

4 WEEKS

SUNNYBROOK COMMUNITY CHURCH

SPIRITUAL GROWTH 101



Every follower of Jesus is on a journey of spiritual growth. But how does someone move from being curious about faith to being a fully devoted follower of Christ? In this series, we'll look at the four key phases of spiritual growth: Seek (Spiritual Seeker), Build (Spiritual Infancy), Own (Spiritual Adolescence), and Thrive (Spiritual Adulthood). Together, we'll discover what each phase looks like, how God grows us through them, and how we can take our next step toward spiritual maturity.

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SEEK

SPIRITUAL SEEKER

WEEK 1

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking It Off:

Do you have a green thumb? If so, what is your favorite thing to plant and grow? If not, what is your favorite thing to purchase at a farmers' market?

Big Idea:

The condition of your heart determines God's impact in your life.

Key Scriptures:

Matthew 13:1-9

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky

places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. Whoever has ears, let them hear."

1 John 2:15

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them.

Matthew 7:17-20

Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

Discussion:

1. Read Matthew 13:1-9 aloud together. What stands out to you in this parable?
2. In your own words, describe what it means to be a Christian?
3. After learning about the different types of soil. Which one represents your heart right now? Can you recall times in your life when the different soils have been represented in you?
4. Everyone can have seasons where their hearts are hardened to God's Word. What are some things we can do to keep that from happening? And what are some ways we can hold each other accountable during those seasons?

Wrapping It Up:

If you are looking for some steps to help in your spiritual journey, take some time this week to dig into the Spiritual Growth page on our website. There you can contact us for a personalized growth plan, a spiritual gifts assessment, and many other resources. <https://www.sunnybrookchurch.org/spiritual-growth>

Prayer Focus:

True believers bear fruit. Each day this week examine the condition of your heart. Ask God to help you live in a way that reflects the fruit of His Word and to be an encouragement to others who are in the seeking stage of Spiritual Growth.

Memory Verse:

**DO NOT
LOVE THE
WORLD OR
ANYTHING IN
THE WORLD.
IF ANYONE
LOVES THE
WORLD, LOVE
FOR THE
FATHER IS
NOT IN THEM.**

1 JOHN 2:15

BUILD

SPIRITUAL INFANCY

WEEK 2

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking It Off:

Think about a time you were brand new at something (playing a sport, your first job, becoming a parent). Talk about some things you did to learn and try to improve.

Big Idea:

God calls us to continue to grow in spiritual maturity, just as He did the with the early believers in the class of 33 AD.

Key Scriptures:

Acts 2:42-47

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had

need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

John 3:3

Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again."

Matthew 5:6

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."

Psalms 119:97

Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long.

Hebrews 10:24-25

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—

and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Discussion:

1. Have you heard the term rebirth or someone being born again. What does that phrase mean to you?
2. Read Acts 2:42-47 together. The early believers devoted themselves to four disciplines: the Apostle's teachings, fellowship, prayer, and communion. As a group, talk about why each of those disciplines are still important as followers of Christ today.
3. If the early church had not stayed devoted, the gospel would not have spread. How does that challenge us today in our devotion?
4. Think of someone you would consider spiritually mature. What characteristics about them do you admire?
5. Are there ways you can see yourself in spiritual "infancy"? Are there ways you see yourself as more spiritually mature?

Wrapping It Up:

This week, which of the four practices (Apostle's teaching, fellowship, prayer, or communion) will you commit to making a top priority to grow deeper in Christ?

Prayer Focus:

Thank God for those first believers in Acts 2 that helped spread the gospel and pray that Sunnybrook Community Church and the class of 2025 (and beyond) would continue to do the same.

Memory Verse:

**JESUS
REPLIED,
"VERY
TRULY I
TELL YOU,
NO ONE CAN
SEE THE
KINGDOM OF
GOD UNLESS
THEY ARE
BORN AGAIN."**

JOHN 3:3

OWN

SPIRITUAL ADOLESCENCE

WEEK 3

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking It Off:

When you were a teenager, what was one rule from your parents or teachers you didn't understand at the time, but now realize was for your own good?

Big Idea:

Spiritual adolescence often comes with rebellion, selfishness and inconsistency, but growth comes as we choose obedience, trust, and a life rooted in God's Word.

Key Scriptures:

Psalm 1

Blessed is the one

*who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,
but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,
and who meditates on his law day and night.
That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither—
whatever they do prospers.*

Not so the wicked!

*They are like chaff
that the wind blows away.
Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,
nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.*

*For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous,
but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.*

Romans 10:13

For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

Discussion:

1. Can you think of a time in life when you wanted more independence but didn't realize the responsibilities that came with it? How does that relate to faith?
2. Talk in your group about what it can look like to have a rebellious or defiant spirit in our walk with God? Are there areas in your life where you have seen that play out?
3. There can be a high cost to following Jesus, instead of following the world. It can cost you relationally, financially, and personally. Are there times when you have thought the cost could be too high?
4. Read Psalm 1 together. It shows two paths: one firmly planted in God's Word and one blown around by the wind. Which one best describes your current season, and why?

Wrapping It Up:

Often times we want to put our own agendas before God's agenda. This week try to release control of what you want and

focus on what God wants for you.

Prayer Focus:

Pray this week for God to bring to light any signs of a rebellious or selfish spirit in you and replace them with trust and obedience.

Memory Verse:

**FOR,
"EVERYONE
WHO CALLS
ON THE NAME
OF THE LORD
WILL BE
SAVED."**

ROMANS 10:13

THRIVE

SPIRITUAL ADULTHOOD

WEEK 4

SMALL GROUP STUDY

Kicking It Off:

What is one thing you wanted to do so badly when you grew up and now that you are an adult you don't like doing?

Big Idea:

Spiritual maturity isn't measured by age, how long you've attended church, or knowledge. It's measure by a transformed mind, a devoted heart, and work for God's kingdom.

Key Scriptures:

1 Corinthians 13:11

When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me.

John 5:39-40

"You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures

that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life."

Romans 12:2

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...

Luke 15:3-7

Then Jesus told them this parable: "Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.' I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent."

1 Corinthians 15:58

Therefore, my dear brothers

and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

Discussion:

1. It can be easy to measure growth at your job or in a sport based on numbers and stats. Why do you think it's so hard to measure spiritual growth?
2. If everyone in your group were to answer the question: "How many spiritually mature people are at Sunnybrook Community Church?" How would you answer? Would you consider yourself one of them?
3. What's the difference between spiritual knowledge and spiritual maturity?
4. Spiritually mature adults often have "calloused" hands. What does that look like in everyday life?

Wrapping It Up:

What is one practical way this week you can put your faith into action so that your mind, heart, and hands reflect spiritual maturity?

Prayer Focus:

Ask God this week to reveal to you where you are in your spiritual growth journey and for the courage to take the next step toward maturity.

Memory Verse:

**THEREFORE, MY
DEAR BROTHERS
AND SISTERS,
STAND FIRM.
LET NOTHING
MOVE YOU.
ALWAYS GIVE
YOURSELVES
FULLY TO THE
WORK OF THE
LORD, BECAUSE
YOU KNOW THAT
YOUR LABOR IN
THE LORD IS NOT
IN VAIN.**

**1 CORINTHIANS
15:58**

NOTES:



Top 10 Tips for Leading a Small Group

1. Establish a welcoming, accepting, and safe environment.
 - Take time to prepare.
 - Make sure to give a warm enthusiastic greeting to each person.
 - Verbally communicate the environment that you hope to create.
2. On the opening night of your group you need to have some intentional discussions centered around these questions:
 - What is the purpose of our group?
 - What is the vision for our group?
 - What are your expectations?
 - What do you hope to gain from this group experience?
 - What are some things we value as a group?
 - What are some healthy guidelines we need to have in place?

Review and sign a group agreement.
3. Be authentic. Spend time sharing your life stories in order to get to know each other on a deeper level.
4. Find a good balance between:
 - Truth and grace/Bible study and life
 - Encouraging and challenging one another
 - Giving and receiving feedback from each other
5. Ask good questions to stimulate good discussion. Use open ended questions and follow up questions.
6. Hang out together, do things socially, eat together and have fun together!
7. Develop a missional lifestyle, find a service project to do together in the community.
8. Raise up new leadership by rotating facilitation of the group.
9. Share the responsibilities in order to increase individual commitment and ownership of the group.
10. Pray for your group and for each other!

Find ways to celebrate what God is doing in your group! Who else could you invite to join you in order that their life may be impacted by what God is doing in your group?

Group Agreement

OUR PURPOSE

To transform our spiritual lives by cultivating our spiritual health in a healthy small group community. In addition, we: _____

OUR VALUES

Group Attendance: To give priority to the group meeting. We will call or email if we will be late or absent.

Safe Environment: To help create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved. (Please, no quick answers, snap judgments, or simple fixes.)

Respect Differences: To be gentle and gracious to people with different spiritual maturity, personal opinions, temperaments, or imperfections. We are all works in progress.

Confidentiality: To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential and within the group, and to avoid sharing improper information about those outside the group.

Encouragement for Growth: To be not just takers but givers of life. We want to spiritually multiply our life by serving others with our God-given gifts.

Welcome for Newcomers: To keep an open chair and share Jesus' dream of finding a shepherd for every sheep.

Shared Ownership: To remember that every member is a minister and to ensure that each attender will share a small team role or responsibility over time.

Rotating Hosts/Leaders and Homes: To encourage different people to host the group in their homes, and to rotate the responsibility of facilitating each meeting.

OUR EXPECTATIONS

- Refreshments/mealtimes _____
- Childcare _____
- When we will meet (day of week) _____
- Where we will meet (place) _____
- We will begin at (time) _____ and end at _____
- We will do our best to have some or all of us attend a worship service together.
- Our primary worship service time will be _____
- Date of this agreement _____
- Date we will review this agreement again _____
- Who (other than the leader) will review this agreement at the end of this study _____



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community church

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