

3 AGES & STAGES OF GROWTH

"I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for his name's sake. I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one." ~ 1 John 2:12-13

<p>LITTLE CHILDREN</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Read the Bible through in the first 2-3 years of faith, following the 3-Year plan. ● Develop basic Bible reading and study skills. (Learn and practice the OIA method, begin journaling, learn basic interpretation skills, and how to use simple study resources.) Begin to immerse yourself in worship music. ● Go through the <i>Design For Discipleship</i> studies in the first two years to strengthen the ability to <i>think biblically</i>. ● <i>Design For Discipleship</i> serves as your 'secondary study'. But with caution, you can add additional reading, such as the Book of the Quarter or a slow read of <i>Pilgrim's Progress</i> or another resource recommended by your coach. ● Participate in a Life Group (2-3 times monthly), Triad (monthly) and coaching (quarterly, or as needed). Fighting sin and learning holy living will be two steps forward and one back. ● Begin serving as a FULL Member in church, and begin to observe how God is working locally, regionally and globally. ● Evangelism: Learn how to share your Testimony, and begin to develop 30-Second Stories. ● Life Call & Dreams: Learn your SHAPE. Begin to think how you can fulfill Psalm 37:3—"<i>Trust in the Lord and do good.</i>"
<p>YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In your Bible reading, having done the "flyover", now deepen your reading, learning how to do "word studies", "biography studies", and dig deeper with shorter readings. ● Continue growing in your quiet time habit by maturing in prayer, practicing fasting, and learning to discern more clearly the Lord's voice. Deepen in your understanding of worship, as something more than music. ● Expand your secondary book reading, by exploring a wide variety of topics. Begin to read doctrinal books that will deepen your ability to <i>think theologically</i>. Fall in love with "apologetics". ● In your Life Group participation, start to serve as a host or facilitator. In your Triad work, pay more attention to how our sin is less a matter of outward behavior than of inward hurts and sin. Grow in your knowledge of "emotionally healthy spirituality". ● As you serve the church, branch out into different areas of ministry. Find local, regional and global ministries to support with your time, prayer, and money. ● Evangelism: Learn how to share the Gospel. Continue to build up your library of 30-Second Stories. ● Life Call & Dreams: Place a high priority on strengthening your marriage, family, friendships, and finances. Develop and nurture educational, vocational, personal, and professional goals. Undergirding it all, accept limits, learn how to experience true "sabbath", and to have "joy in the journey".
<p>FATHERS AND MOTHERS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Your quiet time habit is as automatic as waking in the morning. When it becomes stale, you and the Lord can course-correct. You've learned that God's Word is truly 'living and active' and that you will never in a hundred lifetimes exhaust its riches. ● You automatically <i>think transformationally</i>. You've now 'slain many dragons' in your fight against sin. But you also know that tests and trials are always coming, and so you 'seek the Lord's presence continuously' for 'apart from him, you can do nothing.' Your 'theology of suffering' is intact, yet 'the joy of the Lord is your strength.' ● It's second nature to you that you mentor and encourage as you serve. But you never forget that all is of grace. You are transparent about your weaknesses and sins and have given up "wearing masks" to impress others. You know how desperately you need Jesus in you, and his people around you, to finish the race well. ● Evangelism: Your love of Christ is so deep, that sharing your Lord with others comes easily and naturally. You know how to lead people to Christ, and to disciple them when they come in. You practice 2 Timothy 2:2. ● Life Call & Dreams: You believe that as long as there's life, there's hope. You believe that the righteous are 'ever full of sap and green' in old age, and that the Lord's Spirit enables even the 'old man to dream dreams'. Yet you also know that our 'fruitfulness is from God', and so you trust him to bring from your life all that he wishes, knowing that eternity will add endless chapters to your story and dreams.