

Spiritual Growth Assessment Process

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Spiritual Growth Assessment Process

Your spiritual journey as a follower of Christ began the moment you admitted personal sin and placed your trust in Christ as Savior and Lord. From that point, until death or the return of Christ, your life's call is to grow in Christlikeness.

Jesus summarizes the disciple's call in Mark 8:34, "If anyone wants to be My follower, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me" (Holman CSB).

Accomplishing such a challenging assignment requires growing in your understanding of what it means to be a Christian, expanding your personal knowledge of biblical truth, and applying daily what you learn. Through the presence of His indwelling Spirit, God enables you to know, obey, and serve Him.

God expects His children to grow spiritually and His Word encourages personal examination as an element of growth.

- "Let us search out and examine our ways..." Lamentations 3:40
- "Now, the Lord of Hosts says this: 'Think carefully about your ways.'" Haggai 1:5
- "Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my concerns. See if there is any offensive way in me; lead me in the everlasting way." Psalm 139:23-24
- "But each person should examine his own work, and then he will have a reason for boasting in himself alone, and not in respect to someone else." Galatians 6:4
- "Pay careful attention, then, to how you walk—not as unwise people, but as wise." Ephesians 5:15

This assessment process can help you complete an examination and careful search of your spiritual growth. Follow these simple steps to complete the process.

1. Complete the **Spiritual Growth Assessment**.
The assessment helps you think carefully about your spiritual development related to six specific spiritual disciplines; abiding in Christ, living in the Word, praying in faith, fellowshiping with believers, witnessing to the world, ministering to others. Before completing your responses, ask the Lord to guide your evaluation. Since most of these statements require a subjective response, His guidance is the key to an accurate appraisal. Also, resist the urge to compare scores with others. Self-condemnation or pride could result from such comparisons. Trust God to help you grow spiritually by revealing heart issues and empowering you to take action.
2. Draw and evaluate your **Discipleship Wheel**.
3. Distribute copies of the **Spiritual Growth Observations Response Sheet** to at least three people. Follow the instructions before completing a personal growth plan.
4. Begin working on a **personal growth plan**.
The **Annual Spiritual Growth Plan** worksheet helps you formulate an intentional plan for growth. Use the **Recommended Actions for Spiritual Growth Guide** to discover suggestions for actions to include in your plan. As you discuss your plan with an accountability partner, you may discover additional actions that more effectively meet your needs.

As you complete this assessment process the temptation might be to think your efforts are central to growing spiritually. **Remember, becoming like Christ centers on His work in us and not our work for Him. God desires heart change over religious actions.** Without question, God does the revealing, the renewing, the empowering, and the recreating. Your part as His disciple is to do the yielding, the submitting, and the obeying.

Spiritual Growth Assessment

As you complete the assessment, avoid rushing. Listen for God's voice to encourage and challenge you. Consider this experience as one-on-one time with Him. Be intentional in your growth towards Christlikeness. Use the scale below to respond to each statement.

Never - 1 Seldom - 2 Occasionally - 3 Frequent - 4 Always - 5

| SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES | RESPONSE |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| ABIDE IN CHRIST | |
| 1. I practice a regular quiet time and look forward to that time with Christ. | |
| 2. When making choices, I seek Christ's guidance first. | |
| 3. My relationship with Christ is motivated more by love than duty or fear. | |
| 4. I experience life change as a result of my worship experiences. | |
| 5. When God makes me aware of His specific will in an area of my life, I follow His leading. | |
| 6. I believe Christ provides the only way for a relationship with God. | |
| 7. My actions demonstrate a desire to build God's kingdom rather than my own. | |
| 8. Peace, contentment, and joy characterize my life rather than worry and anxiety. | |
| 9. I trust Christ to help me through any problem or crisis I face. | |
| 10. I remain confident of God's love and provision during difficult times. | |
| Abide in Christ Total | |
| LIVE IN THE WORD | |
| 1. I regularly read and study my Bible. | |
| 2. I believe the Bible is God's Word and provides His instructions for life. | |
| 3. I evaluate cultural ideas and lifestyles by biblical standards. | |
| 4. I can answer questions about life and faith from a biblical perspective. | |
| 5. I replace impure or inappropriate thoughts with God's truth. | |
| 6. I demonstrate honesty in my actions and conversation. | |
| 7. When the Bible exposes an area of my life needing change, I respond to make things right. | |
| 8. Generally, my public and private self are the same | |
| 9. I use the Bible as the guide for the way I think and act. | |
| 10. I study the Bible for the purpose of discovering truth for daily living. | |
| Live By God's Word Total | |
| PRAY IN FAITH | |
| 1. My prayers focus on discovering God's will more than expressing my needs. | |
| 2. I trust God to answer when I pray and wait patiently on His timing. | |
| 3. My prayers include thanksgiving, praise, confession, and requests. | |
| 4. I expect to grow in my prayer life and intentionally seek help to improve. | |
| 5. I spend as much time listening to God as talking to Him. | |
| 6. I pray because I am aware of my complete dependence on God for everything in my life. | |
| 7. Regular participation in group prayer characterizes my prayer life. | |
| 8. I maintain an attitude of prayer throughout each day. | |
| 9. I believe my prayers impact my life and the lives of others. | |
| 10. I engage in a daily prayer time. | |
| Pray In Faith Total | |

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| FELLOWSHIP WITH BELIEVERS | |
| 1. I forgive others when their actions harm me. | |
| 2. I admit my errors in relationships and humbly seek forgiveness from the one I've hurt. | |
| 3. I allow other Christians to hold me accountable for spiritual growth. | |
| 4. I seek to live in harmony with other members of my family. | |
| 5. I place the interest of others above my self-interest. | |
| 6. I am gentle and kind in my interactions with others. | |
| 7. I encourage and listen to feedback from others to help me discover areas for relationship growth. | |
| 8. I show patience in my relationships with family and friends. | |
| 9. I encourage others by pointing out their strengths rather than criticizing their weaknesses. | |
| 10. My time commitments demonstrate that I value relationships over work/career/hobbies. | |
| Build Godly Relationships Total | |
| WITNESS TO THE WORLD | |
| 1. I share my faith in Christ with non-believers. | |
| 2. I regularly pray for non-believers I know. | |
| 3. I make my faith known to my neighbors and/or fellow employees. | |
| 4. I intentionally maintain relationships with non-believers in order to share my testimony. | |
| 5. When confronted about my faith, I remain consistent and firm in my testimony. | |
| 6. I help others understand how to effectively share a personal testimony. | |
| 7. I make sure the people I witness to get the follow-up and support needed to grow in Christ. | |
| 8. I encourage my church and friends to support mission efforts. | |
| 9. I am prepared to share my testimony at any time. | |
| 10. My actions demonstrate a belief in and commitment to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20). | |
| Witness To The World Total | |
| MINISTER TO OTHERS | |
| 1. I understand my spiritual gifts and use those gifts to serve others. | |
| 2. I serve others expecting nothing in return. | |
| 3. I sacrificially contribute my finances to help others in my church and community. | |
| 4. I go out of my way to show love to people I meet. | |
| 5. Meeting the needs of others provides a sense of purpose in my life. | |
| 6. I share biblical truth with those I serve as God gives opportunity. | |
| 7. I act as if other's needs are as important as my own. | |
| 8. I expect God to use me every day in His kingdom work. | |
| 9. I regularly contribute time to a ministry at my church. | |
| 10. I help others identify ministry gifts and become involved in ministry. | |
| Minister To Others Total | |

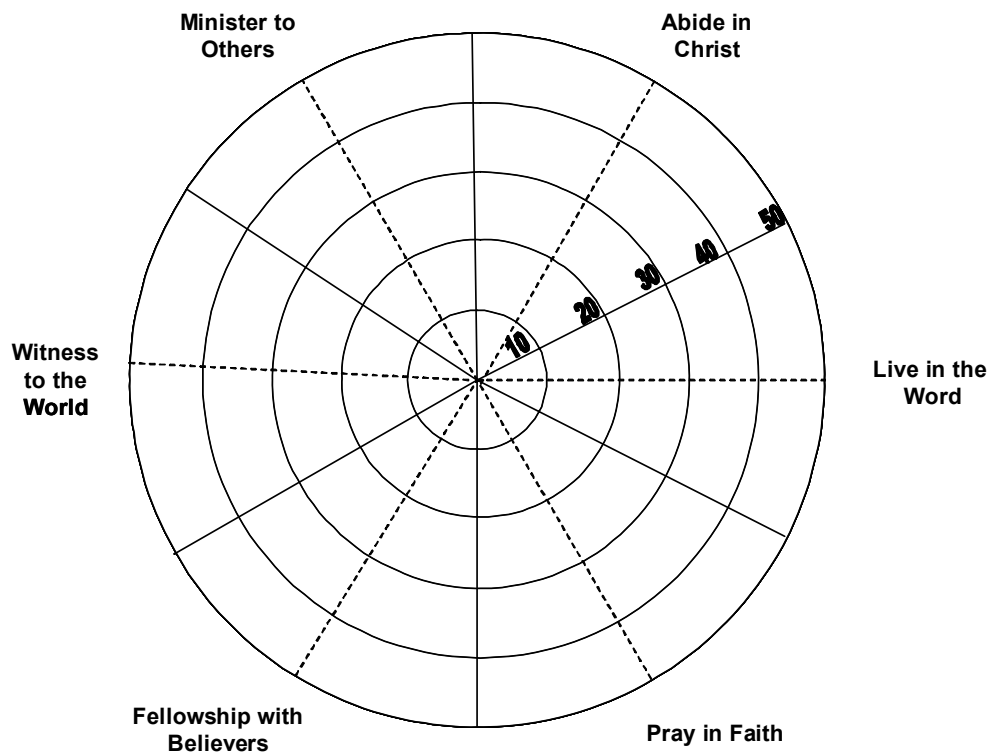
Your Discipleship Wheel

For a visual representation of your spiritual assessment complete the following steps:

Step One: On the dotted line in each discipline section of the circle plot a point corresponding to your total score for that discipline. Place similar points on the solid lines to the immediate right and left of each dotted line.

Step Two: Connect the plotted points with curved lines similar to the lines of the circle.

Step Three: Using a pencil or marker shade the areas in each section between the lines you drew and the center of the circle. The shaded areas reveal your personal discipleship wheel at this point in your spiritual journey.



Step Four: Ask yourself these questions:

1. Which areas have the most shading? At this point in your spiritual journey, you see these as the strongest elements of your spiritual growth. List below one benefit these strengths bring to
 - a. You personally: _____
 - b. Your family: _____
 - c. Your church: _____
 - d. Your community: _____

2. Which areas have the least shading? At this point in your spiritual journey you see these as the elements needing the most improvement. List below one reward growth in these disciplines would bring to:
 - a. You personally: _____
 - b. Your family: _____
 - c. Your church: _____
 - d. Your community: _____

Step Five: Make specific plans to grow spiritually this next year. Complete the **Annual Spiritual Growth Plan**.

Spiritual Growth Observations Instructions

1. Enlist 3 people to complete a **Spiritual Growth Observation** on you. These should be Christians who regularly observe your life actions. If married, your spouse would be an excellent choice to give you feedback. Older children in your family might also be considered. Explain to those you enlist that you need their help to accurately assess your spiritual growth. Point out that you want to discover areas where growth is needed and without their input those discoveries might not be possible.
2. After receiving the completed observations, follow these simple steps:
 - a. Send each person who completed the observations a thank you note.
 - b. Pray over the responses before looking at the specific scores.
 - c. Average the scores of each discipline and write the average score below.
 - Abide in Christ _____
 - Live by God's Word _____
 - Pray in Faith _____
 - Build godly Relationships _____
 - Witness to the World _____
 - Minister to Others _____
 - d. Compare the scores with your personal assessment totals. Ask yourself these questions and discuss your answers with your accountability partner:
 - i. Where do the observer scores agree with my personal scores?
 - ii. Where do the observer scores disagree with my personal scores? If the observer scores disagree with my scores, do they agree with each other? If so, could this be a blind spot for me that needs attention?
 - iii. Review any "NO" (not observed) responses. Should the people closest to me be seeing more of these actions? If your answer is yes, consider addressing this on your **Annual Spiritual Growth Action Plan**.
3. Complete your **Annual Spiritual Growth Action Plan**.

Spiritual Growth Observations Response Sheet

You have been asked by another disciple to participate in an intentional process to evaluate his/her spiritual growth. Your observations will be used to help develop a growth plan for the upcoming year. In order to provide helpful evaluations, ask the Lord for direction before completing this form. Even though these are subjective responses, God can use them to affirm and challenge this fellow traveler on the journey of discipleship. Authentic change occurs as the community of believers helps one another grow spiritually. Use the following scale to respond to each statement.

| Never-1 | Seldom-2 | Occasionally-3 | Frequent-4 | Always-5 | Not observed-NO |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------------|------------|----------|-----------------|
| 1. Peace, contentment, and joy characterize life rather than worry and anxiety. | | | | | |
| 2. Demonstrates trust in Christ when facing life problems. | | | | | |
| 3. Participates in church worship experiences. | | | | | |
| 4. Expresses love for Christ. | | | | | |
| 5. Engages in a personal quiet time. | | | | | |
| Abide in Christ - Total (add lines 1-5) | | | | | |
| 6. Teaches others biblical truth. | | | | | |
| 7. Public and private self are the same. | | | | | |
| 8. Biblical truth guides personal actions. | | | | | |
| 9. Demonstrates self-control in stressful situations. | | | | | |
| 10. Talks about biblical standards for life actions. | | | | | |
| Live in the Word - Total (add lines 6-10) | | | | | |
| 11. Engages in a daily prayer time. | | | | | |
| 12. Talks about God's answers to personal prayers. | | | | | |
| 13. Solicits prayer concerns from others. | | | | | |
| 14. Encourages others to pray. | | | | | |
| 15. Initiates times of prayer in group settings. | | | | | |
| Pray in Faith - Total (add lines 11-15) | | | | | |
| 16. Admits errors in relationships and seeks forgiveness. | | | | | |
| 17. Demonstrates humility in relating to others. | | | | | |
| 18. Seeks unity in relationships rather than creating division. | | | | | |
| 19. Encourages other instead of criticizing. | | | | | |
| 20. Gentle and kind in interactions with others. | | | | | |
| Fellowship with Believers - Total (add lines 16-20) | | | | | |
| 21. Participates in evangelistic mission efforts. | | | | | |
| 22. Makes faith known to neighbors and/or fellow employees. | | | | | |
| 23. Helps others understand how to effectively share a personal testimony. | | | | | |
| 24. Shares a personal testimony with non-believers. | | | | | |
| 25. Prays for non-believers by name. | | | | | |
| Witness to the World - Total (add lines 21-25) | | | | | |
| 26. Treats others needs as important as his/her own. | | | | | |
| 27. Contributes time to a ministry at church. | | | | | |
| 28. Demonstrates an attitude of servanthood. | | | | | |
| 29. Contributes finances to help others in the church and community. | | | | | |
| 30. Serves others expecting nothing in return. | | | | | |
| Minister to Others - Total (add lines 26-30) | | | | | |

Annual Spiritual Growth Plan
Date Started _____

I. Enlist an accountability partner who will agree to do the following:

1. Meet with me initially to overview my assessment and pray with me about this plan.
2. Meet with me at least once each month to discuss my progress on this plan.
3. Affirm my successes and challenge me to stay focused on achieving each part of the plan.
4. Pray regularly for me.
5. My accountability partner will be _____

II. Decide on actions for spiritual growth.

- On the blanks following numbers 1, 2, 3, 4 write in the seasons on the year beginning with the coming season. For Example: You completed the assessment in November. Number 1 would be "Winter."
- Use your discipleship wheel to determine actions. For example, looking at areas of less shading, what is the next step for your growth in that area? (knowing more about what God expects, building skills in this discipline, just doing it, or joining a group that does this discipline).
- Next, consider the areas of more shading. What is the next step for your growth in those areas? (leading others in knowing this discipline, leading others in doing this discipline, or building consistency in doing this discipline)

1. _____ During these months I will
 - a. Improve my understanding of God's standard for the following discipline through individual and/or group study.
Discipline _____
Name of study _____
 - b. Set an action goal. Use the Recommended Actions Guide for suggestions.

2. _____ During these months I will
 - a. Improve my understanding of God's standard for the following discipline through individual and/or group study.
Discipline _____
Name of study _____
 - b. Set an action goal. Use the Recommended Actions Guide for suggestions.

3. _____ During these months I will
 - a. Improve my understanding of God's standard for the following discipline through individual and/or group study.
Discipline _____
Name of study _____
 - b. Set an action goal. Use the Recommended Actions Guide for suggestions.

4. _____ During these months I will
 - a. Improve my understanding of God's standard for the following discipline through individual and/or group study.
Discipline _____
Name of study _____
 - b. Set an action goal. Use the Recommended Actions Guide for suggestions.

Recommended Actions for Spiritual Growth Guide

The following actions can help you complete your annual intentional plan for your spiritual growth. See these as suggestions to get you started rather than as a list of the only possibilities. Trust God to guide you in your choices. The key to growth will be His work in you as you intentionally seek His kingdom first. The administrative guide *Discipleship: God's Life Changing Work* provides recommendations for small group studies related to each discipline. Download this guide at www.lifeway.com/discipleship.

Abide in Christ

1. Attend a corporate worship experience weekly.
2. Set aside a specific time and location for a regular quiet time.
3. Establish a practice of worship preparation through prayer and confession.
4. Learn about biblical fasting.
5. Practice fasting as the Lord directs.
6. Learn about your identity in Christ.
7. Regularly thank God and give Him praise in all situations.
8. Make a list of things that hinder your spiritual growth and seek God's help to remove those hindrances.

Live in the Word

1. Memorize one Scripture verses each week.
2. Memorize passages of Scripture.
3. Take notes from the pastor's sermon and other Bible study experiences each week. Evaluate how the study applies to your life.
4. Establish a regular time for personal Bible study. Take notes from the study and evaluate how the biblical truth applies to your life.
5. Use commentaries and other study resources to enrich Bible study.
6. Read one chapter from the Bible each day. Discover one action required and do it.
7. Read one chapter from the Bible each day. Meditate on the character of God described in the chapter.
8. Participate in an ongoing small group Bible study.
9. Accept a Bible teaching position in your church.
10. Lead a small group study related to living by God's Word.

Pray in Faith

1. Participate in the prayer ministry of your church.
2. Enlist a prayer partner and meet regularly for prayer.
3. Journal your prayers and record God's answers.
4. Organize a prayer ministry for your church or small group.
5. Lead a small group study related to praying in faith.
6. Pray each day.

Fellowship with Believers

1. Ask family members to identify ways you can improve your relationships with each one.
2. Ask friends to identify ways you can improve your relationships with each one.
3. Make a list of people who have hurt you and ask God for help to forgive them.

4. Participate in an ongoing small group to build relationships with other believers.
5. Complete an individual study related to building godly relationships in your marriage. Attend a retreat or workshop on parenting.
6. Attend a retreat or workshop on marriage.
7. Lead a small group study related to building godly relationships in marriage.
8. Lead a small group study related to building godly relationships as a parent.
9. Lead a small group study related to building godly relationships with others.

Witness to the World

1. Write your testimony and practice sharing it with another believer.
2. Secure several gospel tracts and distribute them as the Lord leads.
3. Learn to share your testimony without using printed support.
4. Make a list of non-believers you know and begin praying regularly for their salvation.
5. Begin building relationships with the non-believers on your street.
6. Begin building relationships with non-believers at work.
7. Invite an unchurched friend to worship or Bible study.
8. Include a specific missions focus in your prayers.
9. Share your testimony as God provides the opportunity.
10. Participate in an evangelistic missions experience.
11. Lead a small group study related to witnessing to the world.
12. With your accountability partner list places you visit in a normal week. Brainstorm creative ways of witnessing to the people you regularly see at these places.

Minister to Others

1. Complete a spiritual gifts inventory. Download a spiritual gifts inventory at www.lifeway.com/downloads.
2. Volunteer for a ministry in your church where you can use your spiritual gifts, interests, and natural abilities.
3. Send encouragement notes to your church staff.
4. Visit one homebound person each week.
5. Look for new baby bows on mailboxes in your neighborhood. Send a note of congratulations and drop off a gift or meal.
6. Volunteer to baby sit for a single parent in your church to give them a night out each month.
7. Volunteer to serve meals at a local shelter.
8. Volunteer to tutor students or help in a classroom at a local school.
9. Ask a member of your church staff to help you discover ways to minister to people on your street. For example, hold a small group meeting in your home quarterly to discuss topics such as marriage and parenting.
10. Lead a small group study related to ministering to others.

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