

## “Phrase” from the Stage

Unbeliever	I don't believe there is a god The Bible is just a bunch of myths Evolution explains away God God is just a crutch Jesus is only one way
Spiritual Infant	I believe in Jesus, but my church is when I'm in the woods. I don't have to go to church to be a Christian I gave my life to Jesus and I go to church, but I don't need to be close to other people I pray and read my Bible; that is good enough for me.
Spiritual Child	I love my small group; don't add any more people to it. Who are all these people coming to my Church? Tell them to go somewhere else! I am not coming to church anymore. It has become too big; it has too many people. I didn't like the music today. If only they did it like..."
Spiritual Young Adult	I think I could lead a group with a little help. I have three friends I have been witnessing to, and this group would be too big for them. Randy and Rachel missed group and I called to see if they are okay. Their kids have the flu, so maybe our group can make meals for them. I'll start. I am so exhausted this week I called all sixty men from men's breakfast to see how they were.
Spiritual Parent	This guy at work asked me to explain the Bible to him. Pray for me. We get to baptize someone from our small group tonight. When is the next Belonging class? I want to get her plugged into ministry somewhere. I realized discipleship happens at home... will you hold me accountable to disciple my kids

## Beliefs, Behaviors & Attitudes

Unbeliever	Unbelief, rebellion, blind to truth Belief in one God, but many ways to get to Him Anger toward Christians / Church Ignorance and or confusion about God, Jesus and the Church Misinformed about spiritual/biblical truth; spiritual blindness
Spiritual Infant	Ignorance about what they need spiritually and what the Bible says about life Ignorant about or frustrated toward Christianity and the church Belief that Christians can make no mistakes (no tolerance of) Unrealistic expectations of others Confusion about the Christian life Mixing Christianity and other religions and not knowing it.
Spiritual Child	Excitement of deeper relationships They appreciate sp. changes Understand Christian lingo, but: Have high expectations of others Believe feelings are most important, which leads to spiritual highs and lows Compare themselves to others and compete with them Lack wisdom how to use what they are learning- for example too aggressive when sharing their faith or too legalistic in their approach to dealing with friends and family Belief that people are not caring for them enough
Spiritual Young Adult	Desire to serve for others' good and the glory of God Feel responsible for how others respond to the gospel message Possible pride if a person accepts the message and possible discouragement if they don't Desire to serve but not strategic about how to train others Black and white about what should happen in a church
Spiritual Parent	Has a coach's mindset Wants to see people mature Reproduces disciples Can feed themselves Values the church team

## Spiritual Needs of the Stage

Unbeliever	Secure relationship with a growing believer A picture of the real Jesus Answers, evidences for Christ An explanation of the gospel An invitation to receive Christ
Spiritual Infant	Individual attention from a spiritual parent Protection An explanation of truth from God's Word An explanation and modeling of the habits of growing believers
Spiritual Child	A spiritual family Help to start feeding themselves Teaching who they are in Christ Teaching about how to have relationships with others
Spiritual Young Adult	A place to learn to serve A spiritual parent who will debrief them about ministry Ongoing encouraging relationships and accountability Guidance regarding expectations of people they will serve Spiritual skills training
Spiritual Parents	An ongoing relationship with co-laborers A church family Encouragement in discipleship

***God calls each of us to become spiritual parents.***

(Disciple-makers of all the nations)

Ask yourself these questions:

In what spiritual stage am I?

Do I know how to grow to the next stage?

Am I involved in discipling others?

## What is the spiritual growth process of the normal Christian?

people for personal growth and reproducing disciple-makers on the church team.

(These stages are not based on the content of Bible knowledge, but practical implementation)



### 1) **Unbeliever** – Spiritually dead

**Eph. 2:1-3**

- This person does not know Jesus and has not accepted Him as Savior. He is unbelieving and rebellious.

### 2) **Spiritual Infant** – focus on self

**1 Cor. 3:1-3; 1 Pet. 2:2-3**

- This person has accepted Jesus as His Savior, but is not connected in a relationship environment for the purpose of Biblical Discipleship. He is ignorant of God's Word, confused and dependent on others.

### 3) **Spiritual Child** - What can I get?

**1 Jn. 2:12; 1 Thes. 2:10-12;**

**Phm 1:8-11**

- This person recognizes his need for relationships with other Christians and is connected in a relational environment for the purpose of discipleship, but life is all about him. He is self-centered, prideful, idealistic and has either a high or low view of self often because he lives by pride or emotions.

### 4) **Spiritual Young Adult** - wants to serve

**1 Jn. 2:13-14; Gal. 5:13-14**

- He recognizes his part in the body of Christ. This person has moved from self-centeredness to God- and other-centeredness. He is characterized by service, zeal, mission and spiritual independence. He learns to push on when discouraged.

### 5) **Spiritual Parent** - reproducing

**1 Jn 2:13-14; 2 Tim. 2:2**

- He has been serving and ministering and now thinks in terms of reproducing. He can feed himself and intentionally recruits

### Message Based Discussion Questions

What physical stage of growing up did you enjoy the most? (child, young adult, adult... or did you ever grow up ☺?)

#### **Digging Deeper:**

Based on the charts, what are some other phrases of a child?

What are phrases of a parent?

What are differences between a child and young adult?

Why is it important to understand the Spiritual needs of each stage? What are the needs of spiritual infants and children?

#### **Application of the message to life:**

What are at least four things you could do to ensure you are growing up spiritually?

If you want to be considered spiritually mature, what needs to be true?

## *Strategy for Grace*

## *Stages of Growth*

*1 John 2:12-14*

*January 20*