonprofit Service

**ACTS**

**GROW TRACK**

**SERVE**

**Objective of This Section**

Our final session is designed to bring a greater understanding to the assessments we completed in the last lesson and determine how we can move forward. One of the key components to living out our faith is to find our place, the reason God created us and placed us in His church. When we find where we belong in serving the Lord and His church, then we will begin to find fulfillment in our journey. It’s hard to find fulfillment when there is no investment of time, energy, gifts, and engagement.

The good news is that God has a place for each one of us. And, there is more good news: our church family believes in us and wants us to find our place. When we begin to serve, we continue to connect and grow. Each one of us is needed! God has made us specifically for His service. Serving is joyful and a fulfilling part of the Christian life.

### SERVE Steps

* + - Identify a place you can serve your church.
    - Pray and ask God to strengthen the gifts and abilities inside you.
    - Write a list of unchurched neighbors and coworkers you can begin to intercede for, invest in, and invite to church.
    - Continue to seek the baptism in the Holy Spirit.
    - Complete all of the Acts Grow Track sessions.

### OUTLINE of This Section

#### Serve God

* + - Why Do I Serve God?
    - How Did the Early Church Serve God?
    - How Do I Serve God Today in My Church?

#### Serve My Church

* + - Four Suggestions to Help Me Begin to Use My Gifts
    - Serving Is an Opportunity for Connection and Growth, and Is an Act of Worship
    - Serving Provides Me a Place to Belong

#### Serve My World

* + - How Do I Serve outside My Church Family?
    - What’s Next? Where Do I Go from Here?

**SERVE GOD**

**ACTS**

**GROW TR ACK**

**SERVE**

#### Why Do I Serve God?

Our life is meant for serving God. Serving God is part of His reason for creating us. So, our purpose in life is to love God and fulfill His will for our life. To accomplish this, we should accept that He has a purpose and a plan for us. And if He has a purpose and plan, then we must decide if we want to serve. Some people may use the word *ministry* instead of *service*. That’s not a problem because we believe that every act of service is a form of ministry. No matter what our service is, as we are obedient to God’s leading we are fulfilling what He is asking us to do right now. Don’t worry about next year, just enjoy serving God today. So, why should we serve?

* 1. We serve God because He **CREATED** us to serve Him.

**Ephesians 2:10** “For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.”

* 1. We serve God because we have been **CALLED** for ministry.

**Galatians 1:15–16** “But even before I was born, God chose me and called me by his marvelous grace. Then it pleased him to reveal his Son to me so that I would proclaim the Good News about Jesus to the Gentiles.”

* 1. We serve God by understanding that we have been **GIFTED** for ministry.

**1 Peter 4:10** “God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.”

* 1. We serve God when we understand that God wants us to **SERVE**.

**Matthew 28:18–19** “Jesus came and told his disciples, ‘I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.’ ”

* 1. We serve God because we can meet the **NEEDS** of those who are without Christ.

**1 Corinthians 12:27** “All of you together are Christ’s body, and each of you is a part of it.”

#### How Did the EARLY Church Serve God?

**ACTS**

**GROW TR ACK**

**SERVE**

If the Early Church in the Book of Acts followed the path of Connect, Grow, and Serve, perhaps then we should learn to serve God through this model. Our connection to people will help us develop the church in our community that God desires for us to have.

* 1. Every believer is **ESSENTIAL** to the work of service/ministry.

Acts 4:32–33 “All the believers were united in heart and mind. And they felt that what they owned was not their own, so they shared everything they had. The apostles testified powerfully to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God’s great blessing was upon them all.”

##### See also Ephesians 4:13.

* 1. Every believer should **DISCOVER** and **USE** their gifts within the context of ministry to the body of Christ and those who haven’t met Christ yet.

**1 Corinthians 12:27–31** “All of you together are Christ’s body, and each of you is a part of it. Here are some of the parts God has appointed for the church: first are apostles, second are prophets, third are teachers, then those who do miracles, those who have the gift of healing, those who can help others, those who have the gift of leadership, those who speak in unknown languages.

“Are we all apostles? Are we all prophets? Are we all teachers? Do we all have the power to do miracles? Do we all have the gift of healing? Do we all have the ability to speak in unknown languages? Do we all have the ability to interpret unknown languages? Of course not! So you should earnestly desire the most helpful gifts.

“But now let me show you a way of life that is best of all.”

##### See also 1 Peter 4:10.

* 1. The Holy Spirit **STRENGTHENS** the body of Christ for faithful, **EFFECTIVE**

ministry.

**Romans 12:4–6** “Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ’s body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.

In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well.”

##### See also Ephesians 4:11–12.

* 1. Every believer should allow the **POWER** of God to be released through their life.

**Acts 3:6–8** “But Peter said, ‘I don’t have any silver or gold for you. But I’ll give you what I have. In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, get up and walk!’ ”

“Then Peter took the lame man by the right hand and helped him up. And as he did, the man’s feet and ankles were instantly healed and strengthened. He jumped up, stood on his feet, and began to walk! Then, walking, leaping, and praising God, he went into the Temple with them.”

**ACTS**

**GROW TR ACK**

**SERVE**

##### See also Acts 1:8.

* 1. Every believer should allow spiritual gifts to operate through their life with **LOVE**, **MERCY**, and **GRACE**.

1 Corinthians 13:1 “If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn’t love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.”

##### See also 1 Corinthians 13:2–3.

1. **How Do I Serve God Today in My Church?**

Culture, upbringing, personality, and biblical understanding all influence how we express our love to God as a group of believers. Some of the things we may see in our church would include:

##### Acts of Praise

This is our response in celebration for God’s actions God in our life. This would include our past, present, and future. This portion of the service allows people the opportunity to connect with God and experience Him and His presence.

**Matthew 22:37** “Jesus replied, ‘You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ ”

**Pastor/Leader Note:** This would be a good place to provide a list of the different acts of praise you do in your church. As you take into account the different personalities and styles, think through the different ways you can connect people to God in a variety of experiences.

##### Acts of Worship

This is when we identify with who God is and how we respond in honor, humility, and surrender to His Lordship. Worship helps people join with God in new and fresh ways.

Acts of worship help provide the framework for the release of God’s will in our personal and corporate life. These acts of worship help to remove us from off the throne of our life and place Him on the throne of our life—we’re no longer the one in control; He is.

**John 4:23–24** “But the time is coming—indeed it’s here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way. For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.”

**ACTS**

**GROW TR ACK**

**SERVE**

**Pastor/Leader Note:** This would be a good place to highlight the expressions of worship embraced in your church. Keep in mind the different personalities when you develop the worship experience.

##### Corporate Singing and Prayer

These are the moments in our service where we as a congregation in a spirit of unity, collectively sing songs of worship and praise, join together in spoken prayer, have a time in a prayer of agreement for one another, and intercede for special needs.

**James 5:14** “Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord.”

**Pastor/Leader Note:** This would be a good time to discuss how prayer and singing are utilized in your church.

##### Offering Time

The Bible is a book about giving. Jesus talked about giving more than almost any other subject. Over half of His parables have to do with money. There are more promises in the Bible related to giving than to any other subject. Giving frees us from greed and selfishness. When we give, we are giving to God through the church, not to the church. Giving is worship to Jesus and an expression of the relationship between the individual giver and God. Two types of giving help us in our new walk with God.

* 1. **TITHING**

Tithing is giving God the first 10 percent of our income through the local church. It is a primary way we acknowledge that God is first in what is most important to us. The Bible instructs us that one of the ways we serve the Lord is through the way we handle our finances. Tithing is the act of bringing our first gifts to God from our finances. God places this element of service in our lives to make sure we depend on Him in all of our ways. God wants to stretch us beyond our own understanding.

**Proverbs 3:9–10** “Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the best part of everything you produce. Then he will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with good wine.”

**ACTS**

**GROW TR ACK**

**SERVE**

* 1. **OFFERINGS**

The offering is a precious gift we give to God as an act of abundant praise, a gift we give beyond the biblical teaching of tithing. Think about this: the Bible says by giving offerings we are able to take hold of life that God truly wants us to have. Offerings are the gateway to the abundant life in Christ.

1. **Timothy 6:18–19** “Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others. By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may experience true life.”

**Pastor/Leader Note:** This would be a good time to talk about the different ways to give to the church (for example, online, in offering, apps, wills, mail, reoccurring giving).

##### Preaching

These are times to expand the awareness of God to every person through the study of Scripture so we can develop as a disciple of Christ. Preaching should reveal God and the truth of God to us through His Word. Preaching is one avenue of how people can be fed, nurtured, and find direction for their life. Since the Bible is full of the wisdom of God, preaching provides answers to the questions of life.

1. **Timothy 4:2–3** “Preach the word of God. Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching.

“For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear.”

##### See also 1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 3:16.

**Pastor/Leader Note:** This would be a good time to talk about the different times and styles of preaching that occur in the church (for example, teaching, topical sermons, exegetical sermons, revivals, special meetings).

**SERVE MY CHURCH**

**ACTS**

**GROW TR ACK**

**SERVE**

Here is our opportunity to discover a place for us to use our gifts and resources, to grow

and find fulfillment through serving. We have explored and considered what our life could be as we follow Christ. We understand that serving has a more complex outcome. Until now we have looked at how we could find new friends, we have shared our story with those in our circle of influence, and we have talked about how we can grow in Christ.

This study has a distinctive outcome. It’s very easy to create measurables that we can’t obtain. However, as we begin to serve, we should understand that our ministry leaders aren’t going to throw us into the deep end of the pool to drown. Pastors and ministry leaders want each one to learn and grow as someone who serves the Lord and has a bright future in His church.

#### Four Suggestions to Help Me Begin to Use My Gifts

* 1. Seek God’s **DIRECTION**.

As we look at the different ministries God has placed within our church, we should pray and ask where God may be leading us to serve.

**2 Thessalonians 1:11–12** “So we keep on praying for you, asking our God to enable you to live a life worthy of his call. May he give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith prompts you to do. Then the name of our Lord Jesus will be honored because of the way you live, and you will be honored along with him. This is all made possible because of the grace of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ.”

“When the right motive is in place, serving becomes less about doing and more about becoming like Him. Doing exhausts every resource, but being thrives in the sacrifice” (Mike Clarensau, *A Spirit-Empowered Life*, Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2015) 148.

* 1. Understand your **GIFTINGS**.

**Pastor/Leader Note:** Discuss the ACTS assessment from last week.

**1 Corinthians 12:18–22** “But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where

he wants it. How strange a body would be if it had only one part! Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. The eye can never say to the hand, ‘I don’t need you.’ The head can’t say to the feet, ‘I don’t need you.’

“In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary.”

**ACTS**

**GROW TR ACK**

**SERVE**

* 1. Ask your church’s leadership where you can **SERVE**.

**1 Peter 2:9** “But you are not like that, for you are a chosen people. You are royal

priests, a holy nation, God’s very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.”

* 1. Be willing to make a **COMMITMENT** to volunteer.

**1 Peter 4:10** “God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.”

**Pastor/Leader Note:** It is our recommendation that these ministries should be for a trial time with a clear off-ramp. People need to know that if they don’t like a particular ministry, they can try another one guilt free.

#### Serving Is an Opportunity for CONNECTION, and GROWTH, and Is an Act of WORSHIP.

“Our relational circle has an effect on the direction and speed of our lives.” Rob Ketterling (author and pastor)

We live in a society in which we experience what some sociologists call, “crowded loneliness.” We’re surrounded by people but do not feel a sense of belonging. In fact, a survey conducted by the Gallup organization revealed that 7 in 10 people do not know their neighbors and that one-third of Americans admit to frequent periods of loneliness. (Randy Frazee, *The Connecting Church*, Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001). This is another reason why connecting, growing and serving in your church is paramount to your spiritual growth.

**Hebrews 10:25** “And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.”

##### See also Ephesians 2:19.

1. **Serving Provides Me a Place to BELONG.**

**ACTS**

**GROW TR ACK**

**SERVE**

* 1. The gifts God has placed in me are **SPECIAL ABILITIES** and not natural talents or skills.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **SPIRITUAL GIFTS** | **NATURAL TALENTS** | **SKILLS** |
| Given by the Holy Spirit | Natural abilities | Learned abilities |
| Discovered after spiritual birth | Present from natural birth | Acquired with training |
| God-given to all members of the body of Christ | God-given to all people | Developed by people over time |

* 1. God gives these gifts to **EVERY** believer and He desires for me to use them.

**1 Corinthians 12:11** “It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.”

* 1. These gifts are to **BUILD UP** the body of Christ and be used to **EQUIP US** for ministry.

**Ephesians 4:11–12** “Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.”

##### See also 1 Corinthians 14:22,24; Ephesians 4:13.

**SERVE MY WORLD**

**ACTS**

**GROW TR ACK**

**SERVE**

1. **How Do I Serve outside My Church Family?**

By placing ourselves in a position to serve in our church, we can prepare to serve in our world. We must be careful never to allow our servant’s heart to be lost in the world in which we live. By serving the people in our church, we will develop the courage to serve those in our world. In our world, we have influence. Our influence may be the difference for our friends and family finding Christ.

Remember, every person has value, **EVERY PERSON**. Because God loves them, we should use our abilities and giftings to share this vital principle with them: God sent His Son to give them life. They may not want to hear it, they may walk away, or they may react in a very uncomfortable way. However, that doesn’t change the truth that Jesus is the Light of the world. He is Savior and Lord. And He wants us to serve Him by finding ways to be used.

“Real serving flows from the relationship we have with Christ. Because we love Him, we willingly lay ourselves down in front of others, sacrificing our resources, and giving our absolute best to accomplish the purposes of Christ’s kingdom” (Clarensau, *A Spirit-Empowered Life*, 147).

Authentic service allows us to demonstrate our love to those around us. This would include our immediate family, our friends, and those in our community. Many people are more open to the gospel of Jesus Christ than ever before. The time to make an impact in our family and community is right now. People sense something happening in the spiritual realm.

**Matthew 9:10–13** “Later, Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners. But when the Pharisees saw this, they asked his disciples, ‘Why does your teacher eat with such scum?’

“When Jesus heard this, he said, ‘Healthy people don’t need a doctor—sick people do.’ Then he added, ‘Now go and learn the meaning of this Scripture: “I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices.” For I have come to call not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners.’ ”

Jesus spent time with the people He was trying to reach. Reaching people happens best through relationships. The best relationships we have are in our sphere of influence. At the end of the day, our sphere of influence is boils down to where we live, where we work, and where we play. The primary issue become one of discipleship within this sphere. May we be like David: “For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation, fell asleep and was laid with his fathers and saw corruption” Acts 13:36 (ESV).

Our sphere of influence is our missions field. It can be broken down in the following manner:

**ACTS**

**GROW TR ACK**

**SERVE**

##### Where we live

» Family members

» Relatives

» People in our household

» Neighbors

##### Where we work

» Coworkers

» People we are in contact with in our working relationships

##### Where we play

» Families of the kids our kids are on sports teams

» Places we go to for amusement/hobbies

#### What’s Next? Where Do I Go from Here?

Now that you have completed the Acts Grow Track sessions, you should have gained a new perspective of our church. We want to encourage you to take some time to review the material, reflect on what God has shown you through the teaching and through your interaction with others in the classes. Then determine how the Lord is directing you and what your next step should be.

We are fully convinced from Scripture that God’s intention is for each of us to live a life of connection. Maybe your next step is to **CONNECT** in a smaller group, where you can experience biblical community with other followers of Christ at the church. Maybe you would like to explore areas of service for you to serve in. Or maybe you would like to just invite someone out for coffee or a meal.

We should be prepared to start a new commitment to **GROW** in Christ by developing the ways of a disciple. The beginning place to start is through daily time with Him in prayer and in His Word.

Finally, we are all called to **SERVE** and make an impact in the lives of others. Perhaps your next step is to discover your abilities and giftings for ministry and begin serving God by serving others. You can serve others by sharing your faith or simply inviting others to a worship service. The ultimate goal is to bring glory to God by allowing your unique “fingerprint” to be seen in your community and in the world.

**Pastor/Leader Note:** You should develop a plan to help people take the next step and become involved in a ministry.