

Spiritual Visionary Leadership

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1.1 Purpose

Understanding the difference between being a Christian (converted) and development as a Christian; encouragement: "With God there are plenty of opportunities."

The course day to which this material pertains, relates to the consequence of sin in us and to the solution that God has provided. It concerns God's influence in our lives and how we may increase it so that there is growth.

How does sin manifest itself in us and how may we go the road of renewal? Understanding of ourselves, and of what the fall does to us, will drive us into the hands of God the Father who is able to bring about a change in our hearts. *For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose.* (Philippians 2:13).

Leadership is based on 'teamwork'. Leadership has no function for the soloist. Directing people is easiest when you have a relationship with them. Everyone feels that it is so. You like to work best for someone whom you like, someone you love and respect. It is easier to be obedient to someone like that, or to even go against yourself. From someone like that you will accept things and you do not mind as much to receive feedback from them. Growth and renewal may prosper in such a climate. In order to have a relationship with someone, you must communicate. In communication we experience many barriers. We fail to understand one another. "My intentions were good. Yet, he became angry anyway." In order to understand this, it is important to understand how sin manifests itself in me and in the other person.

2.1 Who am I?

It is good to have a clear picture of yourself, to know your own strengths and weaknesses, to not be arrogant but to obtain a better picture of where you stand in relation to God through a better understanding of His will. Who we are is the sum total of our:

- ❑ character (genetic origin)
- ❑ education
- ❑ circumstances
- ❑ the applied values and norms

Character

Character consists of the personality traits which we inherited from our parents, which they passed on to us.

Education

Due to the things we experience during our education, we sometimes have to deal with many insecurities in later life. We develop certain habits and methods of coping with our uncertainties. Yet we cannot blame it all on our parents. We ourselves remain responsible. Insecurity often plays a major role in education. This is true, both on the side of the educators (parents) as well as on the side of the ones being educated (children). It is advisable to attempt to apply a process-based approach so that parents try to understand the child's expectations. Children are not expecting ready made answers. (They certainly do not need continuous criticism). Children are expecting you to take their question, or issue, seriously by finding it relevant and by making a joint attempt at finding an answer. When we understand that, it becomes clear why God does not always immediately answers our prayers. He wants to have relationship with us. He wants us to go on a search together with Him. So He can use the situation to show us what He can do for us. Even in our relationships with others we must try to not always have our (cold) cut and dry answers (they may cause the death of a relationship). Let us attempt to be a companion for the other person. It is quite important to listen to him/her. Try not to be different from who you really are (since you feel it offers you a better image), try to always be authentic.

Circumstances

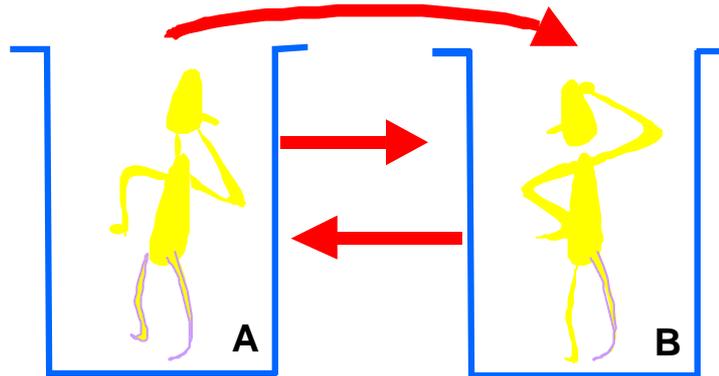
You may experience difficulties in life. For example, you may lose your job. This can make you fearful of losing it again later in life. It causes you to feel insecure which results in stress. We may then ask ourselves: "What am I afraid of?" What am I hiding for? We should try to identify our fear, discuss it in confidential relationships, but particularly take it to God.

Applied values and norms

For a believer, Christ will be the source of norms and values. Aside from that, and aside from the relationships, it will be nothing more than a catalogue of what we are and of what we are not allowed to do. In the Kingdom of God, we ourselves are 100% responsible for all of our behaviour. God will hold us personally responsible, yet He also offered us the solution for everything. And the first thing that He offers us, is His love. Based on these notions, we have to ask ourselves the question: what does it mean to me, in all situations, and towards all people that I meet? First and foremost, we must (and may) radiate love and continue based on that. We should not immediately blame others or pretend that we have all the answers. Instead, we should demonstrate understanding, recognition, and a willingness to walk the road together and to take it to the Lord in prayer together.

2.2 Communication from heart to heart

Every human being lives in a well and everyone's well is different. The other person often has problems that are quite different from yours. Communication is often best of all when you are both standing on the bottom of each other's well. Therefore, you are standing at the same level: you experience what the other person is experiencing. This can only happen, of course, during parts of your life. When you do not do it that way, so when you, as it were, are looking over the rim of the well, you are never able to understand the other person in their well. Jesus Christ descended into our well. He descended from heaven and was tempted in the same way [as we are] in order to pull us out of our well and to bring us to the Father. He approached us with His love. It is up to us whether we are willing to accept that He pulls us out. In fact, it is up to us, whether we are willing to accept Christ's sacrifice.



A relationship develops at the bottom of the well if you are willing to admit the other person. You have to understand that the other person is also living in a well. Only Christ fully knows the other person's well. So communication with the other person has to go via Him. It is much the same as the communication between members of the body that occurs via the head. Therefore, relationships are indispensable in processes of change/innovation.

1 *Who may look into your well?*

2 *In which areas of your life is it permitted?*

2.3 Faith

Hebrews 11 and 12 relate to throwing off the burden and sin and to running the race with our eyes fixed on Jesus.

The life of a manager is characterised by setting objectives and preparing the plans to achieve the objectives. Our performance depends on whether or not we reach those goals. Such plans may relate to business or to your private life (relations, sports, money, church board). Moreover, these may be conscious plans or unconscious plans (expectations of our children, etc.).

If the result does not match our promises and expectations then something is wrong. The fear of what people will think of us—will we be able to survive it?, etc.—greatly determines our behaviour. And if it continues for many years then we end up in a vicious cycle that can hardly be broken. Our certainty is then based on what we have achieved,

despite of everything. This often relates to tangible things (house, job, salary, capital, image, etc). We panic when these things are at stake. That is why Hebrews 11 deals with faith in God.

When you read it, your response is: I want to do that as well! The witnesses of faith, faith giants—I would like to be one of them, but where do you start? Compare your own life to that of the witnesses of faith. What do you notice? See for instance Abraham's life: he receives the promise. Yet, in his experience, the fulfilment of the promise seems to elude him. He and his wife are growing old. Do you think that he was very happy when she celebrated her 95th birthday? All of this happened in a culture in which having male offspring was practically the most important thing in life. When the fulfilment of the promise does not happen, Abraham and Sarah decide to help God: Ishmael is born. What would we have said and thought if we had been present at the event? Furthermore, a transition occurs in the second half of Hebrews 11. No longer does it deal with all those fantastic people. Now it relates to persecution, torture, deaths. So that is part of it all? We have to live and act in such a way that we are continuously in tune with God. Things may go differently from what we thought. He is in control! He will do it according to His plan! It is important to bear this in mind.

Make SMALL steps with a HIGH expectation of God.

Hebrews 12 indicates a line of thought that will break the vicious cycle. First, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin and then understand that this separates you from God: the sin, your own sin (not the events, circumstances, etc.). You must be willing to face up to your sins (what are you afraid of, what are you hiding?), to dispose of them and to tune in to God. You have to pick up the vision again. Also, you must run the race with perseverance, fixing your eyes on Jesus. God wants to see more of His Son in us. For that forms the optimal love relationship. And as the Lord God sees more of His Son in you, you respond to His love!

3 *What does it mean 'to throw off sin', according to you?*

4 *Which role does your faith play in this respect?*

5 *Which role do your efforts play in this context?*

2.4 Manifestation of the fall

The devil, God's adversary, does everything to distract us from the concept of 'sin'. Modern man does not want to hear about it anymore. The main thing he is concerned with is that he feels good. It is necessary to recognise the subtlety with which sin manifests itself in me. This does not mean that we should feel like a victim, or that we should turn to pessimism and struggle. Yet we should adopt the purpose to know that there is only one way, based on grace, close to God. He sent His Son, Whose blood flowed for many to the forgiveness of sin.

Sins may be categorised into four categories:

- Unconscious and invisible
- Unconscious and visible

- Conscious and invisible
- Conscious and visible

Unconscious and invisible

These are the sins which I do not know about and which nobody sees. Yet, they do exist. We may hope and expect that God will make them known to me at the proper (His!) time. The concept of the existence of unconscious and invisible sins does have the consequence that we should continuously remember (without this making us insecure): Am I doing it correctly? Is not there something that needs to be dealt with? So: a lifelong searching for adjustment. This prevents us from being arrogant.

Unconscious but visible

These are the sins of which you are not aware, yet which are perceived by others. For instance, at your conversion, you discover that there were many sins in your preceding life of which you were not aware.

Conscious and invisible

There are things that you consciously do wrong, sins that are consciously committed, without anyone noticing it.

Conscious and visible

This requires no explanation.

Unconscious sins affect the relation with God differently from conscious sins. Conscious sins appear to have a serious effect on the relationship with God. This is particularly true if we do not even resist them. Hanging on to conscious sins is rebellion against God. Through his Holy Spirit, God wants to make us aware that something is not right with us in the life-long process of purification and sanctification. Everything (even all of the unconsciously developed trick mechanisms) is destroyed. This process can only gain shape in a life close to Him, in a relationship towards Him and focused on Him. He must become greater; I must become less. (John 3:30, spoken by John the Baptist). We are tempted to find the visible sins more serious than the invisible ones. Take a look at our churches. We categorise sin. Sins that hurt other people are worse than those which do not hurt people or image. Yet in this way, we do not give a faithful witness. Let us learn to look with God's eyes to our own life. Let us learn to refer to our sins as sin and let us confess them. And having confessed them, let us know that they are done away with. Because of the work of God's Son on the cross of Calvary!

3 NEW MOTIVATION

Since the fall the old motivation is 'fear' as we saw during the first days of the course. New motivation arises from knowing God and from understanding the reality about ourselves. This commences by accepting His offer of atonement and it proceeds as a continuous process.

To man, God's most important characteristics are His love and faithfulness. When man first becomes acquainted with these characteristics they excite him. Consequently, He wants to get to know God better and do as He says. So it is not a case of being forced to do something. (Something is wrong, if someone feels that God forces him to do something).

However, the desire to know God better has to be expressed in actual deeds leading to a living and personal relationship with God.

Conditions for a growing relationship are: The acceptance of ourselves, the way we are (relationship with yourself), the understanding that God has accepted us (relationship with God) and the willingness to grow, allowing ourselves to be changed by God. Acceptance of ourselves means that we acknowledge our limitations and our tendency to sin.

I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honour the one who serves me.

John 12:24-26

The acceptance of yourself, contrary to performing in order to be accepted, will be discussed in more detail under "New Strategy".

3.1 Assurance by faith

Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this:

Psalm 37:5

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

Hebrews 11:1

Read the preceding chapter once again and proceed with the next question.

6 *How does this affect the four core items?*

- My core emotion
- My core motive
- My core strategy
- My temptation

7 *Can you do something with it in the very near future? If so, what?*

The old strategy (see material of Day 1) is hiding or fleeing as a reaction to the core emotion of fear. The new strategy that we want to adopt is loving Him, trusting Him and continuing to build on that trust by our personal, daily relationship with Him.

When you live without God, you have to develop a survival strategy on your own, in order to be able to cope with your core emotion: Fear. The only alternative for man is to accept God's offer of salvation, healing and to accept a relationship. The only effective solution results in a radical change. (Please note: This does not always translate as 'spectacular'). As a Christian, you have new opportunities, a new motive and a new strategy. God's reply to your core emotion of fear is: Experiencing His love and trusting in Him. It is the basis for quite a different strategy: A life of faith. Many times God says in the Bible: "Trust in Me" and "have faith".

Trust in God results in healing and development. Experiencing God's love and trusting in Him is only possible if you have a personal relationship with God. God desires to have such a relationship with individuals.

Then God said: "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

Genesis 1:26

It says: "... man in our image...". . . i.e. in the image of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. These three together are a unity. So God wants man to experience harmony with other human beings and with Him. God calls him, saying: "Adam, where are you?" (Gen. 3:9), because He misses the contact with him.

Jesus prays:

I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name—the name you gave me—so that they may be one as we are one.

John 17:11

Paul writes:

God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

1 Corinthians 1:9

4.1 Walking with God

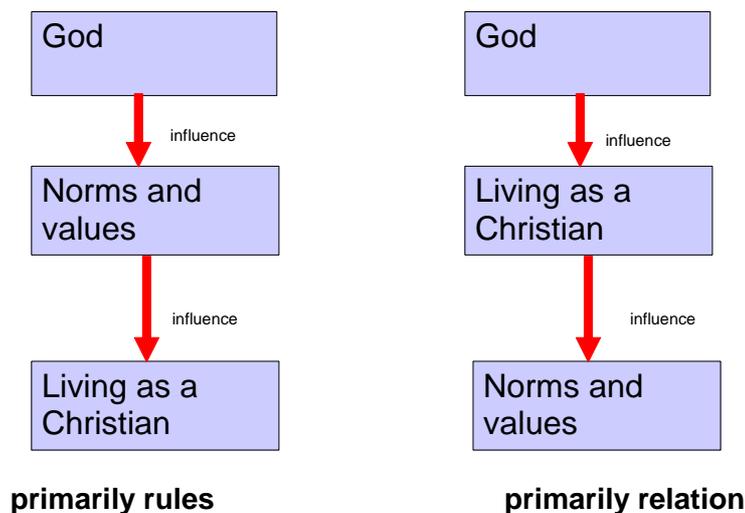
The proper perspective: A Christian can be with God, as a child is with his mother or father, by walking with Him. Noah is a typical example of this (Genesis 6).

Walking with God means:

- Experience God's power, greatness, care and love, experience his acceptance.
- Taking God's promises seriously (such as eternal life) and living accordingly.
- Giving priority to the fruit of the Spirit instead of will power.
- Being obedient to Him.
- Maintaining a personal relationship with Him.

No rules but a relationship

The relation between your relationship with God, your norms and values and your life as a Christian is sometimes seen or experienced differently.



Test questions

8 *What remains if you cast 'norms and values' as well as rules overboard? (If you do that are you still a Christian?)*

9 *Is your life as a Christian determined by the norms and values or by the relationship with God?*

A personal relationship with God entails:

- Being saved based on a personal decision, prayer (not on the basis of participation in a group or church or education).
- Being in fellowship with God: Daily prayer and submission to the Bible.
- Whatever the Bible says is personally applicable to you. It is necessary that you apply what it says.
- A personal relationship is characterised by intimacy and trust.

4.2 Relationships

God wants you to be an instrument in His hand. He does not want you to be a robot. He wants you to obey, based on love. He loves His Son so much that He wants to multiply the number of obedient believers. If God needed results, beautiful things, image, expensive items then He would not need us for this. God wants to have a relationship: i.e. love and a freedom of choice. Yet, this also allows for much trouble.

He has prepared a task for us in eternity. (Romans 12:9; 1 Corinthians 13) Accept your own responsibility by understanding your own situation. Yet, you must also take the other powers into account. The spiritual armour is a necessity. We are all in the midst of the battle that Satan wages against God. We take part in this, due to Adam and Eve's decision. The enemy attacks when there is an advance in terms of growth in love.

The worst thing that a human being can experience is complete rejection, being abandoned. Relationships are needed in order to achieve any changes. It fits God's plan to learn in relationships together with others. The first relationship for which I am responsible, which has the main priority for me, which I must guard, is my relationship with Jesus Christ. If something is wrong with it, if it is stressed, then this will affect all of

our other relationships. The second relationship that requires some attention is the relationship with yourself (self image, see also chapter 4.5). You need time for yourself (particularly quiet time) to take care of yourself and of your relationship with God and other people. This has nothing to do with egoism. Naturally, even this requires a balanced approach. The next relationship that requires attention is the relationship with my spouse. When there are problems in this relationship they affect everything. And then there is the relationship with the children. Show them that you truly want a relationship with them. Show understanding, appreciation and interest. Learn to be sensitive to their problems. Take time to talk about difficulties. Start to do this while they are young. In order to gain their confidence and to create a true relationship you will have to start early.

Next, there is the relationship with your dearest friends. These are people surrounding you and which you might hurt. They are willing to descend into your 'well' (Chapter 2.2) and to subsequently walk the road together with you. You only need a few of such people. You may pray that God will give them to you.

Then there are the other relationships: Relationships with your colleagues at work, with the brothers and sisters in the local church, with your neighbours, your acquaintances, etc. Our relationships with other people must be primarily based on giving –as the relationship with God– they should not be based on consuming. They should not be based on our principles, interests and the like, but always on God's principles. In and through relationships, God wants to teach us as well as the other person. Often, God wants to make things clear to us by means of relationships. However, this is only possible when the relationship is pure and when it is controlled by His principles.

The value of each human being is expressed in the price that Jesus Christ paid for him or for her on the cross. We can never treat this value with sufficient care and respect. This applies to all brothers and sisters in Christ. It even applies to the ones we do not like. We should not be motivated by our own rights but by the love of Christ! This is quite essential when we are talking about relationships and shifts within such relationships. Before expressing your criticism you should pray to God that He will give you the opportunity to express love and to show understanding and respect to the other person, to stand next to him in the well and together to find God and the other person.

That all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

John 17:21-23

10 How closely related are unity, close fellowship and perfection?

11 Which survival strategy do you adhere to?

a Are you doing it continuously without exception?

b Which place have you given to relationships –even the one with God– in your strategy? (Unity and fellowship)?

c Are there any things in your life (behaviour) which you do not understand and which are a symptom of something that needs to be changed (developed/healed)?

Feel free to take some time for personal prayer.

4.3 Maintaining the relationship with God

Let love and faithfulness never leave you. Bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.

Proverbs 3:3

The process of growing in trust, experiencing God’s love and loving God and obedience to Him in response to His love, forms the basis of our relationship with God. It is the motor of life as a Christian. The vehicle is stopped without an engine or with an idling engine. If this is the case, turning the wheels will not be the solution. Starting the engine and stepping on the gas is the answer.

Just think about the above-mentioned example and indicate in which way it corresponds to the spiritual life, a relationship with God.

<i>Vehicle</i>	
<i>Idling engine</i>	
<i>Starting</i>	
<i>Step on the gas</i>	
<i>Turning the wheels</i>	

No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.

If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned.

If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

John 15:4-8

The result of a personal relationship with God is that it changes our mind. When our mind changes, our life changes as well. So we will have a different influence on our surroundings. (You always exercise a certain influence, no matter what you do).

12 *How do you allow your mind to be influenced?*

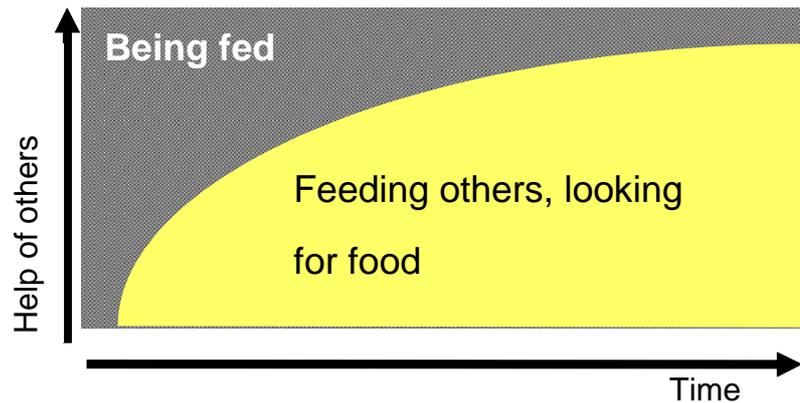
13 *How does it affect your life?*

14 What sort of influence do you exercise?

4.4 Start of the Relationship

A personal relationship with God starts at the spiritual birth, the acceptance of God's offer to becoming His child. (John 3)

In general, this relationship starts with the help of others who bring us into contact with God, who teach us to pray and to use the Bible. As we grow, we more and more develop the desire for more (see development diagram) and we take the initiative to maintain the relationship.



Development diagram

Help of others and the 'fellowship of the saints' will always remain the healthy elements in the life of a Christian. Christians must encourage one another to 'love and good works' regarding people as well as in the relationship with God.

In order to develop the relationship with God it is necessary to become acquainted with Him. This may be done in various ways by:

- Discovering facts about God via Scripture, through understanding and insight.
- By experiencing His acting or response to what we tell Him (prayer).
- To hear about Him from people who are living with Him.

15 What was the main thing that caused you to understand God?

When you examine your spiritual life:

16 How are you blessed yourself? What do you have to do for it?

17 How can your spiritual needs met?

18 *What makes you strong to withstand difficulties? How can you grow stronger?*

19 *What keeps you spiritually refreshed?*

20 *How do you survive difficult periods?*

21 *How do you bear fruit?*

22 *How do you bring blessing to others? What do they have to do? And what do you have to do?*

23 *How do you make sure that the spiritual needs of others are met?*

24 *How do you help others to overcome difficulties?*

25 *How do you help others to be spiritually refreshed?*

26 *How do you help others to survive difficult periods?*

27 *How may you contribute so that others bear fruit?*

28 *What should be your focus of attention, to what should you devote your efforts, to obtain these things and to experience them?*

Our care may be focused on the above questions. We may invest much energy in this. It is simpler to focus our attention on our relationship with God. He will make it clear to you what is important at every moment. See also Matthew 6:33

Stay close to the source . . .

This is what the LORD says: Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the LORD.

He will be like a bush in the wastelands; he will not see prosperity when it comes. He will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives.

But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit."

Jeremiah 17

29 Which six promises does the LORD make here?

30 Can you mention examples from your own life that illustrate Jeremiah 17?

5 GOD'S INFLUENCE IN YOUR LIFE

God affects our life in various ways. We mention just a few:

By the Holy Spirit

I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better:

pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength...

Ephesians 1:17-19

By the Holy Spirit, faith, love and . .

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being,

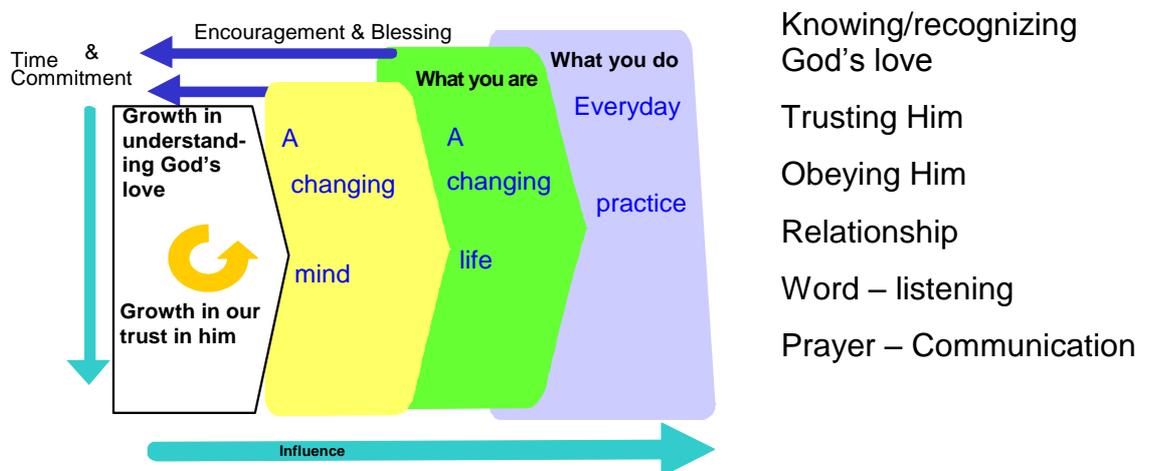
so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,

Ephesians 3:16-20

And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

Philippians 1:9-11

The influence of our relationship with God on our daily life, based on Romans 12:1-2 is depicted in the following diagram to give an overview and insight.



Process of growth after first development (after care)

The elements of the illustration are discussed below.

5.1 God's love for us

All spiritual development begins with God's love. He took the first step by making the offer of forgiveness and salvation. The development depends on our response to the offer. When we accept His offer, our growth may begin.



The more we experience God's love, the better we will be able to trust Him. When we trust Him more, we love Him, so we experience more of His love, etc.

In a proper relationship love is bi-directional: God loves us and we love God. God wants a deep relationship with human beings: He wants unity and a relationship of mutual love. God loves us in Christ as His children:

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God

John 1:12

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8

This means that His love is unconditional. See also Ephesians 1:4. He does not expect us to understand everything from the start. He even says we have to be as children:

And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.

Matthew 18:3-5

5.2 Our love for God

If a human being does not respond to God's love then nothing will change for him. His development is limited. He has to do everything on his own. We cannot love God on our own.

We love because he first loved us.

1 John 4:19

Love is not necessarily a feeling. It entails to be focussed on, to surrender heart and soul.

"Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."

"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 neighbour as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Matthew 22:36-40

31 What do you understand by loving God?

32 What do you understand by loving your neighbour?

5.3 Promises and trust

Below you will find some scripture verses in which God makes some promises. Together they are the 'first vitamins' for a newly born Christian:

Assurance of salvation

And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life

1 John 5:11-13

Assurance of forgiveness

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

Assurance of answered prayer

Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

John 16:24

Assurance of guidance

Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your paths straight.

Proverbs 3:5,6

Assurance of victory and His protection

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

1 Corinthians 10:13

Discuss the first vitamins according to the following questions:

33 What does the Bible say here? What is promised?

34 Which promise strikes you most of all?

35 What do each of the 5 verses mean to you personally?

God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfil?

Numbers 23:19

Knowing this, understanding His promises (see above), the choice is ours.

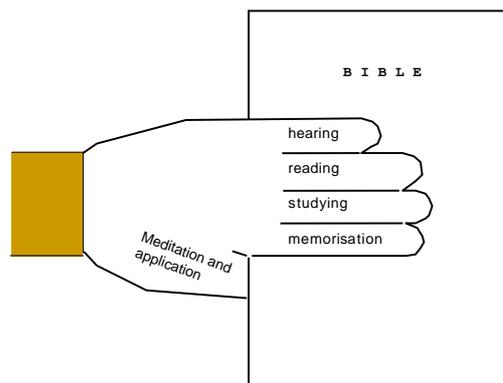
36 Is trust merely a matter of choice?

37 Are there any other aspects involved in this? If so, how do we handle these?

5.4 The Bible

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,

2 Timothy 3:16



The above illustration provides the five most important ways to absorb God's Word. Perhaps you are already aware of all five of them. They help you to develop a firm grasp of the Bible. The thumb has the main function, the 'meditation and application'. Combined, meditation and application provide a firm 'grip' of what was acquired by means of the other ways of interacting with the Bible. By meditating on (small) sections of scripture the Word of God will come alive to you. Without meditation and application you run the risk that what you have read stays a collection of mere words.

Hearing	Romans 10:17	(sermon, tape, radio, TV)
Reading	Deuteronomy 17:19	
Studying	Acts 17:11	
Memorisation	Psalms 119:9,11	
Meditation	Psalm 1:2,3	
Application	Philippians 4:8,9	

But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does. If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

James 1:25-27

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 3:16-17

5.5 Prayer

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

1 John 5:14

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you?

You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God.

When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

James 4:1-3

Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

John 16:24

I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

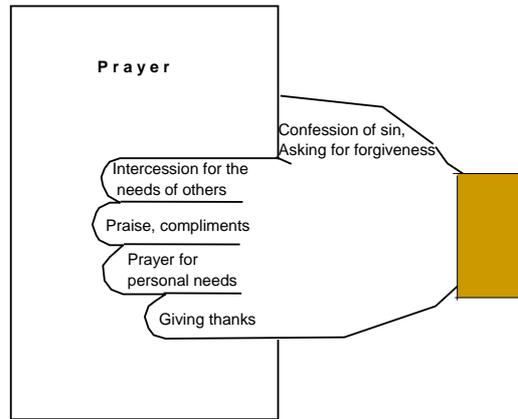
For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time. And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth, I am not lying—and a teacher of the true faith to the Gentiles.

1 Timothy 2:1-7

*Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my sighing.
Listen to my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray. In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.*

Psalms 5:1-3

There are also five aspects to prayer



- **Confession of sin, pleading for forgiveness** (confessing and asking forgiveness for anything that divides)

I confess my iniquity; I am troubled by my sin.

Psalms 38:18

- **Intercession for the needs of others**

As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by failing to pray for you. And I will teach you the way that is good and right.

1 Samuel 12:23

- **Praise, compliments** (appreciation for who God is)

Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise—the fruit of lips that confess his name.

Hebrews 13:15

- **Prayer for personal needs**

If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

James 1:5

- **Giving thanks** (for all that He has done)

..... always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ..

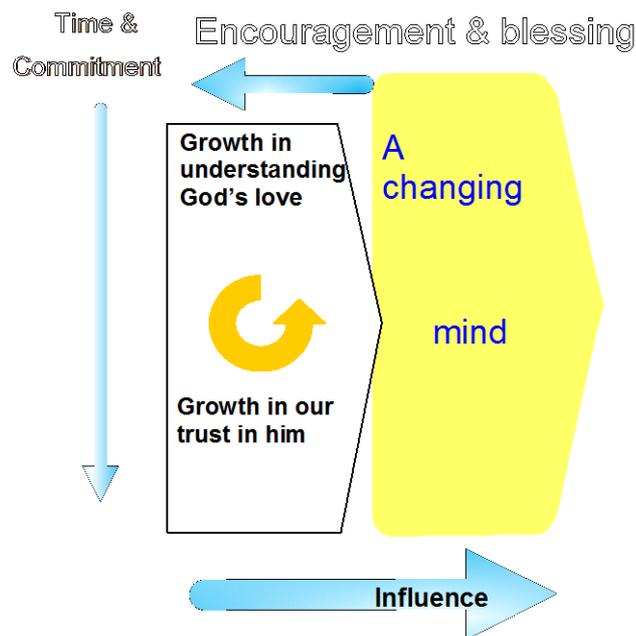
Ephesians 5:20

6 THINKING IN TERMS OF CHANGE

The thoughts of a human being are usually determined by congenital factors, upbringing, education and environment (family, work, church, society, etc.). Certain things we cannot change (anymore), other things we can. By choosing we may do something about the measure in which we are influenced.

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God— this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Romans 12:1-2



A changing mind is evident in a number of areas, such as:

- Awareness of position.
- Attitude.
- Self-knowledge.
- Norms and values.

Since our mind is changing, we are encouraged and grow in our love for God and in our trust in Him.

6.1 Attitude

An attitude of submission to God and a willingness to be obedient are essential for a changed mind. Our attitude determines what our life looks like. It determines whether we grow as a Christian and whether we have peace.

As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."

1 Peter 1:14-16

38 What does 'holy' mean?

"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?

I will show you what he is like who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice. He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built.

But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete."

Luke 6:46-49

39 Describe in your own words what Jesus means with this parable.

A second essential attitude is that of depending on God, irrespective of the circumstances.

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:10

but those who hope in the LORD; will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

Isaiah 40:31

6.2 Awareness of position

A changed mind starts by being aware of your new position:

You are no longer bound but free.

To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples.

Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

They answered him, "We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?"

Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.

a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever.

So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

John 8:31-36

40 What does it mean to remain "in Jesus' word"?

Friends of Jesus

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command.

I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name.

This is my command: Love each other.

John 15:12-17

41 *What can you conclude now about your position towards God?*

It is no longer I in the centre but God and His will

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Galatians 2:20

6.3 Self-knowledge, relationship with yourself

A part of a changed mind is to see yourself as God sees you.

A true self-image as God sees you.

A changed mind results in a different self-image and

a different self-image results in a changed mind.

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

have different gifts, according to the grace given us.

Romans 12:3-6

42 *What does it mean when you think more highly of yourself than you ought?*

43 *What would be thinking of yourself as you ought?*

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

1 Peter 2:9-10

44 What is your position according to the abovementioned verse and what does it imply?

For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.

1 Corinthians 15:9,10

45 Do you acknowledge the facts about yourself, about who you are? Do you know the facts?

46 Who are you in your own eyes?

47 Who are you in the eyes of others?

48 Who are you in God's eyes?

49 Do you recognize yourself in certain persons in the Bible?

Self-acceptance contrary to performance in order to be accepted, is a part of the new strategy that God gives to us. When you try to obtain a proper image of who God is, and therefore, of how He sees you and how He thinks about you, it provides you with a basis to build a better and true self-image. This is quite important to people who have a poor self-image.

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8

Self-acceptance is only possible when we accept God's love and trust in His word. The new strategy of trusting in God leads to a more conscious experience of God's love.

*Self-acceptance is a matter of accepting
God's thoughts about yourself and adopting
them as your own*

*(However, this may be a process that will take many
years to complete).*

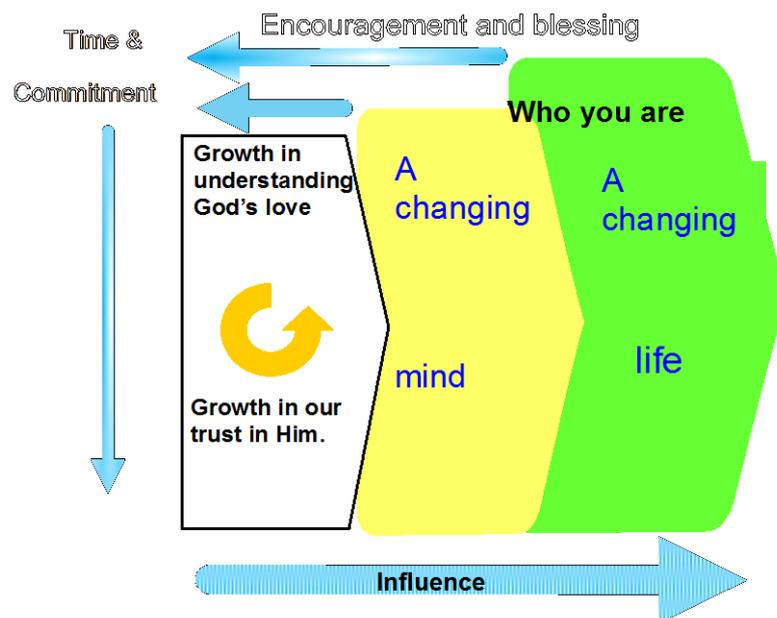
Your life changes as your mind changes. Your attitude to other people changes and you focus on different things.

Listing of differences

(Extreme) forms of living without God	Aspects of living with God
Characterised by the old core motif:	Adopting more and more characteristics of Christ:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egocentric • Egoistic • Lonely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serving • Giving • Strong relationships with other Christians
Indifferent to others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compassionate with people. • Involvement, mercy. • Aimed at bringing people in touch with Christ.
Blowing with the developments in society.	Not conforming to the world if it causes a conflict with God's will for your life.
Enslaved to sin.	Repenting of sin.
Self-realisation.	Becoming what God wants you to be.

The aspects indicated above are the extremes. In between are all kinds of variants which we come across in practice.

50 *Mention a number of practical examples that tie in with the right hand column as well as with the left hand column.*



If we allow God to change our mind then our life will be transformed. These changes make a human being thankful. They are a blessing and encouragement to a person.

This in turn leads to increasing love for God and trust in Him. This again may change our mind even more . . .etc.

51 *Which change did you experience yourself?*

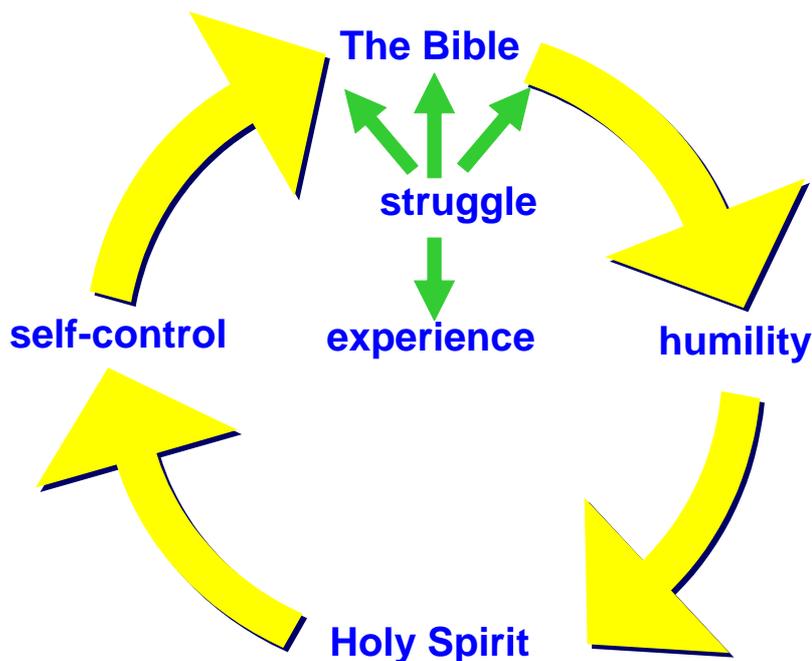
52 *Are you now involved in a process of change?*

53 *Which change would you still like to see?*

• Being more Christ-like.	• Serving.
• Giving.	• Relationships with other Christians.
• Compassion for people.	• Involvement, mercy.
• Bringing people in touch with Christ.	• No conformity with the world.
• Repenting of sin.	• Becoming what God intended, developing.
• Something else . . .	

8.1 The process of change

It is often difficult in processes of change to make the proper start. Where and how should you begin? We have to guard against worrying so long that there is no more time to go down the road of change. We have to make a start, even if it is only a very small step. We have to ask: Lord, here I am, what do you want me to do? And then He will show us. We have to break the vicious cycle that we do not seem to be able to leave. We often make the major error of thinking: "I made a mistake, but it will not happen again." We continue to focus on the things which we know are not good—that is sin. So we continue to fight to prevent it from happening again. It is a natural response. Yet it costs quite a bit of energy. And although we know that God will not let us go, that He can and will help us, we are not able to break the pattern. The start down the proper road is that we identify sin, recognize and acknowledge that it is sin. We must repent of the sin, look the other way and place ourselves in the hands of our Father and Lord. There is still an ongoing battle. Yet, our focus and our outlook are different. When we take the first step and make the proper start and then make the correct progress, the following illustration from the book 'The Insider' of Jim Petersen (page 116) may help us to give a better insight in the desired process. For any experience we should be able to recognize sin as such in the light of the Bible. We do not want that to happen again. This causes tension, struggle. It places us before a choice. If we choose to go left, we will choose for self-control ("it will not happen again, I will not do that anymore"). We pursue our natural urges. We try to fight it but fail constantly. To the right, we choose for the way of humility. We confess our sin and our inability to change and place it in the hands of the Lord. He is able to do something about it. He is near when He sees that we are weak. His Spirit will work in us. The self-control is no longer something of ourselves (which does not achieve anything anyway), but a fruit of the Holy Spirit. In order to show the true fruit of the Spirit we must not fight continuously. Instead, we must allow ourselves to be fed. We must be rooted in Christ. For a good fruit is the automatic result of good nutrition. And then the proper adjustment will take place almost without effort. This may take time. Sometimes it takes a lot of time. But the result is the way God wants it. See also chapter 8 of 'The Insider' on spiritual renewal.



8.2 From Christ to Christian

Thesis: *Being a Christian = changing = life (standing still is deterioration, decay)*

Change:

In knowledge	Education, learning	By various means	Fairly simple
In attitude	Exercise	Knowledge with associated emotions	More difficult
Behaviour	Doing	Picking up something new, getting rid of something old	Much harder

Personal spiritual growth is a way in which God works in people. It is a concept that He invented and which occurs in different ways in creation.

He did not create the maximum number of people, animals and plants at once. He created a number of plants, animals and human beings and...

a concept for multiplication!

God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it."

Genesis 1:28

So it does not only relate to physical growth but also to growing in responsibility and skills.

54 Which types of growth are you able to distinguish?

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

Colossians 2:6,7

Once we are rooted, we must continue

. . . Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

1 Peter 2: 2,3

This means that you must not only be spiritually born again but you must also continue to grow: In order to know God, you need to allow your mind and life to be changed in three phases:

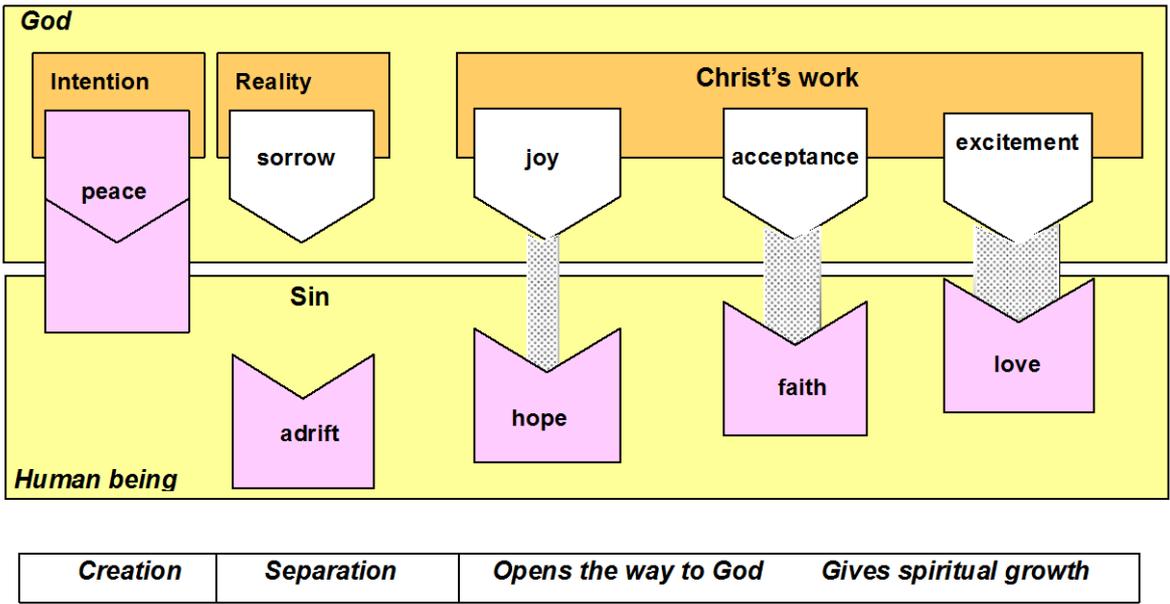
- Rooting. First vitamins (see course material: promises), start of a personal relationship with God, with a desire for more.
- Being built up, growing as a disciple.
- Being confirmed.

55 In what way are you spiritually rooted?

56 Are you being built up?

57 What is confirmation? How do you see that?

There are various kinds of growth. Spiritual growth depends on a balance with the development of other areas (social, emotional, physical, intellectual growth, etc.). This course will later explain how you as a leader may play a part in this.



8.3 What does spiritual growth include?

Spiritual growth not only includes being born but also continued growth. Paul says to the Hebrews:

We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn.

In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. [...]

[...] But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. [...]

Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. And God permitting, we will do so.

Hebrews 5:11-6:3, NIV

Comparison of physical and spiritual food.

Milk?:

- The elementary instructions (Hebrews 6:1-3).
- The gospel.
- Faith – no works.
- Assurance of eternal life/position in Christ.
- Learning to feed yourself (from the word), not merely listening...
- Holding daily quiet time, prayer, Bible reading and application.

Solid food?

- Distinguishing between good and evil (Hebrews 5).
- Proper preaching.
- Understanding God's will
- Norms and values.
- Ethics.

58 Currently, which type of food do you yourself need most of all?

8.4 Phases in spiritual growth

During his spiritual growth, a Christian goes through various stages, as with physical growth. Even in a spiritual sense, phases such as 'unborn', 'newly born', 'child', 'adult', can be distinguished, although it may be hard to determine the exact limits of each phase.

God is responsible and He gives you growth (to maturity)

being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:6

for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.

Philippians 2:13

What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task.

planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.

So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring

it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work.

If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

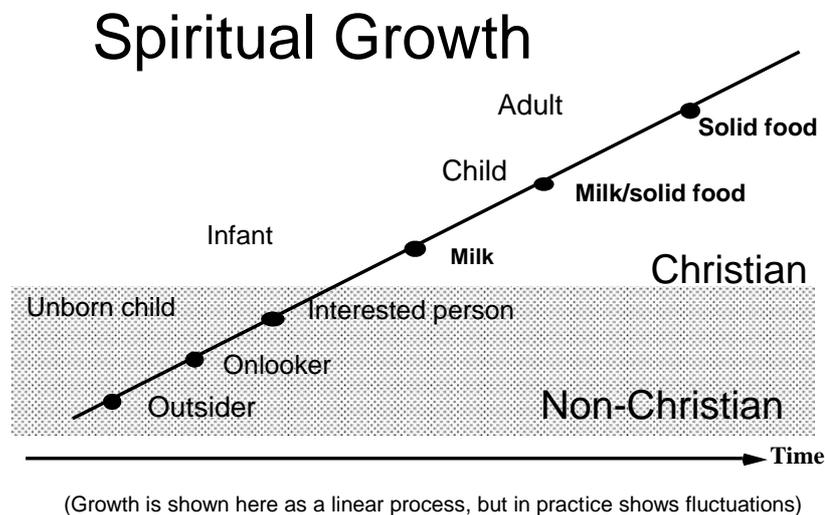
1 Corinthians 3:5-15

For growth, the only thing that we must do is: to be willing to commit ourselves to God and to give Him access to our lives. We are unable to make ourselves grow (by pulling ourselves up by our bootstraps), yet we have to be willing to do something of to stop doing something.

You cannot accomplish growth on your own. In general you need others for it.

As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.

Proverbs 27:17



Definitions for use in this course:

Concept	Definition	Comments
Outsider	Someone who has no direct relationship with God, nor with Christians, for whom the gospel does not play an important role	Friendship with a Christian!
Onlooker	Someone who has somehow come into contact with the gospel, who (yet) does not want to be identified with Jesus. Is curious, is looking for the meaning of life, time, has a certain need, etc.	Discover what a Christian is.
Interested person	An onlooker, who by asking is looking for answers about Jesus and the gospel. Has	Respond in language that is easy to understand.

Concept	Definition	Comments
	been touched somehow, is intrigued by the gospel. God's Spirit is at work.	
Infant	An interested person who in Jesus has found the answer to his questions and who has surrendered to Him. Has accepted Him as his Saviour and Lord. Receives the first vitamins. Learns to eat.	First vitamins. Learns to feed himself.
Child	Allows God to change his mind. Is breaking with certain sins and desires to grow.	Able to understand God's words, distinguishing between good and evil. Hebrews 5:11-6:3
Adult	Still growing, yet in a much less turbulent way. Growth in a broader, deeper sense. (You might say: The adult is mature, so he does not grow anymore! On the other hand: Change is a characteristic of life; standing still is as deteriorating).	Know, learn, and apply norms and values. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. Philippians 4:8,9
Builder/ Labourer	An adult who wants to pass on what he receives, seeking for ways to give shape to the Kingdom of God. Who wants to serve.	Training, vision, development.

The trajectory of growth is not a prescribed regulation, it is a tool. It is a map, a support. It helps you to determine the direction, to decide what is necessary for yourself and others.

We may be involved in growth in various ways:

- By growing ourselves (our responsibility).
Continuous spiritual growth,
Being changed by God,
Surrender to Him and to growth.

- If we are spiritual parents and educators.
- By using our gifts. (Our responsibility. Just think of the parable of the talents, see 4.7)

59 Are you growing or are you a parent (who grows)?

60 Are there any people who you coach in their growth, people that you care for?

Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Ephesians 2:20-22

Spiritual growth relates to people, it does not relate to methods. It relates to applying principles, it does not relate to applying laws.

8.5 Assignment

Christians have received a number of assignments. We mention a few of them below:

1. Giving the highest priority to your relationship with God.
2. Being oriented to know God's will.
3. Not living based on rules but based on your relationship with God.

8.6 Priority of Christ

Christ, the Centre

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

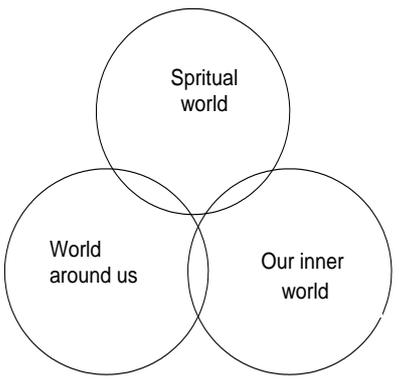
Galatians 2:20

So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'

For the pagans run after all these things, And your heavenly Father knows that you need them.

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

WHERE is Christ, the Centre?

	<i>Our inner world</i>	<i>Spiritual world</i>	<i>World around us</i>
	Values	Kowing God	Relationships
	Priorities	Prayer	Work
	Emotions	Spiritual battle	Family
	Motivation	Salvation	Society
	Experiences		Creation
	Self-image		Health
	View of God		World view
	Etc.		Other Christians
			Business

61 *What is the centre of your life?*

Christ comes first

Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.

For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?

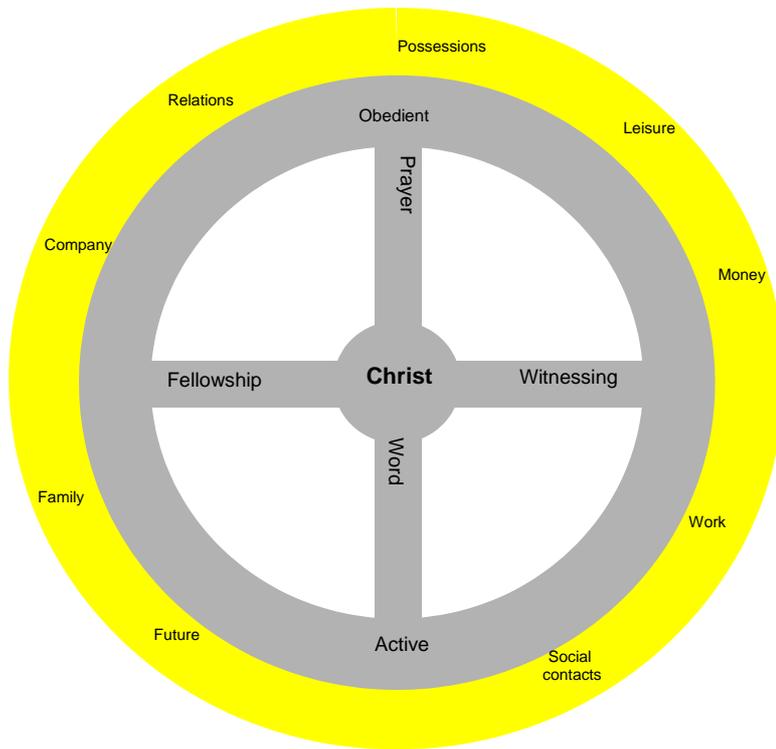
If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

Luke 9:23-26

62 *Does this mean that you should spend most of your time on the matters of faith?*

If Christ does not have the first and central place in the life of a Christian then further spiritual growth is not possible.

Growth in discipleship arises from the application of the 6 aspects of the following wheel illustration, so that the various areas of our life are brought under Christ's influence.



The wheel is driven by the axis, via the spokes. In this way, everything in our life revolves around Christ, the centre of our life.

Axis:
Christ, the Centre

Spokes:
Word
Prayer
Witnessing
Fellowship

Rim:
Obedience and action

8.7 Knowing God's will

Whoever wants to serve God, follow Jesus, wants to know God's will.

In Hebrews 5:11-6:3 distinguishing between good and evil is mentioned.

There are a few generalities known that God wants and does not want, which apply to anyone.

- E.g. the Ten Commandments*
- He wants us to trust in Him.*

Even in specific situations we like to know God's will. It depends on our personal relationship with God to what extent this may be feasible. Psalm 25:14.

In relationship to a topic such as this, there is a chance that people will not go beyond looking for direct assignments, or 'letters from heaven'.

Therefore, we should mention a number of main issues:

1.- Knowing God

An important basis for knowing God's will, and recognizing his guidance, is knowing Him and his character (John 17:3).

The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice;

John 10:3-4

2.- Trust in God See the previous chapters.

3.- Willingness, eagerness to do God's will

I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.

Psalm 40:9

When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, O LORD God Almighty.

Jeremiah 15:16

Jesus answered, "My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me. If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own."

John 7:17

How can we know God/His will?

God reveals Himself and His will in various ways

Bible	Psalm 119:105
Holy Spirit	John 15:26, John 16:13
Dreams	Matthew 2:13 (Luke 1:11, Luke 1:26)
Prophets	Hebrews 1:1
Angels	Matthew 2:19
Visions	Acts 10:10-16, Acts 16:9

Yet these things have to be tested: God is love, therefore: love should characterize the instruction and it should also be in line with 1 Corinthians 14:3. *But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort.*

Also, He makes things clear to us by:

Experiencing peace,	Colossians 3:15
Circumstances	Romans 8:27-28

In this case it is expected that we wholly commit ourselves:

[This includes] our minds Matthew 22:37-38

It is God's decision how He will reveal His will:

In those days the word of the LORD was rare; there were not many visions.

1 Samuel 3:1

Knowing God's will in practice.

The matters, for which you may want to discover God's will, may be quite varied.

Sometimes it is good to take time out to consider things (passive). Another time things become clear when you take initiative asking God to control things (active).

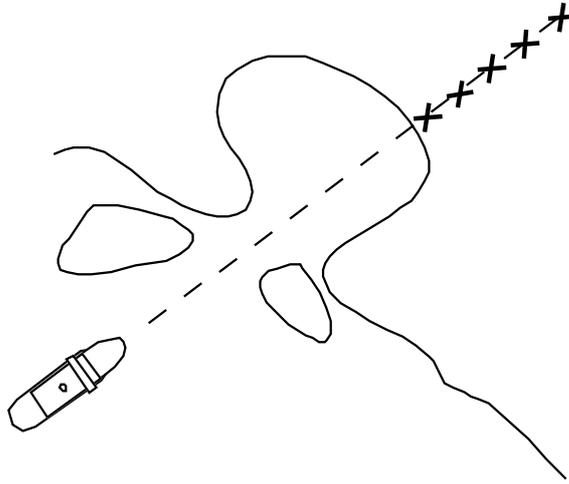
Passive

Achieve greater certainty about God's will by five, independent, overlapping aspects.

Only God can make all five overlap in the same way!

This type of plotting of your course may be compared to that of a ship which makes use of beacons.

When all the lights are seen as a single light: [the ship is] on course.



The five aspects, related to whether we are on the same line with God's will, are:

- 1 – instructions from Scripture Psalm 119:105
- 2 – prayer Philippians 4:6,7
- 3 – peace (the opposite of unrest). Colossians 3:15
- 4 – circumstances (opportunities, mishaps) Ephesians 5:15-17
Colossians 4:5
Acts 16:7
- 5 - counsellors Proverbs 24:6

Active

Whenever there are no specific circumstances related to your question for guidance, you should just start to do something. Through success or difficulties, God may show what He wants. Actively being lead by God may be compared to piloting a ship. A ship cannot be piloted as long as it does not move. You can move the rudder, yet it has no effect. The position will only affect the direction of the ship when the ship is in motion.

Whoever watches the wind will not plant; whoever looks at the clouds will not reap.

Ecclesiastes 11:4

Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.

Psalm 37:7

I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart.

Psalm 40:9

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

Psalm 119:105

Whoever watches the wind will not plant; whoever looks at the clouds will not reap.

Ecclesiastes 11:4

for waging war you need guidance, and for victory many advisers.

Proverbs 24:6

I will lead the blind by ways they have not known, along unfamiliar paths I will guide them; I will turn the darkness into light before them and make the rough places smooth.

Isaiah 42:16

When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, O LORD God Almighty.

Jeremiah 15:16

When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."

Matthew 2:13

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.

Matthew 22:37-38

"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

Luke 11:9-10

"When the Counsellor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me."

John 15:26

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

John 16:13

And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:27-28

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

Ephesians 5:15-17

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.

Colossians 3:15

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:6,7

Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.

Colossians 4:5

In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son,

Hebrews 1:1-2

Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

1 John 4:1

63 *Will you be able to apply this information about finding God's will in the near future?*