

SPIRITUAL GROWTH



SESSION ONE: JOURNEY

ICEBREAKER

If you haven't already played The Maturing Game as a group, it can be a fun, fast-paced, video-based kickoff to this session's discussion. You can find it at:

groupleaders.org/maturing-game

VIDEO RECAP

How would you explain “spiritual growth”?

One of them [the Pharisees], an expert in the law, tested him with this question: “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Matthew 22:35-40

Jesus’ Top Two

1. Love God.
2. Love your _____.

That’s what spiritual growth is.

But if anyone obeys [Jesus] word, love for God is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.

1 John 2:5-6

If you want to know how someone is loving God, look at how they treat other people.

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know you are my disciples.”

John 13:34-35

The goal is growth in Three Vital Relationships

1. _____ with God
2. Community with Insiders
3. Influence with _____

Practicing the Three Vital Relationships leads to spiritual growth.

Definition: Spiritual growth is the process of growing your faith in God and your love for others.

Answer Key:

neighbor
intimacy
outsiders

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

1. Prior to watching the video for this session, how would you have defined "spiritual growth"? How did you come up with that definition?
2. During the message, Clay said, "If you want to know how someone is loving God, look at how they treat other people." Do you agree with that statement? Why or why not?
3. When it comes to your own spiritual growth, in which of the Three Vital Relationships do you currently devote most of your attention? In which do you devote the least?
4. In what area of your life do you find it challenging put your faith in God? Why is it difficult for you to trust him?
5. Take a few minutes to write down the name of a person or group of people do you find difficult to get along with.

Now, write down three things you can do to love that person or group as you love yourself.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What are some things that stand in the way of you doing any or all of those three things?

THIS WEEK, THINK ABOUT . . .

Spiritual growth is the process of growing your faith in God and your love for others. What is one thing you can do this week to put your trust in God? What is one thing you can do to demonstrate love for another person?

PRAYER

God, help me to trust you more deeply in all aspects of my life. Give me the wisdom and patience to see other people as you see them, and to treat them the way I would want to be treated.

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SESSION TWO: PROCESS

VIDEO RECAP

Who is responsible for your spiritual growth?

- Your group isn't responsible for your spiritual growth.
They support the process of your growth by promoting _____, belonging, and care.
- Your group leader isn't responsible for your spiritual growth.
He or she encourages the process of your growth by promoting your participation in the group.
- The _____ isn't responsible for your spiritual growth.
It is your partner in the process.

You are responsible for your spiritual growth.

To own your spiritual growth:

- Stay _____.
- Remain curious.
- _____ a step.

The Five Things God Uses to Grow Your Faith

1. Practical Teaching
2. Providential Relationships
3. Private Disciplines
4. Personal Ministry
5. Pivotal Circumstances

You will not _____ find what you don't _____ pursue.

Answer Key:

accountability
church
engaged
take
passively
actively

SPIRITUAL PATHWAYS ASSESSMENT

If you haven't done so as a group, it can be helpful to take the Spiritual Pathways Assessment before discussing the video. It's a video-based assessment that helps you identify some of the ways you best connect with God. The assessment takes about 12 minutes. You can find everything you need at:

groupleaders.org/spiritual-pathways-activity

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 meaning "not at all" and 10 meaning "completely," to what extent do you currently own the process of your spiritual growth? Why did you answer the way you did?
2. During the message, Clay said, "If we're never challenged, we can't grow." Talk about a time when you were challenged beyond your talent, training, or experience. How did you grow as a result?
3. Did anything Clay said during the message change the way you view this group? If so, what?
4. Talk about a time when God used one of the Five Things to grow your faith. How was God active during that period of growth? What actions did you take?
5. What can you do this week to stay engaged, remain curious, or take a specific next step in your spiritual growth? Jot down some ideas in the space that follows.

How can this group support you?

THIS WEEK, THINK ABOUT . . .

You own your spiritual growth. If you're still wondering about your best next step in growing, take another look at the list of Five Things God Uses to Grow Your Faith. Is there anything you can do to more actively pursue one of the Five Things?

PRAYER

Father in heaven, I recognize that I own the process of my spiritual growth. Thank you for taking an active part in that growth. Guide me as I take next steps toward growing my trust in you.

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SESSION THREE: FUEL

VIDEO RECAP

Curiosity is the most powerful ingredient in spiritual growth.

- Knowing _____ God is important.
- Knowing God is more important.

Curiosity about God can deepen your relationship with God.

Be Curious About God

- Choose to _____.
- Seek understanding.

*“As the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.”*

Isaiah 55:9

If we're not challenged, we don't change.

Be Curious About Others

- Reserve _____.
- Ask questions.

Be Curious About Yourself

- Challenge your assumptions.
- _____ feedback.

There are things you don't know about you that other people do know about you.

Curiosity fuels spiritual growth.

Answer Key:

about
trust
judgment
seek

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

1. During the message, Clay said, "Curiosity is the most powerful ingredient in spiritual growth." Do you agree? Why or why not?
2. Is your current relationship with God based mostly on what you know about him or on knowing him? What are some ways you can connect relationally with your heavenly Father?
3. What are some characteristics of a person who is curious about others?
4. Use one or more of the following scenarios to explore what it looks like to respond to others with humility and curiosity.

Scenario 1

A friend shares that his mother died two years ago after a long bout with cancer. He doesn't know how a good God could have let her suffer the way she did or why she would die even though she was a good person while bad people continue to live. How would you respond to what your friend said?

Scenario 2

A co-worker asks if you think she should pursue a promotion that has become available at work. She has strong business and leadership skills, but lacks self-awareness. For example, she sometimes says things that hurt other people's feelings and doesn't seem to notice. You think the promotion will include responsibilities she's not quite ready to handle. How do you respond to her inquiry?

Scenario 3

An acquaintance that knows you're involved in church opens up about the important role meditation has played in his spiritual journey. He says that he's a Christian because he definitely believes in Jesus, but that he also considers himself a Buddhist. How do you respond?

5. Talk about a time when you learned something about yourself that you didn't previously know. How did it change the way you thought about yourself? How did it influence your behavior moving forward?

THIS WEEK, THINK ABOUT . . .

What is one thing you can do this week to practice curiosity about God?

About other people?

About yourself?

How can this group support and encourage you as you take action?

PRAYER

God, help me to seek to better understand you, to ask other people questions instead of making snap judgments, and to continually seek feedback so I can better understand myself.