

How Disciples Grow

Part 3 of the *Disciple* series

Pastor Rich Warriner

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Review

- The goal of the church is to make disciples who make disciples.
- A disciple is someone who is following Jesus, being changed by Jesus, and committed to the mission of Jesus.

Discipleship is a call to me, but it is a journey of we. Michael Spencer

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-13

Discipleship or the road to spiritual maturity is a process.

[We] are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

2 Cor 3:18

“He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion.”

Phil 1:6

Two things reveal where you're at on the road to spiritual maturity: what you do and what you say.

Just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions.

Matthew 16:20 NLT

For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.

Matthew 6:45 NI

The Five Stage of Spiritual Growth

- Spiritually Dead (Ephesians 2:1-2, 4-5)
 - Characteristics: unbelief, brokenness, seeking
 - Need: loving relationships with followers of Jesus, to see the Gospel lived out, an explanation of the Gospel, an invitation to follow Jesus.
- Spiritual Infant (1 Peter 2:2-3)
 - Characteristics: unaware, discovery, dependent
 - Need: the personal attention of a disciple-maker, care & protection, teaching & modeling the new truths of the faith, developing new habits
- Spiritual Child
 - Characteristics: teachable, inquisitive, self-centered
 - Need: a strong relational connection to a mature believer
- Spiritual Young Adult
 - Characteristics: other-focused, responsible, God-centered.
 - Needs: trained & empowered to serve with their God-given gifts & abilities
- Spiritual Parent
 - Characteristics: reproducing, the ability to make disciples
 - Need: regular encouragement & accountability

Next Steps

Set some time aside this week to read through the 5 stages of spiritual growth. Do an honest self-assessment of where you're at on the road to spiritual maturity.

Take some time to answer the following questions with your spouse, children, or small group...

- Have you ever felt like you're stuck on the road to spiritual maturity and just haven't been able to grow? Tell about it.
- Read through the 5 stages of spiritual growth listed above. Share with the group where you feel you're at. Why?
- Based on the stage you chose, what are some needs you have that will help you grow? Discuss with one another some ways that those needs could be met.
- Based on the needs of each stage, what can you do to help someone (a friend, spouse, or children) grow in their relationship with Jesus?