

THOUGHTS ON GROWING NEW BELIEVERS

How Does A New Believer Acquire Spiritual Understanding?

If a new believer is not instructed otherwise, he will typically appropriate the values and convictions of the Christians that he associates with during the formative first period of his new spiritual life, just as a baby will tend to adopt the values and convictions of his family.

Let's say that a new Christian is brought into association with a group of Navigators, who we would rightly expect to immediately begin to challenge the believer's former values and convictions. That believer is either going to adopt the Navigator's values and convictions, or he will become so uncomfortable that he will seek a more "friendly" and less intrusive environment.

But what happens if there is not such a group of relatively mature mentors who will take the new believer under wing? Typically the new believer will be introduced into a congregation, where it is often assumed that "sitting under the preaching of the Word" will be sufficient to lead that new believer into a spiritually mature walk. It is hoped that the negative traits observed in the congregation do not distort the new believer's understanding. Is that realistic? We believe it is safe to say that most new believers will be impacted more by what they "see" other believers do, than what they "hear" them say. If it can be said that a particular congregation is spiritually mature, then it would be realistic to reason that the combination of "hearing" Biblical truth from a pastor/teacher, together with "seeing" Biblical spirituality modeled from the congregation, would be a tremendous help in the healthy spiritual growth of a new believer. Leaders need to realistically evaluate the spiritual health of the congregation, asking themselves, "**Do we want a new believer to become like the 'typical' member of this congregation?**" If the answer is no, then arrangements need to be put in place to impart Biblical values to new believers.

Example – Modeling affects how newer believers interpret the Bible. A one-day workshop was taught on Discipleship and the Christian life. A lady attended, and later that evening shared with her husband some of the spiritual issues that had been discussed. The next day the husband mentioned that after his wife had talked with him, he had taken another look at the Great Commission in Matt. 28:18-20. He had always interpreted it as saying, "go and make converts", but now realized that it indeed said, "go and make disciples". He was surprised that he hadn't been reading it correctly. Why had this happened? We believe what is emphasized or de-emphasized (for instance, by omission) will bias the listener's interpretation of the Bible (especially an impressionable newer believer) as to what has Biblical importance. This Christian man had read the word "disciples", but in reality the term had little significance, since what he was "hearing" and seeing "modeled" around him conveyed to him that what was really important was "making converts". In his mind the term "disciple" simply came to mean "convert" as a result of the definition presented to him by what he "heard" and "saw".

Ideally, we should be able to place new believers into a congregational environment and have healthy spiritual growth with Biblical values and convictions. Should a new believer not have the "**right**" to assume that older Christians have Biblical values and convictions? Are you satisfied with the spiritual values and convictions of the congregation with which you are associated? In many cases the answer would be "no". But when a new believer is simply placed in the congregation without personal tutoring, is it not conveyed that he should feel "**free to adopt**" the spiritual values and convictions of that congregation? Why should we expect otherwise? Would I expect my child to acquire acceptable values and convictions if I allow him or her to associate with children whose values and convictions are unacceptable, yet I don't object? By not saying anything to the contrary, do I not convey to my child that the association meets my approval?

We should not expect the new believer to understand much about the Christian walk. It is only natural for new believers to be mainly concerned with **doing** the right things, which means their focus is on **external** behavior. As stated previously, a new believer **should** be able to make the assumption that if he behaves like “older” Christians, then logically he’ll be behaving in an acceptable Biblical fashion, since those older Christians have “obviously” styled their behavior on Biblical patterns. Right? **NOT!** Unfortunately, many older Christians have typically adopted their behavior from **previous** older Christians who they similarly “assumed” to be spiritual. And so one generation follows the next. Unwittingly, many Christian leaders are “conveying” **approval** of this natural human process, by not insuring that each new believer is personally helped through the first formative and critical period of the Christian walk.

While it is totally natural for new believers to begin the Christian walk focusing on “**external behavior**”, we believe it is God’s purpose for those believers to quickly begin to focus on living by “**Biblical principles**”. Probably more than 90% of typical daily external behavior is not addressed specifically in the Bible. The typical Christian will not “**transition**” from focusing on external behavior to focusing on Biblical principles, **unless** another Christian is willing to put the time and energy into helping them to understand God’s purposes and His process for producing spiritual growth.

Let’s look at several examples of adopting “external behavior” patterns:

How does a new believer evaluate the **spiritually acceptable car** to drive? Clearly it is not a question addressed specifically in a Bible verse. While the Bible doesn’t say, “thou shalt not drive a car valued at more than \$45,000”, most Christians wouldn’t feel comfortable driving to church meetings in a Rolls Royce. But who can find a verse that says it’s wrong? A new believer walking through the church parking lot cannot avoid noticing that most affluent believers drive more expensive vehicles and less affluent believers tend to drive less expensive vehicles. Imagine that, just like the world!

How about **spiritually acceptable houses**? Same as for cars. Most believers choose their houses, using the same principles as unbelievers do. Unless a new believer is personally instructed as to Biblical values, why should we think they’ll come to any other conclusion than, “it must be okay, since older, wiser Christians have made that determination. They know the Bible better than I do. I’m just a new believer, what do I know?”

How about **spiritually acceptable eating behaviors**? How obese is obese? Is it 19% over normal? How about 20% over normal? Who decides what is “normal”? If there are so many overweight believers (just like in the world), then obviously the new believer has to assume that Bible verses referring to obesity were really meant for believers in a different era, since the subject is not addressed in most congregations.

What about **smoking, drinking alcohol, wasting time, excessive working, neglect of spouses and family, financial investment in possessions, the stock market**, etc. And the list goes on. If the new believer is allowed to continue focusing on outward external behavior, rather than on Biblical principles, there is a high probability that the believer will grow into a “self-dependent” and “worldly-minded” Christian, practicing an externally acceptable spiritual life on the one hand (acceptable to Christian peers), while at the same time pursuing worldly goals of possessions, pleasures, power and popularity (to the extent they’re not offensive to Christian peers).

What do we mean by the terms “self-dependent” and “carnal”?

In the Bible we see a contrast between “spiritual believers” and “self-dependent (carnal) believers”. This, we believe, is the contrast brought out in Proverbs 3:5-6, *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.*

We also need to distinguish between “disposition” and “acts of behavior”. What we do is an expression of what we are. One of the best examples is the contrast between King David and King Saul (see also Lesson 3-3). King David was described by God as a “spiritual man” (referring to the disposition of his heart). Acts 13:22 - “... *David ... , concerning whom He also testified and said, ‘I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will do all My will.*’ But nobody would suggest that David’s behavior was pleasing to God when he committed adultery and murder. On the other hand, King Saul’s heart disposition was characterized by a pattern of “self-dependence”. As a result, when faced with decisions related to behavior, King Saul consistently “leaned on his own human understanding”, rather than walk by faith in God’s leading. It is important to note that Spiritual believers do not always trust God in every situation (see Paul in 2 Cor. 1:8-9 and 12:7), and “self-dependent” (“carnal”) believers often call upon the Lord in times of distress and crisis.

Another example is the clear contrast between Joshua and Caleb and the other ten Israelite tribal leaders (see also Lesson 3-4). All were sent by God to survey the Promised Land. All twelve men saw the same things, but only two men, Joshua and Caleb, had a “faithful” heart disposition that led them to trust God’s promise. The other ten had a disposition of trusting in their own human reasoning, which led them to forfeit God’s intended blessings. In Joshua 14:7-8, Caleb relates, *“I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, and I brought word back to him as it was in my heart (according to my convictions - NIV). Nevertheless my brethren who went up with me made the heart of the people melt with fear; but I followed the LORD my God fully.”* In Numbers 14:22, God says of Caleb, *“But My servant Caleb, because he has had a different spirit and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land which he entered, and his descendants shall take possession of it.”*

We use the term “spiritual” to describe believers who have chosen to acknowledge God as the One who can best oversee and manage their lives, who view themselves as “servants of God their Master” (Lordship). We use the terms “self-dependent” and “carnal” to describe believers who have either willingly, or ignorantly, not chosen to acknowledge and accept the authority and Lordship of Christ over their life. Unfortunately, we believe the Biblical concept of “self-dependence” would characterize about 70-80% of believers found in the American evangelical Christian community.

Again, we need to be careful to apply the terms “spiritual” and “self-dependent” (carnal) to “heart attitude” (disposition) rather than to “external behavior”. If we convey to others that the terms “spiritual” or “self-dependent” refer mainly to external behavior, then we will be unconsciously promoting the misconception of focusing on external behavior, rather than the Biblical concept of focusing on the “internal transformation”, from which external behavior is derived.

Romans 12:1-2 - *Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

Proverbs 23:7 - *For as he thinks within himself, so he is. ...*

Matthew 12:34 - *... For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart.*

POINTS TO CONSIDER!

Are congregational meetings not designed for the “equipping” of the saints so that they (each one) will in turn spiritually impact the lives of those with whom they interact?

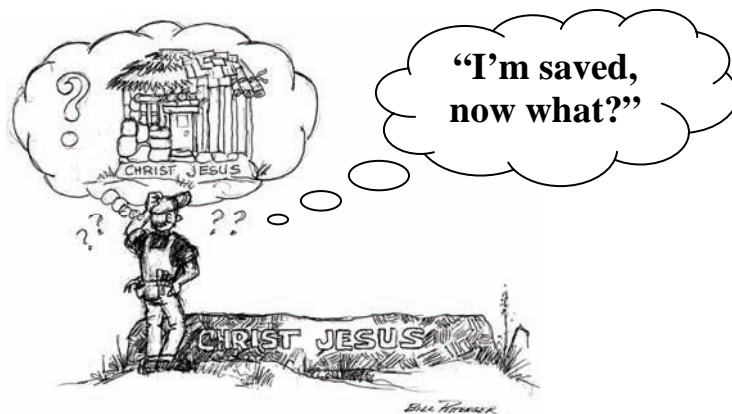
*And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, **for the equipping** of the saints **for the work of service**, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a **mature** man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what **every** joint supplies, according to the proper working of **each** individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. Ephesians 4:11-16*

Why is it that many children of Christian leaders become resistant to the values of their parents?

Some would attribute that resistance to the enemy’s attacks against the Christian parent’s ministry. That is certainly an occurrence that can’t be ignored. However, we suspect that in many cases what the child sees modeled in the home has more impact than what the child is told. In other words, a parent will typically make declarations of Biblical values and convictions, but the child will not adopt those same stated values and convictions unless there is a **consistency** in the everyday living out of those stated values. If I tell my child about the importance of living for eternity, but then demonstrate by my life that this temporary life on earth is of great importance, which will they believe, my words or my life? It is relatively easy for a Christian leader to portray a consistent spiritual life to those with whom there are only short periods of contact each week, but it is very difficult to hide the **real** life values and convictions from children who are continually watching, and imitating.

The new believer understands the foundational doctrine of salvation by grace through Christ. Now he wants to build on that truth, but isn’t quite sure how to go about it. Is it reasonable to simply give him a Bible and expect him to effectively grow to spiritual maturity?

It is possible, but we think it is the exception. Because some new believers do seem to grow with little individual mentoring, a **false impression** is given. We are tempted to ask, “Why can’t more Christians grow like that?” Isn’t it also true that in the secular world there are those who excel without much help from others? But are they not the exception? For instance, we can hand a **computer manual** to 100 people who have no prior computer understanding. A few will manage, with difficulty, to eventually figure things out. But the vast majority will become frustrated and decide that a computer really isn’t worth all the hassle. Many Christians, left on their own, reach the same conclusion regarding the Christian life. Which would you prefer, to be given a computer manual to learn on your own, or to have someone take the time to personally tutor you through the beginning phases and answer your questions? We could truthfully state that the manual has **all** the knowledge you’ll need, and it is **clearly** presented. How about building a house on a foundation? How many inexperienced men would enjoy being handed blueprints and a manual for building a house, and be expected to do a decent job? Not many.



Some might argue that the Holy Spirit alone should be the new believer's Teacher. The Biblical analogy of a new believer being like a "baby" carries little meaning if we don't accept the analogous implications. Does the command to "make disciples" simply convey the idea of handing someone a Biblical manual? Does the Holy Spirit not expect older Christians to be **available** for His use in the process of spiritual parenting, just as He wants them to be available as witnesses when He chooses to convict an unbeliever?



If a computer illiterate person were just handed a computer manual without personal tutoring, how well would most people do?



Yet many Christians are told, "here's a Bible, just read it, it has all the answers."

Perhaps one guide for measuring the true spirituality of a congregation would be the **level of conviction** that an unbeliever experiences while in the presence of the believers. Does not 1 Cor. 14:24-25 lead us to believe that if the congregation is truly spiritual and an unbeliever happens to enter, that the unbeliever should feel uncomfortable? *But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an ungifted man enters, **he is convicted** by all, he is called to account by all; the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so he will fall on his face and worship God, declaring that **God is certainly among you.***

In a spiritually healthy congregation should **spiritual reproduction** not be **observable** and **measurable**? Should spiritual parenting (spiritual tutoring) not be the norm, rather than the exception?

PARABLE OF THE SOWER (One interpretation)

Matthew 13:3-8, 18-23 & Luke 8:4-8, 12-15

Lk. 8:4 ... Jesus told this parable:

Lk. 8:11 "This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God.

U N B E L I E V E R S	GRP. 1	<p>"ALONG THE PATH"</p> <p>Lk. 8:5 "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell <u>along the path</u>; it was trampled on, and the <u>birds</u> of the air <u>ate it up</u>.</p> <p>Lk. 8:12 Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then <u>the devil</u> comes and <u>takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved.</u></p>	<p>NOTE: Obviously "unsaved" people who have <u>rejected</u> the message of salvation.</p>
	GRP. 2	<p>"ON ROCKY PLACES"</p> <p>Mt. 13:5-6 Some fell <u>on rocky places</u>, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the <u>soil was shallow</u>. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they <u>withered</u> because they had <u>no root</u> (Lk. 8:6 ... <u>no moisture</u>).</p> <p>Mt. 13:20-21 The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who <u>hears the word</u> and <u>at once receives it with joy</u>. But since he has <u>no root</u>, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he <u>quickly falls away</u>.</p>	<p>NOTE: It appears that these people "<u>intellectually</u>" accept the message of salvation, but then reject the implications of a relationship with God, once they realize that it is not what they had originally anticipated.</p>
B E L I E V E R S	* GRP. 3	<p>"AMONG THORNS"</p> <p>Lk. 8:7 Other seed fell <u>among thorns</u>, which grew up with it and <u>choked</u> the plants.</p> <p>Lk. 8:14 The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are <u>choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures</u>, and they <u>do not mature</u> (Mt. 13:22 making it <u>unfruitful</u>).</p>	<p>NOTE: These people receive Christ as Savior, but either through lack of understanding or willingly, <u>some do not acknowledge His lordship over their life</u>, while <u>others simply allow the distractions of this world to choke off the Holy Spirit's fruit</u>, thereby forfeiting the associated blessings and rewards that God had intended for them.</p>
	* GRP. 4	<p>"ON GOOD SOIL"</p> <p>Mt. 13:8 Still other seed fell <u>on good soil</u>, where it <u>produced a crop</u> -- a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.</p> <p>Mt. 13:23 But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and <u>understands it</u>. <u>He produces a crop</u>, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."</p>	<p>NOTE: These people are saved, <u>have acknowledged His lordship over their life</u>, and are to varying degrees allowing the Holy Spirit to produce His fruit through their life, resulting in blessings here on earth and rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ.</p>

* Note: If personal discipleship were the common church practice, we believe the number in Group #3 would be greatly diminished, and the number in Group #4 would be greatly increased.

The Common Perspective of Christian Congregations vs. the Biblical Perspective

(SPIRITUAL MATURITY IS TYPICALLY GRADED “ON THE CURVE”)

Common perspective		Biblical perspective
“Spiritual” 3	<p>These Christians appear to have wholeheartedly acknowledged His Lordship in their life, be walking in fellowship with the Holy Spirit, and seem to be bearing spiritual fruit.</p>	“Spiritual” 3
“Acceptable”	<p>These Christians don’t exhibit excessive negative outward behavior. These Christians may regularly attend church services, give financially, and be involved in other Christian activities. They will quickly acknowledge God’s presence in their life, but do not exhibit much passion for the Lord, or understanding of wholehearted surrender to His Lordship.</p>	“Self- dependent” (carnal) 2
“Self- dependent” (carnal) 2	<p>These Christians tend to exhibit questionable negative outward behavior, such as on-going marriage, relational or financial problems, addictions, etc. They may or may not regularly attend church services, or consistently give financially. They may be involved in some Christian activities. They will quickly acknowledge God’s presence in their life. Counseling is often seen as the recommended recourse. Their salvation may be in doubt.</p>	“Self- dependent” (carnal)
1	<p>These individuals are usually recognized as being unsaved.</p>	1

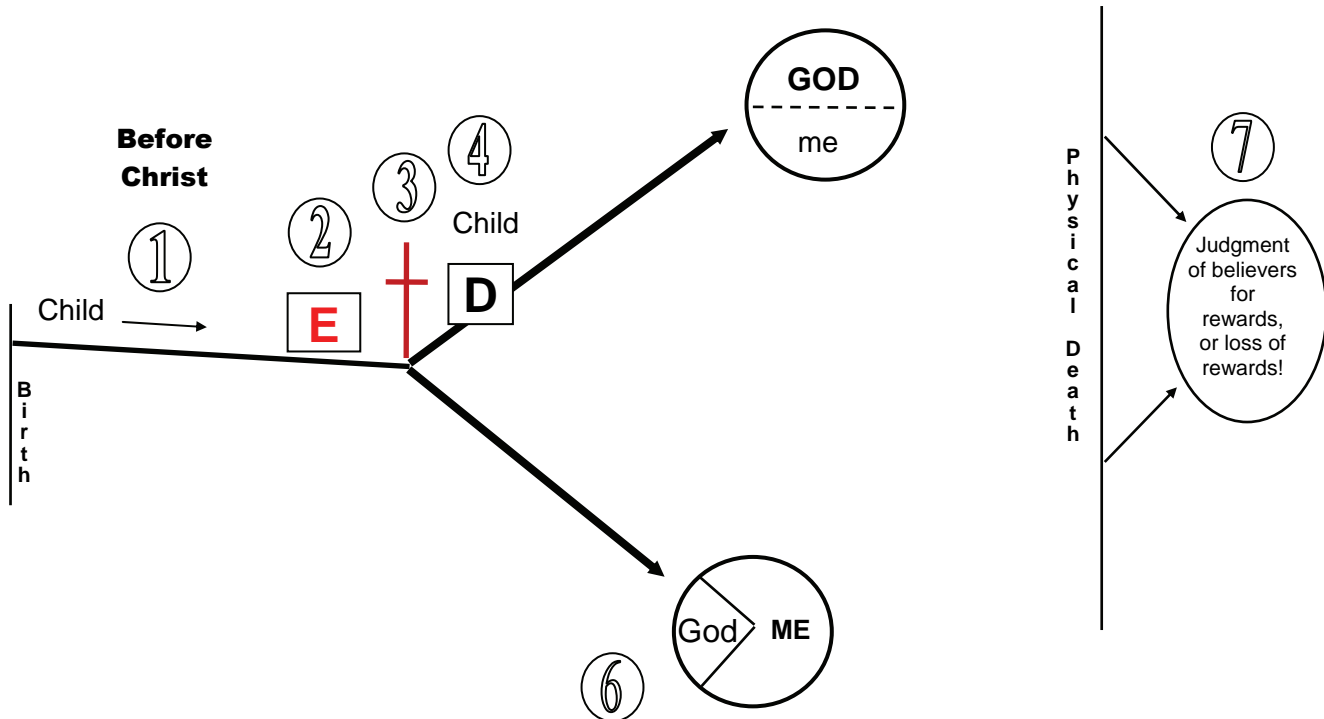
TYPICAL DISCIPLED and UNDISCIPLED BELIEVERS

TYPICAL "DISCIPLED" BELIEVER

5

- Increasing dependence on God (Master-servant)
- Increasing God-reliance (Faith walk)
- Focus on inward transformation (producing Godly behavior)

"It's about God!" ("dog attitude")



TYPICAL "UNDISCIPLED" BELIEVER

- God is my "Junior" Partner (up to 49% control)
- God is my "Co-pilot" (God is on standby)
- Focus on behavior modification
- Self-dependent

"It's about me!" ("cat attitude")



*I (Paul) **planted**, Apollos **watered**, but God was causing the **growth**. So then neither the one who **plants** nor the one who **waters** is anything, but God who causes the **growth**. Now he who **plants** and he who **waters** are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own **labor**. For we are God's **fellow workers**; you are God's **field**, God's **building**. (1 Corinthians 3:6-9)*

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LESSON GUIDE

TYPICAL DISCIPLED AND UNDISCIPLED BELIEVERS

Note for discipler: The purpose of this lesson is to present the **typical** results that can be expected when a new believer is given personalized individual attention during the critical formative development period of their Christian life, and the **typical** results that can be expected if the new believer is not given the needed attention during that time. Obviously there are those who grow and have a reasonable fruitful spiritual life in spite of having received little personal attention – but they are the exception.

① **Physical Birth to Spiritual Rebirth**

② **Evangelism phase** – This represents the period of time during which the Holy Spirit is revealing to the unbeliever his lost condition before a holy God. Generally, the Holy Spirit will use a combination of His Word, a believer(s) and circumstances as instruments to draw the unbeliever to Himself.

John 12:32 (Jesus said) “*And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.*”

John 16:8 “*And He (the Holy Spirit), when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment;*

③ **The Cross** – This event is the most important single event in a human’s life. The person has passed from “death” (separated from God) to “life” (in which the Lord indwells the believer).

John 5:24 “*Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.*

④ **Discipleship phase (**Spiritual Parenting**)** – (For a biblical model of discipleship, see **1 Thess. 2:3-13** in Lesson 2-2) – The typical new believer will never be more open to being personally disciplined than at this stage of his Christian life. Hence there is a window of opportunity in which the believer’s worldview can be greatly impacted. As can be attested to by many experienced believers, the personal attention and guidance afforded the new Christian during this period can have a huge influence on later spiritual development. Conversely, many Christians who have not had the needed personal spiritual guidance early on in their Christian life will lament having had to go through much avoidable confusion, struggles and fruitlessness.

5

Disciplined believer – The new Christian who receives personal attention and guidance in their new walk with the Lord will typically find the transition to a Master-servant relation relatively natural. At this stage the issue of who will manage the direction of their life will not be overly threatening to them, as they become increasingly aware of His love and care. As the Lord oversees this process of growth we would typically expect the new believer to be filled with anticipation, not dread, as he begins to witness God’s sovereign involvement in his life. The believer who understands and yields to His lordship will increasingly perceive the Lord as the One around whom their life revolves, in contrast to the believer who still thinks that they’re the one around whom the world revolves. It has been suggested that most dogs display a loyalty to their master in a way that could serve as a model for believers, in that they tend to understand their role as submissive and obedient servants. They typically don’t expect to be served by their master.

6

Undisciplined believer – If a new believer is not given adequate personal attention and guidance during this important first phase, but is simply placed into corporate settings with other Christians, they can usually be expected to display spiritual traits that are characteristic of the peers with whom they associate. Left on their own they will typically adopt a lifestyle in which they will attempt to balance their spiritual and secular lives in an acceptable way, resulting in a compartmentalization of their life, as they strive to rationalize and reconcile values and behavior that they recognize are not compatible with the Bible. This of course is the product of unsuccessfully attempting to manage the direction of their life and their own spiritual development.

Many older Christians honestly yearn for a closer relationship with God, but have never had that relationship clearly explained to them. Many incorrectly conclude that God simply wants them to do their best, or that the Christian life is just too difficult for them to clearly understand. A distorted “partnership” mentality is often the outcome of a failure to receive proper biblical guidance as to what the normal Christian life should look like. It has been suggested that a cat could represent these believers who have not yet yielded to His Lordship, in that the typical cat tends to display an attitude of indifference, unsubmitiveness and independence.

7

Rewards Ceremony – The Judgment Seat of Christ should not be seen as a threat, but rather as a motivator for allowing the Lord to manage the direction and spiritual development of one’s life, which will result in a maximizing of fruitfulness. If the Holy Spirit is allowed to manage the spiritual construction in a Christian’s life, He will produce the best possible eternal creation.

***“The system you have in place is perfectly designed
for the results you are getting.”***

(from a *Man In The Mirror* seminar – 2004)

FIVE IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

Every New Believer Needs To Understand

(TO HELP MAXIMIZE SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND HELP MINIMIZE FRUSTRATION!)

(Important - Underlined words/phrases may need further explanation.)

1. As your Savior – Jesus wants you to know that all your sins have been forgiven, and you now have eternal life.

John 5:24 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.
Rom. 4:7-8 “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven, and whose sins have been covered. “Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account.”
Rom. 8:1 Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
Rom. 8:16 ... The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,
Rom. 8:31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?
Rom. 10:13 for “Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.”
1 John 3:24 ... We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.
1 John 5:11-13 And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

2. As your Lord – Jesus wants you to know that you have been bought with a price, and you are no longer your own.

1 Cor. 6:19-20 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.
1 Cor. 7:23 ... he who was called while free, is Christ’s slave. You were bought with a price ...
Rom. 14:7-8 ... not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s.

NOTE: This could be threatening, if it were not for the absolute truth that God loves you and will always do what is in your best interest.

3. You are very special and God has a marvelous, unique design for your entire life, and He wants to manage His plan for you.

Psalms 139:16 Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in Your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them.
Jer. 29:11 ‘For I know the plans that I have for you,’ declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.’
Prov. 3:5-6 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.

4. God wants you to know that the Holy Spirit alone is capable of guiding you and revealing God's plan to you.

Jer. 10:23 ... a man's way is **not in himself, nor** is it in a man who walks **to direct his steps**.
Isa. 55:8-9 "For My thoughts are **not your thoughts, nor are your ways** My ways," declares the Lord. "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways **higher than your ways** and My thoughts **than your thoughts**.
1 Cor. 2:9-14 ... "Things which **eye has not seen** and **ear has not heard**, and which have **not entered the heart of man**, all that God has prepared for those who love Him." ... the thoughts of God **no one knows except the Spirit of God**. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, **so that we may know** the things freely given to us by God, ...
Psa. 32:8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you.
John 14:26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will **teach you** all things, and **bring to your remembrance** all that I said to you.
John 16:13-15 "... the Spirit of truth, ... will **guide you** into all the truth; ... "He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will **disclose it to you**. ...

5. God wants you to know that the Holy Spirit will train you to recognize, follow and obey His guidance.

Luke 9:23-24 And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must **deny himself**, and **take up his cross** daily and **follow Me**. ...
John 10:27 (Jesus said) "My sheep **hear** My voice, and I know them, and they **follow** Me;
John 12:24-26 (Jesus said) "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and **dies**, it remains alone; but **if it dies**, it bears much fruit. "He who loves his life loses it, and he who **hates his life in this world** will keep it to life eternal. "If anyone serves Me, he **must follow Me**; and where I am, there My servant will be also; ...
Rom. 11:36-12:2 ... do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed** by the renewing of your **mind**, **so that you may prove what the will of God is**, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Related concepts that may be helpful to discuss at this time:

1. The character of God (see Lesson 1-5)
2. The personality of the Holy Spirit (see Lesson 1-6)
3. The human nature and the divine nature (see Lesson 1-5)
4. The sovereignty of God (see Lesson 1-14)
5. Internal transformation vs. behavior modification (see Lesson 1-16)

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