

Beliefs, Behaviors & Attitudes

Unbeliever	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lack knowledge about what they need spiritually and what the Bible says about life -Lack knowledge about or frustrated toward Christianity and the church -Belief that Christians should make no mistakes ever or they complain -Unrealistic expectations of others -Confusion about the Christian life -Mixing Christianity and other religions and not knowing it.
Spiritual Child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Excitement of deeper relationships -They appreciate spiritual changes -Understand Christian lingo, but: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> =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 =Believe people do not care for them enough
Spiritual Young Adult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Has a coach's mindset -Wants to see people mature -Reproduces disciples -Can feed themselves -Values the church team

"Phrase" from the Stage

Unbeliever	<p>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.</p>
Spiritual Infant	<p>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.</p>
Spiritual Child	<p>I didn't like the music today. If only they did it like..." I am not coming to church anymore. It has become too big; it has too many people. Who are all these people coming to my Church? Tell them to go somewhere else! I love my small group; don't add any more people to it.</p>
Spiritual Young Adult	<p>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.</p>
Spiritual Parent	<p>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. Will you help me as I cast vision for these three guys I have discipled to disciple other guys?</p>

Spiritual Needs of the Stage

Unbeliever	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 Matt. 28:19-20)

Ask yourself these questions:

In what spiritual stage am I?

Do I know how to grow to the next stage?

Are those whom I'm discipling in Christ discipling others?

What is the spiritual growth process of the new Christian?

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 toward God.

2) **Spiritual Infant** – Focused on self

1 Thes. 2:7-8; 1 Cor. 3:1-3

- This person has accepted Jesus as His Savior and is connected in a relationship environment for the purpose of Biblical Discipleship. He is dependent on others for learning God's Word.

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

1 Jn. 2:12a,13c; 1 Thes. 2:10-12

- This person connects with other Christians. He is learning discipleship. Yet, life is often about him in what he wants to learn, how he worships and who he is around. He is often self-centered, prideful, idealistic and has either a high or low view of self because he lives by pride or emotions.

4) **Spiritual Young Adult** – Willing to serve

1 Jn. 2:13b,14b; Gal. 5:13-14

- He is moving from self-centeredness to God- and other-centeredness. He recognizes his part in the body of Christ. He is becoming equipped for service and mission by interdependence. He learns to push on when discouraged. He is learning faithfulness and responsibility.

5) **Spiritual Parent** - Reproducing

1 Jn. 2:13a,14a; 2 Tim. 2:2

- He can be counted on in ministry and thinks in terms of reproducing. He can feed himself and intentionally recruits people for personal growth and reproducing disciple-makers on the church team.

(These stages are not based on a person's amount of Bible knowledge, but on growth toward making disciples)

Message Based Discussion Questions

In what physical stage of growth does someone have the most joy?

Digging Deeper:

- What happens when children do not grow up?
- How would you help a person to understand the blessing of being a parent? What are some of the challenges of being a parent? How are those overcome?
- 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 differences between a child and young adult?
- 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

Connect..... Equip.....Multiply.....

*Go, make disciples of all nations....baptizing...teaching
Matt. 28:19-20*

Stages of Spiritual Growth

1 John 2:12-14

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