

SEVEN STAGES OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

The greatest decision anyone will ever make in their lifetime is to accept God's gift of salvation – becoming one of his children. God desires for his children to continually grow and mature into the likeness, character, and mentality of the Lord Jesus Christ. The local church has been given the responsibility of helping them accomplish this growth in each believer. There are Seven Stages of Spiritual Growth we want to see each believer grow through.

THE SEVEN STAGES OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH		
Name of Stage	Description	Age Comparison
1) _____	Change in the disciple's life at salvation <i>Add to your faith VIRTUE</i>	Babe 1Pet. 2:2
2) _____	Learning about the God that saved me <i>and to virtue KNOWLEDGE</i>	Little Children 1John 2:12
3) _____ Involvement	Natural desire to participate in the Lord's work <i>and to knowledge TEMPERANCE</i>	Children Eph. 4:14
4) _____ Development	Fruit and Testimony is proved <i>and to temperance PATIENCE</i>	Young Men 1John 2:13-14
5) Moment of _____	Testing to prove the disciple's commitment <i>and to patience GODLINESS</i>	Fathers 1John 2:13-14
6) Leadership _____	God entrusts the disciple with leadership <i>and to godliness BROTHERLY KINDNESS</i>	Elders 1Pet. 5:1-3
7) Consecration and _____ Vision	Fully equipped to begin a new work <i>and to brotherly kindness CHARITY</i>	Aged Phil. 9

How do we make spiritual growth a priority within our churches?

A. Understand God's _____ on spiritual growth.

Colossians 1:20-22

²⁰And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. ²¹And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled ²²In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:

B. Make God's perspective your _____.

Colossians 1:28

Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

STAGE 1: REPENTANCE

This is the change that takes place in the disciple's life at salvation.

A. Defining repentance – _____

Matthew 21:28-29

²⁸But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. ²⁹He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went.

B. There are two important parts to repentance:

1. Repentance and _____

2Corinthians 5:17

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

2. Repentance and _____

Romans 8:29

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

C. The vast majority of believers _____ grow beyond this stage.

1 Corinthians 3:1-2

¹And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. ²I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

1. They are content to believe in God and never _____.

2. They are content to go to church and just hold _____.

3. They are content to read their bibles and _____ putting into practice.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION:

How will I know if someone is growing into this spiritual stage?

Listen to what they talk about: _____

How will I know if someone is growing beyond this spiritual stage?

Believers will grow beyond this stage when they add _____ to their faith.

STAGE 2: ENLIGHTENMENT

This is when disciples begin to learn about the God that changed them.

A. This stage is about developing a _____ with God through the person of Jesus Christ.

1. The heart of a true discipler is for their disciple to _____ Jesus.

Colossians 1:9-10

⁹For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; ¹⁰That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

2. The heart of a true _____ is to know Jesus.

Philippians 3:8-10

⁸Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, ⁹And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: ¹⁰That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

3. The only way to get to know Jesus is by spending _____ with him through the bible.

John 5:39

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

B. There are two important dangers to avoid in this stage:

1. _____ ministry involvement

2. _____

PRACTICAL APPLICATION:

How will I know if someone is growing into this spiritual stage?

Listen to what they talk about: _____

How will I know if someone is growing beyond this spiritual stage?

Believers will grow beyond this stage when they add _____ to their virtue.

STAGE 3: MINISTRY INVOLVEMENT

Disciples will have a natural desire to participate in the Lord's work when they reach this stage.

A. Disciples should reach this stage by the end of the one on one discipleship process.

1. Repentance → _____
2. Enlightenment → _____
3. Ministry Involvement → _____

B. Disciples will learn to apply God's truth to their lives by being _____ in ministry.

1. There should be a natural desire to _____ to someone who is already doing the work of the ministry.

1Corinthians 16:15-16

¹⁵I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,) ¹⁶That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth.

2. Disciples will see Jesus change _____ through their ministry involvement.
 - a. His power over creation – *Luke 8:22-25*
 - b. His power over Satan – *Luke 8:26-36*
 - c. His power over sickness – *Luke 8:43-48*
 - d. His power over death – *Luke 8:49-56*

PRACTICAL APPLICATION:

How will I know if someone is growing into this spiritual stage?

Listen to what they talk about: _____

How will I know if someone is growing beyond this spiritual stage?

Believers will grow beyond this stage when they add _____ to their knowledge.

STAGE 4: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Developing leaders must have their fruit and testimonies tested and proven.

A. Leadership development is about training leaders, it is _____ about leadership responsibility.

1. We must put our disciples in situations that will _____ them for future leadership.

Luke 9:1-3

¹Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases. ²And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. ³And he said unto them, Take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece.

2. Disciples must be _____ to be put in those situations to help them grow as leaders.

Luke 9:6

And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where.

3. We must use each ministry situation as a _____ moment.

Luke 9:10

And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place belonging to the city called Bethsaida.

B. Leaders are _____, they are not self-appointed.

Luke 9:28

And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.

C. We are to be always developing leaders.

1. You are always developing the next leader who will take your place and _____.

2. You are always developing the next leader who will take your place when _____ go.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION:

How will I know if someone is growing into this spiritual stage?

Listen to what they talk about: _____

How will I know if someone is growing beyond this spiritual stage?

Believers will grow beyond this stage when they add _____ to their temperance.

STAGE 5: MOMENT OF CRISIS

God will lead developing leaders through times of major trials to prove them and to reveal their hearts.

- A. God brings testing into a leader's life because ministry is _____ business, and it will not survive without proven and tested leadership.

Job 13:15

Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him.

1. This testing is usually a _____ defining moment that causes disciples to re-evaluate everything and be separated unto God.
2. This testing will _____ the hearts of disciples.

- B. God brings testing into a leader's life to give them an opportunity to _____.

John 6:66-68

⁶⁶From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. ⁶⁷Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? ⁶⁸Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

1. Many disciples quit because the word of God _____ them.

John 6:61

When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

2. Many disciples quit because they are following their _____ and not the spirit.

John 6:63

It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

3. Many disciples quit because they were _____ believers.

John 6:64

But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION:

How will I know if someone is growing into this spiritual stage?

Listen to what they talk about: _____

How will I know if someone is growing beyond this spiritual stage?

Believers will grow beyond this stage when they add _____ to their patience.

STAGE 6: LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY

God will entrust proven disciples with responsibilities in leadership.

A. Leadership responsibility gives disciples the opportunity to put the decisions they made during a moment of crisis into _____.

1. Decisions without _____ are meaningless.
2. Leaders must learn through _____.

B. Leadership responsibility gives disciples the opportunity to develop their _____ qualities.

1. Learn to be _____. – *Luke 9:46-48*
2. Learn the need for _____. – *Luke 9:49-50*
3. Learn to love _____ people. – *Luke 9:51-56*
4. Learn the importance of _____. – *Luke 11:1-4*
5. Learn to _____ eternal things over the temporary things. – *Luke 12:22-23,31-34*
6. Learn that God will hold you _____. – *Luke 16:1-2*
7. Learn that God is _____ you to lead others on your own. – *Luke 18:28-34*

PRACTICAL APPLICATION:

How will I know if someone is growing into this spiritual stage?

Listen to what they talk about: _____

How will I know if someone is growing beyond this spiritual stage?

Believers will grow beyond this stage when they add brotherly _____ to their godliness.

STAGE 7: CONSECRATION AND WORLD VISION

Disciples who reach this stage are fully equipped to begin a new work on their own.

A. The goal of _____ ministry must be to grow leaders to this point.

John 17:4-6

⁴I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. ⁵And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. ⁶I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

B. The goal of every ministry must be to grow leaders who will _____ leaders.

1. The mark of a mature ministry is not in its seating capacity, following capacity, or knowledge capacity; but it is rather marked by its _____ and _____ capacity.

John 17:18-21

¹⁸As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. ¹⁹And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. ²⁰Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; ²¹That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

2. The mark of mature disciples is not in how many times they sit in church, who they follow, or how much they know; but rather in the seeds they have sown and their _____ to go.

Acts 1:8

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION:

How will I know if someone is growing into this spiritual stage?

Listen to what they talk about: _____

How will I know if someone is growing beyond this spiritual stage?

Believers will grow beyond this stage when they add _____ to their brotherly kindness.