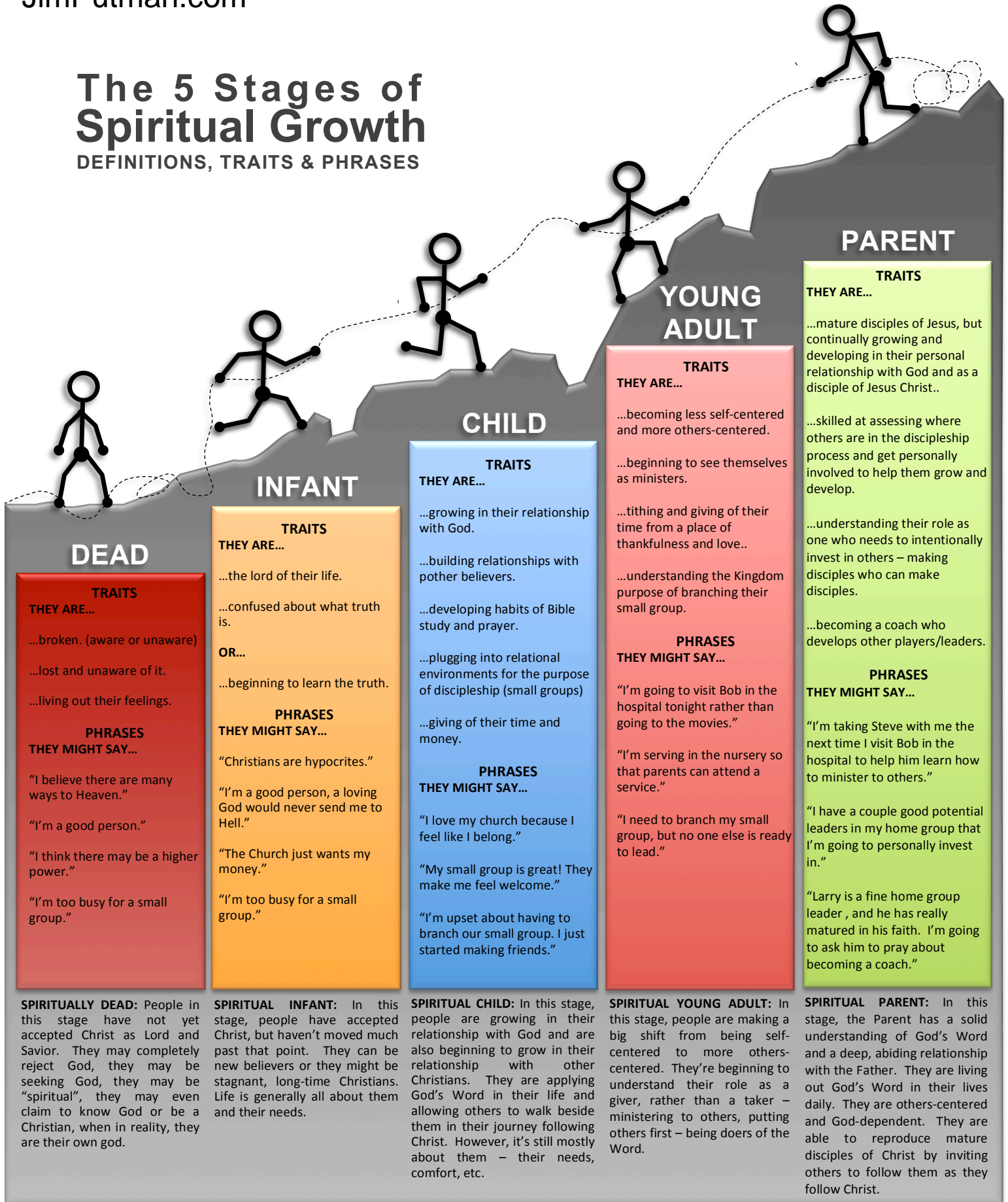


The 5 Stages of Spiritual Growth

DEFINITIONS, TRAITS & PHRASES



DEAD

TRAITS THEY ARE...

- ...broken. (aware or unaware)
- ...lost and unaware of it.
- ...living out their feelings.

PHRASES THEY MIGHT SAY...

- "I believe there are many ways to Heaven."
- "I'm a good person."
- "I think there may be a higher power."
- "I'm too busy for a small group."

SPIRITUALLY DEAD: People in this stage have not yet accepted Christ as Lord and Savior. They may completely reject God, they may be seeking God, they may be "spiritual", they may even claim to know God or be a Christian, when in reality, they are their own god.

INFANT

TRAITS THEY ARE...

- ...the lord of their life.
- ...confused about what truth is.

OR...

- ...beginning to learn the truth.

PHRASES THEY MIGHT SAY...

- "Christians are hypocrites."
- "I'm a good person, a loving God would never send me to Hell."
- "The Church just wants my money."
- "I'm too busy for a small group."

SPIRITUAL INFANT: In this stage, people have accepted Christ, but haven't moved much past that point. They can be new believers or they might be stagnant, long-time Christians. Life is generally all about them and their needs.

CHILD

TRAITS THEY ARE...

- ...growing in their relationship with God.
- ...building relationships with other believers.
- ...developing habits of Bible study and prayer.
- ...plugging into relational environments for the purpose of discipleship (small groups)
- ...giving of their time and money.

PHRASES THEY MIGHT SAY...

- "I love my church because I feel like I belong."
- "My small group is great! They make me feel welcome."
- "I'm upset about having to branch our small group. I just started making friends."

SPIRITUAL CHILD: In this stage, people are growing in their relationship with God and are also beginning to grow in their relationship with other Christians. They are applying God's Word in their life and allowing others to walk beside them in their journey following Christ. However, it's still mostly about them - their needs, comfort, etc.

YOUNG ADULT

TRAITS THEY ARE...

- ...becoming less self-centered and more others-centered.
- ...beginning to see themselves as ministers.
- ...tithing and giving of their time from a place of thankfulness and love..
- ...understanding the Kingdom purpose of branching their small group.

PHRASES THEY MIGHT SAY...

- "I'm going to visit Bob in the hospital tonight rather than going to the movies."
- "I'm serving in the nursery so that parents can attend a service."
- "I need to branch my small group, but no one else is ready to lead."

SPIRITUAL YOUNG ADULT: In this stage, people are making a big shift from being self-centered to more others-centered. They're beginning to understand their role as a giver, rather than a taker - ministering to others, putting others first - being doers of the Word.

PARENT

TRAITS THEY ARE...

- ...mature disciples of Jesus, but continually growing and developing in their personal relationship with God and as a disciple of Jesus Christ..
- ...skilled at assessing where others are in the discipleship process and get personally involved to help them grow and develop.
- ...understanding their role as one who needs to intentionally invest in others - making disciples who can make disciples.
- ...becoming a coach who develops other players/leaders.

PHRASES THEY MIGHT SAY...

- "I'm taking Steve with me the next time I visit Bob in the hospital to help him learn how to minister to others."
- "I have a couple good potential leaders in my home group that I'm going to personally invest in."
- "Larry is a fine home group leader, and he has really matured in his faith. I'm going to ask him to pray about becoming a coach."

SPIRITUAL PARENT: In this stage, the Parent has a solid understanding of God's Word and a deep, abiding relationship with the Father. They are living out God's Word in their lives daily. They are others-centered and God-dependent. They are able to reproduce mature disciples of Christ by inviting others to follow them as they follow Christ.