



CREW LIFE DISCIPLESHIP

LESSON 3

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Becoming More Like Jesus Christ



GROW



FISH



REPEAT

CREW LIFE — LESSON 3



Introduction

Every healthy life grows

When a baby is born, no one expects them to remain an infant forever. We celebrate their birth, but we also look forward to watching them mature. We expect them to learn, develop, and eventually become healthy, productive adults. The same is true spiritually.

In our last lesson, we learned how a person enters the Kingdom of God through the New Birth. Through repentance, baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, and the infilling of the Holy Ghost, we receive new life in Christ. But the New Birth is not the finish line—it is the starting line. God's desire is that every believer continually grow into the image of Jesus Christ

At Angler Church, we believe discipleship is a LIFELONG JOURNEY. No one arrives overnight. Every one of us—regardless of how long we have walked with God is continually growing as the Lord shapes us into the person He has called us to become. That is why CREW LIFE exists.

Our goal is not merely to help people come to church. Our goal is to help people become the Church. We are committed to making disciples who love Jesus Christ, believe and obey His Word, follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, discover their purpose, faithfully serve His Church, and help others begin the same journey.

God disciplines His people through His Word, through the work of the Holy Spirit, and through the spiritual leaders He has placed in the Church. As we submit ourselves to those influences, He continually transforms us from the inside out.

The Apostle Paul described this lifelong transformation when he wrote: “...we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” — 2 Corinthians 3:18

The Christian life is not a single moment of change but a continual process. God shapes us to look more like Him. As we grow in our relationship with Him, our thinking changes, our desires change, our priorities change, and our actions begin to reflect His character.

This transformation does not happen by human effort alone. It happens as we continually surrender ourselves to God's Word, remain sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit, and faithfully walk with Him each day.

That is what this lesson is about. Not simply learning more information, but understanding how God forms every disciple into the image of Jesus Christ.

Lesson Objective

To understand that spiritual formation is the lifelong process of becoming more like Jesus Christ through continual surrender to God's Word, the Holy Spirit, and faithful discipleship.

Big Idea

God's desire is not only for us to experience the New Birth through repentance, baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, and the infilling of the Holy Ghost, but also to continually transform us into the person He created us to be.

Focus Scriptures

- *Romans 8:29
- 2 Corinthians 3:18
- Philippians 1:6
- Ephesians 4:11–16

Lesson 3 - Spiritual Formation — Becoming More Like Jesus Christ

God's Goal Is Christlikeness

One of the greatest misconceptions about the Christian life is believing that God's primary goal is simply to get us to heaven. While eternal life is the wonderful promise given to every believer, God's work in our lives begins long before we enter eternity. The moment we are born again, God begins a lifelong process of transforming us into the image of Jesus Christ.

Many people think Christianity is about becoming a better person, learning more Bible verses, or simply attending church faithfully. While those things are important, they are not God's ultimate goal. His desire is much greater. He wants every area of our lives—our thoughts, attitudes, desires, words, relationships, and actions—to reflect the character of HIMSELF.

The Apostle Paul wrote: — “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son...” (Romans 8:29, KJV)

Notice what Paul says God's purpose is. He does not say we are predestined to simply know more about Jesus. He says we are to be conformed to the image of the Son.

The word conformed means to be [SHAPED](#), [MOLDED](#), or fashioned into the likeness of another. Just as a sculptor carefully shapes a piece of clay into the image he desires, God patiently works in our lives, removing what does not belong and forming the character of Christ within us. — This has been God's plan from the beginning.

This transformation is not something we accomplish through our own strength or determination. It is the work of God's grace operating in the life of a believer who continually surrenders to Him. Every season of life, every victory, every trial, and every lesson God allows us to experience becomes part of His process of making us more like Jesus.

Paul said, — “But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” (2 Corinthians 3:18, KJV)

Notice the words “[from glory to glory](#).” Spiritual growth is not usually instant. God changes us one step at a time. As we continue walking with Him, He faithfully transforms us day by day. The person we are today should not be the same person we were when we first came to Christ, and one year from now we should be even more like Him than we are today. This is the heart of spiritual formation.

- It is not about trying [HARDER](#).
- It is not about [EARNING](#) God's love.
- It is not about [CHECKING](#) off a list of [RELIGIOUS](#) duties.

***It is about allowing God to continually shape us into the image of Jesus Christ.

As disciples, we should regularly ask ourselves:

- * Am I becoming more like Jesus?
- * Do I love people more than I used to?
- * Do I respond with greater grace and patience?
- * Do I hunger for God's Word more than I once did?
- * Is the fruit of the Spirit becoming more evident in my life?
- * Is Christ being seen in me?

The Christian life is not measured by how long we have attended church but by how faithfully we are allowing Jesus Christ to transform us.

This transformation is God's plan for every disciple. Transformation is His desire for every believer. And it is the purpose of spiritual formation.

[Crew Discussion](#) — Romans 8:29 says God's goal is to conform us to the image of His Son.

Q1: What do you think it means to become more like Jesus?

Q2: What is one area of your life where you would like to grow to reflect Christ more clearly?

Spiritual Growth Is a Lifelong Journey

One of the greatest encouragements in the Christian life is realizing that God does not expect us to become spiritually mature OVERNIGHT. The moment we are born again, we become children of God, but just as physical children must grow and mature, so must every believer.

Spiritual growth is not measured by how long someone has attended church or how much Bible knowledge they possess. True spiritual maturity is measured by the CONTINUAL work of God TRANSFORMING our hearts and lives into the image of Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul understood this well. Although he had planted churches, preached the gospel around the world, and written much of the New Testament, he still recognized that God was not finished with him. — “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after...”(Philippians 3:12, KJV)

If Paul could honestly say, “I’m still growing,” then every one of us should have the same attitude. None of us ever graduates from discipleship. There is always another lesson to learn, another area to surrender, and another opportunity to become more like Christ.

This is why we should never compare our spiritual journey with someone else’s. God is working uniquely in every believer’s life. Some people grow quickly in one area while continuing to struggle in another. Others may appear spiritually mature on the outside while God is patiently transforming areas of the heart that no one else can see.

Our responsibility is not to COMPARE ourselves with others. Our responsibility is to continually say, “LORD, KEEP WORKING IN ME.”

Paul also encouraged the church at Philippi with these words: — “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 1:6, KJV)

What an incredible promise! The God who began His work in us is faithful to complete it. He never abandons His children halfway through the process. Even when we experience setbacks, failures, or seasons of discouragement, God continues patiently calling us forward.

This truth should produce both humility and hope. It produces humility because we recognize that none of us has arrived. Every believer is still growing, learning, and becoming more like Christ.

It produces hope because we know that God has not given up on us. His grace continues to shape us day by day as we walk with Him.

The Apostle Peter gave this simple instruction: — “...grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ...” (2 Peter 3:18, KJV)

Notice that Peter did not say, “Arrive.” — He said, “Grow.”

- Growth is the language of discipleship.
- Healthy disciples continue growing.
- Healthy churches continue growing.

Healthy leaders continue growing.

No matter where we are in our walk with God, there is always another step to take.

This is the heart of CREW LIFE.

We are all on the same journey. Some may be farther along than others, but every one of us is moving in the same direction—toward Jesus Christ.

Discipleship is not a destination. It is a lifelong journey of faithfully following Him.

God Forms Every Disciple Through Three Biblical Foundations

If God’s desire is to continually transform us into the image of Jesus Christ, an important question naturally follows: How does He accomplish that transformation?

God does not leave us to figure out the Christian life on our own. From the very beginning, He has provided everything we need to grow spiritually. Throughout Scripture, we see that God forms every disciple through three biblical foundations:

1. [HIS WORD](#)
2. [HIS SPIRIT and](#)
3. [HIS CHURCH](#)

These foundations do not compete with one another. They work together under the authority of God to shape our lives into the image of Jesus Christ. As we faithfully build our lives upon these foundations,

1. we grow in our relationship with God,
2. mature in our faith, and
3. become better equipped to serve His Kingdom.

Let’s look at each of these biblical foundations.

[Crew Discussion](#) — None of us has “arrived” spiritually. We are all growing.

Q1: Why is it encouraging to know that spiritual growth is a lifelong journey?

Q2: How have you seen God helping you grow over the past year?

Three Biblical Foundations for Spiritual Growth.

1. His Word — The first foundation for spiritual growth is the Word of God.

The Bible is not simply a collection of inspiring stories or religious teachings. It is the inspired Word of God and our final authority for faith and practice.

Through His Word,

1. God reveals His character,
2. His will, and
3. His plan for our lives.

Jesus prayed, “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” (John 17:17, KJV)

God’s Word has the power to transform us. As we faithfully read it, study it, believe it, and obey it, God renews our minds and shapes our hearts to become more like Him.

At Angler Church, we believe that if God’s Word plainly teaches something, we believe it without compromise and obey it. Our opinions, traditions, and experiences must always be measured against the truth of Scripture.

The Word of God is the solid foundation upon which every disciple builds his or her life.

2. His Spirit — The second foundation for Spiritual growth is the Holy Spirit.

When we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, God does more than save us—He comes to dwell within us. His Spirit works daily to transform our hearts, strengthen our faith, and lead us into obedience. — “...the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost... he shall teach you all things...” (John 14:26, KJV) — “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.” (John 16:13, KJV)

The Holy Spirit never contradicts the Word of God. Instead, the Spirit helps us,

1. UNDERSTAND the Word of God
2. APPLY it to everyday life
3. feel CONVICTION when correction is needed, and
4. to live an EMPOWERED life according to God’s will.

As we submit ourselves to God’s leading, He continues the work of transforming us into the image of Himself through Jesus Christ.

3. His Church — The Third Foundation for Spiritual Growth is the Church.

God never intended for believers to follow Him ALONE. He places every disciple into the body of Christ,

1. where we worship together,
2. encourage one another,
3. learn together, and
4. grow together.

Within the Church, God gives spiritual leaders to equip and strengthen His people. Paul wrote, “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:11–12, KJV)

Pastors and teachers are gifts Christ has given to His Church. Their responsibility is to,

1. faithfully teach God’s Word,
2. shepherd His people, and
3. equip believers for lives of spiritual maturity and ministry.

As we remain faithfully connected to the local church, we receive,

1. biblical teaching,
2. loving encouragement, wise counsel, accountability, and
3. opportunities to serve alongside other believers.

God uses these relationships to help us continue growing into the people He has called us to be.

Building on All Three Foundations

Healthy disciples do not build on just ONE foundation while neglecting the others. They build their lives upon all three.

1. God’s Word reveals truth.
2. God’s Spirit transforms our hearts.
3. God’s Church equips us to faithfully live out our faith.

As these three biblical foundations work together, God continually forms us into His image.

This is why discipleship is much more than attending church services or gaining biblical knowledge.

It is the lifelong process of allowing God to shape every part of our lives through His Word, His Spirit, and His Church.

That is how God forms every disciple.

Crew Discussion — God forms every disciple through His Word, His Spirit, and His Church.

Q1: Which of these three foundations has had the greatest impact on your spiritual growth?

Q2: Is there one of these foundations you would like to strengthen in your life?

Key Takeaway

God's desire is not only to save us, but to transform us.

He forms every disciple through His Word, His Spirit, and His Church, shaping us day by day into the image of Jesus Christ.

Crew Notes

1. At Angler Church, we believe discipleship is a _____.
2. God wants us to reflect the character of _____.
3. The word conformed means to be _____, _____, or fashioned into the likeness of another.
4. Spiritual formation is not about trying _____. It is not about _____ God's love. It is not about _____ off a list of _____ duties.
5. God does not expect us to become spiritually mature _____.
6. Spiritual growth is measured by the _____ work of God _____ our hearts and lives into the image of Jesus Christ.
7. Our responsibility is not to _____ ourselves with others, but to continually pray, "_____, _____, _____, _____."
8. God forms every disciple through three biblical foundations: His _____, His _____, and His _____.
9. Through His Word, God reveals His _____, His _____, and His _____ for our lives.
10. The Holy Spirit helps us _____ God's Word, _____ it to our lives, brings _____ when correction is needed, and empowers us to live according to God's _____.

Crew Life Culture

Growing is normal. Stagnation is not.

At Angler Church, we believe every disciple is on a lifelong journey of becoming more like Jesus Christ. No one has arrived, and no one is expected to have it all together. We celebrate spiritual growth, encourage one another through every season, and continually build our lives upon God's Word, God's Spirit, and God's Church.

We don't measure maturity by perfection—we measure it by a heart that is willing to keep growing.

Living the Culture

This week, intentionally take one step toward becoming more like Jesus.

1. Spend time reading God's Word.
2. Pray and ask the Lord to reveal the areas where He wants to continue His work in your life.
3. Be faithful to gather with your church family, receive God's Word with an open heart, and encourage someone else in their spiritual journey.

Remember, spiritual formation doesn't happen overnight. It happens one faithful step at a time.

Grow. Fish. Repeat.

Memory Verse

[2 Corinthians 3:18 \(KJV\)](#) — "...we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."