



Why do you believe what you believe?

CAN YOU EXPLAIN & DEFINE BIBLICALLY THE BELIEFS THAT YOU HOLD TO & LOCATE THEM IN THE BIBLE?

Date: _____

SPIRITUAL FAMILY

IT BEGINS WITH ADOPTION

legally being made a son

EPHESIANS 1:5-6

He predestined *and* lovingly planned for us to be **adopted to Himself as [His own] children through Jesus Christ**, in accordance with the kind intention *and* good pleasure of His will— ⁶ to the praise of His glorious grace *and* favor, which He so freely bestowed on us in the Beloved [His Son, Jesus Christ].

JOHN 1:12-13

But to as many as did receive *and* welcome Him, **He gave the right [the authority, the privilege] to become children of God, that is, to those who believe in (adhere to, trust in, and rely on) His name—** ¹³ **who were born,** not of blood [natural conception], nor of the will of the flesh [physical impulse], nor of the will of man [that of a natural father], **but of God [that is, a divine and supernatural birth—they are born of God—spiritually transformed, renewed, sanctified].**

GALATIANS 4:6

And **because you [really] are [His] sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying out, “Abba! Father!”**

& BEING A CHILD OF GOD COMES WITH
BENEFITS & EXPECTATIONS FROM OUR
FATHER

ROMANS 8:17

¹⁷ And if [we are His] children, [then we are His] heirs also: heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ [sharing His spiritual blessing and inheritance], if indeed we share in His suffering so that we may also share in His glory.

EPHESIANS 5:8-10

For once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of Light [live as those who are native-born to the Light] ⁹ (for the fruit [the effect, the result] of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), ¹⁰ trying to learn [by experience] what is pleasing to the Lord [and letting your lifestyles be examples of what is most acceptable to Him—your behavior expressing gratitude to God for your salvation].

1 THESSALONIANS 5:4-5

But you, believers, [all you who believe in Christ as Savior and acknowledge Him as God's Son] are not in *spiritual* darkness [nor held by its power], that the day [of judgment] would overtake you [by surprise] like a thief; ⁵ for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We do not belong to the night nor to darkness.

1 PETER 1:14-16

[Live] as obedient children [of God]; do not be conformed to the evil desires which governed you in your ignorance [before you knew the requirements and transforming power of the good news regarding salvation]. ¹⁵ But like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves in all your conduct [be set apart from the world by your godly character and moral courage]; ¹⁶ because it is written, "You shall be holy (set apart), for I am holy."

MATTHEW 5:44-45

But I say to you, love [that is, unselfishly seek the best or higher good for] your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ⁴⁵ so that you may [show yourselves to] be the children of your Father who is in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on those who are evil and on those who are good, and makes the rain fall on the righteous [those who are morally upright] and the unrighteous [the unrepentant, those who oppose Him].

PHILIPPIANS 2:14-15

Do everything without murmuring or questioning [the providence of God], ¹⁵ so that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and guileless, innocent and uncontaminated, children of God without blemish in the midst of a [morally] crooked and [spiritually] perverted generation, among whom you are seen as bright lights [beacons shining out clearly] in the world [of darkness],

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GOD IS OUR FATHER

JESUS IS OUR SAVIOR BUT HE IS ALSO OUR BROTHER - WE AS THE BODY OF CHRIST ARE ALL SIBLINGS & WE ARE ALL FAMILY

JESUS CHANGED THE RELATIONSHIP

MATTHEW 12:47-50

47 Someone said to Him, "Look! Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside asking to speak to You." 48 But Jesus replied to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" 49 And stretching out His hand toward His disciples [and all His other followers], He said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! 50 For whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven [by believing in Me, and following Me] is My brother and sister and mother."

HEBREWS 2:11-12

Both Jesus who sanctifies and those who are sanctified [that is, spiritually transformed, made holy, and set apart for God's purpose] are all from one *Father*; for this reason He is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters, 12 saying, "I will declare Your (the Father's) NAME TO MY BRETHREN (BELIEVERS), IN THE MIDST OF THE CONGREGATION I WILL SING YOUR PRAISE."

JUST AS WE ARE IN GOD'S FAMILY AS INDIVIDUALS WE ARE ALSO COLLECTIVELY TOGETHER "FAMILY"

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BY FAITH WE BECOME FAMILY & FAMILY BECOMES FELLOWSHIP & FELLOWSHIP IS SPIRITUAL

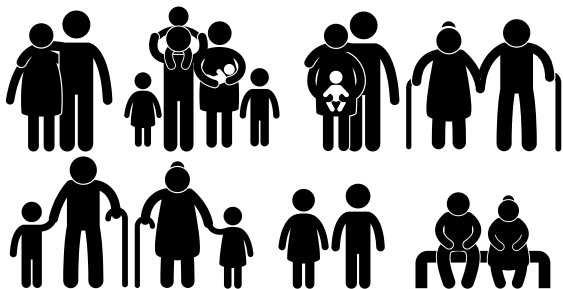
2842. Koinónia [FELLOWSHIP]

spiritual fellowship, **a fellowship in the spirit;** contact, fellowship, intimacy: used of the intimate bond of fellowship which unites **Christians:** of the **fellowship of Christians with God and Christ,** consists in the fact that **Christians are partakers in common of the same mind as God and Christ,** and of the blessings arising therefrom

IN GOD'S FAMILY -THE BOND IS TIGHT & EVEN DEEPER THAN BLOOD --BECAUSE IN HIS FAMILY YOU ARE BORN OF THE SPIRIT & WATER

AS YOU READ SCRIPTURE, YOU CAN SEE THAT GOD'S IDEA OF CHURCH IS ACTUALLY DEMONSTRATED WITHIN THE CONCEPT OF FAMILY

IN THE NATURAL WE ARE BORN INTO A FAMILY

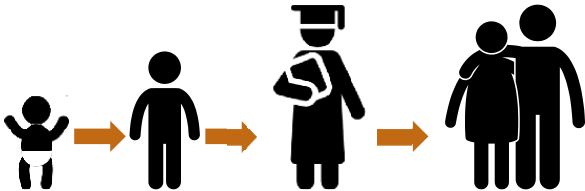


LIKEWISE, IN THE SPIRIT WE ARE BORN INTO A FAMILY

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IN A SPIRITUAL FAMILY, WE EACH HAVE A ROLE, A PURPOSE, & A MISSION IN DISCIPLESHIP & IN UNDERSTANDING & SHARING THE GOSPEL

GOD'S ULTIMATE DESIGN IS FOR US TO GROW UP, TO BECOME MATURE, LEAVE HOME & THEN GET OUR OWN FAMILY



SO, THE QUESTION THEN BECOMES-HOW DO WE FACILITATE THIS GROWTH WITHIN THE CONFINES OF CHURCH?

LET'S LOOK AT HOW WE "GROW" UP AGAIN

- By studying God's Word **1 Peter 2:1-3**
- By increasing your knowledge of God **Colossians 1:10**
- By deepening your faith **Ephesians 4:13**
- By showing love **Ephesians 4:15-16**
- By developing Christian character **2 Peter 1:5-8**
- By growing & bearing fruit **John 15:2,4-5, 16**

ON THE 4 LEVELS



WHEN IT IS YOU+ You start by focusing on fellowship with others of the same sex



YOU + A FEW [TOGETHER]

- Studying God’s Word
- Increase your knowledge of God
- Deepen your faith
- Learn to show love
- Develop Christian character
- Grow & bearing fruit

Then, it’s WITH The Families of those from your core group – Learning HOW to live in Transparent Fellowship

YOU & YOUR FAMILY + A FEW OTHER FAMILIES



- Studying God’s Word
- Increase your knowledge of God
- Deepen your faith
- Learn to show love
- Develop Christian character
- Grow & bearing fruit

Then, it's the families in your Transparent Fellowship meeting with several other "Groups" that have been established
SEVERAL FELLOWSHIPS ASSEMBLING TOGETHER IN A LARGER LOCATION



- Studying God's Word
- Increase your knowledge of God
- Deepen your faith
- Learn to show love
- Develop Christian character
- Grow & bearing fruit

IT'S IN THESE 3 LEVELS WHERE GROWTH CAN HAPPEN IT'S THE INTIMACY OF FAMILY...

WHERE YOU ARE KNOWN

WHERE YOU ARE LOVED

WHERE PEOPLE NOTICE WHEN YOU DON'T SHOW UP

WHERE PEOPLE ARE MOTIVATED TO BE A PART OF YOUR LIFE

LET'S LOOK AT THE SPIRITUAL "AGE" & THE NEED OF EACH INDIVIDUAL WITHIN A FAMILY

**WE ALL START OUT AS INFANTS.
IN RELATION TO THE KEY ELEMENTS OF
GROWTH**

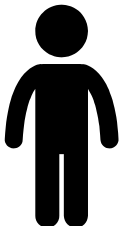


HOW DO YOU HELP A NEW BELIEVER....

- Study God's Word
- Increase their knowledge of God
- Deepen their faith
- Learn to show love
- Develop Christian character
- Grow & bearing fruit

**HOW LONG SHOULD THEY STAY IN
INFANCY?**

**FROM INFANCY YOU MOVE TO BEING A
YOUNG CHILD IN RELATION TO THE KEY
ELEMENTS OF GROWTH**

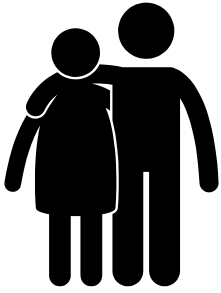


**HOW DO YOU HELP THEM TRANSITION
FROM INFANCY TO A YOUNG CHILD?**

- In Studying God's Word
- Increasing their knowledge of God
- Deepening their faith
- Learning to show love
- Developing Christian character
- Growing & bearing fruit

**HOW LONG SHOULD THEY STAY AS A
YOUNG CHILD?**

FROM A YOUNG CHILD YOU THEN MOVE TO BEING A YOUNG ADULT - IN RELATION TO THE KEY ELEMENTS OF GROWTH



HOW DO YOU HELP THEM TRANSITION FROM A YOUNG CHILD TO BEING A YOUNG ADULT?

- In Studying God's Word
- In Increasing their knowledge of God
- Deepening their faith
- Learning to show love
- Developing Christian character
- Growing & bearing fruit

HOW LONG SHOULD THEY STAY AS A YOUNG ADULT?

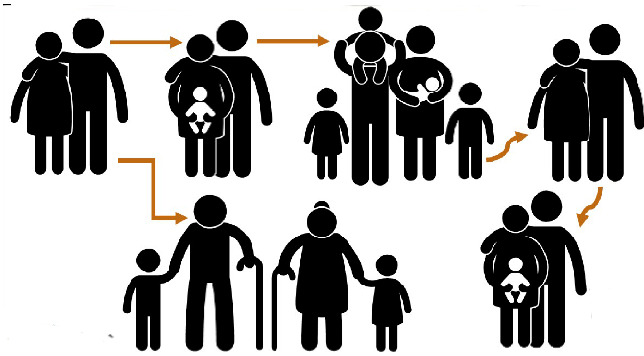
IF GROWTH HAS HAPPENED ACCORDING TO GOD'S PLAN, A YOUNG ADULT WILL QUICKLY BECOME A PARENT



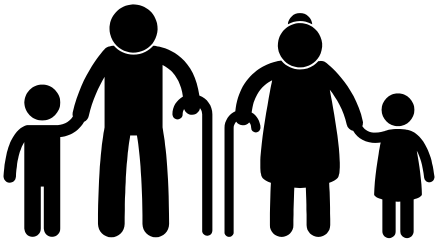
BECOMING A "PARENT" MEANS YOU HAVE EFFECTIVELY LEARNED HOW TO SHARE THE GOSPEL & MAKE YOUNG BELIEVERS. IN THIS ROLE YOU CONTINUE PERSONAL GROWTH & BEGIN MOVING "SPIRITUAL CHILDREN" THROUGH THE GROWTH STAGES

Studying God's Word | Increase their knowledge of God |
Deepen their faith | Learn to show love |
Develop Christian character | Grow & bearing fruit

AND A PARENT KEEPS PRODUCING



BECOMING A GRANDPARENT IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS A SIGN OF DEEP SPIRITUAL MATURITY



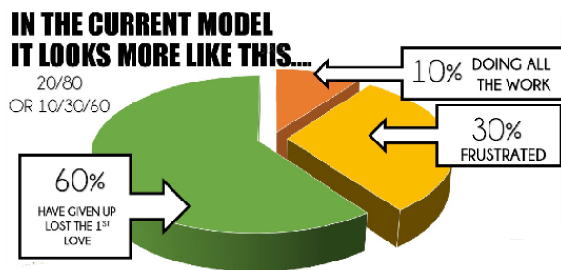
A GRANDPARENT KNOWS THAT THESE NEVER END...

Studying God's Word
Increasing their knowledge of God
Deepening their faith
Learning to show love
Developing Christian character
Growing & bearing fruit

AND A GRANDPARENT HELPS THE YOUNG ONES GROW UP

EVERYONE HAS A ROLE
 EVERYONE CONTRIBUTES
 NO ONE SITS ON THE SIDELINES
 YOU LEARN HOW TO BE WHO GOD
 CREATED YOU TO BE WITHIN THE BODY OF
 CHRIST

BUT, HAS IT SHIFTED & BEEN MADE
 DIFFICULT WITHIN THE CURRENT MODEL
 OF CHURCH? [At least within America?]

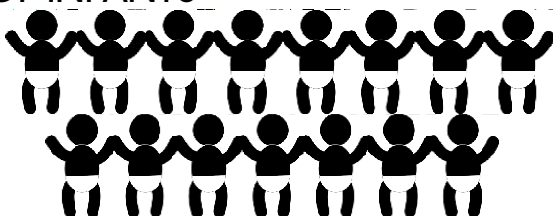


**INSTEAD OF PARENTS
 WE HAVE LEADERS**

WHILE A PARENT FOCUSES ON THEIR KIDS. A
 LEADER WANTS TO DO A GOOD JOB, BUT
 WHEN THE JOB IS DONE, THEY WANT TO GO
 HOME TO THEIR FAMILY - THOSE WHO THEY
 REALLY LOVE.

AND INSTEAD OF GROWING UP WITHIN
 THE FAMILY OF GOD - YOU FEEL MORE
 LIKE A CHILD RAISED IN AN ORPHANAGE

MOST BELIEVERS HAVE GROWN UP WHERE
 THERE ARE A FEW LEADERS AND A WHOLE
 LOT OF INFANTS



OF PEOPLE – WE CAN AFFORD TO
BECOME AFRAID TO SUBMIT OR TO GET
HURT AGAIN. IT’S EASY TO COME FROM
A PLACE WHERE YOU WOULD RATHER BE
INDEPENDENT & THAT’S NOT HEALTHY.
WE CANNOT BE THE CHURCH ALONE.

HEBREWS 10:25

²⁵ not forsaking our meeting together [as
believers for worship and instruction], as is the
habit of some, but encouraging *one another*;
and all the more [faithfully] as you see the day
[of Christ’s return] approaching.

THE TRUTH IS...

WE NEED EACH OTHER

WE CAN’T GROW UP ALONE

WE NEED TO EXPERIENCE REAL CHURCH

HOW DO WE BECOME A FAMILY?

LIKE THE CHURCH OF ACTS

FIRST, EVERYONE MUST BE BORN AGAIN

» THEY NEED TO HAVE THE SAME

SPIRIT [ONENESS OF SPIRIT]

TO TRULY MAKE THIS WORK, WE MUST
HAVE THE SAME VISION/TRUTH –BIBLICAL
FOUNDATION

God is spirit [the Source of life, yet invisible
to mankind], and those who worship Him
must worship in spirit and truth.” John 4:24

ACTS 2:44-47

⁴⁴ And all those who had believed [in Jesus as Savior] were together and had all things in common [considering their possessions to belong to the group as a whole]. ⁴⁵ And they *began* selling their property and possessions and were sharing the proceeds with all [the other believers], as anyone had need. ⁴⁶ Day after day they met in the temple [area] continuing with one mind, and breaking bread in various private homes. They were eating their meals together with joy and generous hearts. ⁴⁷ praising God *continually*, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord kept adding to their number daily those who were being saved.

IT'S NOT ABOUT A SPECIFIC "FORMULA"
IT'S NOT ABOUT CREATING THE PERFECT "PROGRAM". BUT IT IS HAVING A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING OF WHERE EACH PERSON IS IN THEIR "SPIRITUAL AGE", KNOWING HOW & WHAT TO DO, TO MOVE THEM TO THE NEXT LEVEL OF GROWTH.

THE FIRST CHURCH HAD STRUCTURE WITHOUT RITUAL, WITHOUT A SET "SYSTEM" THAT WE SEE IN TODAY'S CHURCH. WE MUST UNDERSTAND THAT EACH FELLOWSHIP WILL BE DIFFERENT BECAUSE NO TWO PEOPLE ARE ALIKE.

YES, BUT I NEED TO KNOW EXACTLY WHAT & WHEN....

back upstairs and had broken the bread and eaten, he talked [informally and confidentially] with them for a long time—until daybreak [in fact]—and then he left.

**OR HOW ABOUT WHEN PAUL WAS IN
EPHESUS | ACTS 19**

And he went into the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly,

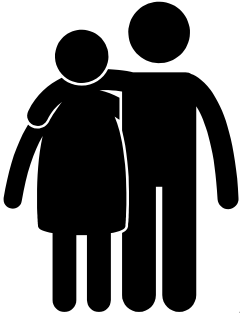
reasoning *and* arguing and persuading *them* about the kingdom of God.⁹ But when some were becoming hardened and disobedient [to the word of God], discrediting *and* speaking evil of the Way (Jesus, Christianity) before the congregation, Paul left them, taking the disciples with him, and went on holding daily discussions in the lecture hall of Tyrannus [instead of in the synagogue].¹⁰ This continued for two years, so that all the inhabitants of [the west coast province of] Asia [Minor], Jews as well as Greeks, heard the word of the Lord [concerning eternal salvation through faith in Christ].

**EACH FELLOWSHIP SCENRIO SHOULD
LOOK DIFFERENT
BECAUSE THE NEEDS ARE DIFFERENT**

TO BE SUCCESSFUL -
WE NEED TO BE LED BY THE SPIRIT
WE NEED TO BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY THE
NEEDS WITHIN OUR FELLOWSHIPS AND THEN
ADAPT WHAT WE DO & HOW WE FUNCTION
BASED ON THE PEOPLE - RATHER THAN
MAKING THE PEOPLE ADAPT TO A SET
PROGRAM.

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SO, WHAT EXACTLY DOES THAT MEAN?
IF A FELLOWSHIP = A FAMILY, THEN...
(IN RELATION TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY)



AS AN ADULT

AT SOME POINT, YOU HAVE TO STEP OUT AND STEP UP & BEGIN SHARING THE GOSPEL & MAKING DISCIPLES. IF YOU DON'T KNOW HOW... YOU NEED TO LEARN!

A CHURCH WITHOUT CHILDREN IS STAGNANT

WHETHER YOU KNOW IT OR NOT - YOU NEED HELP GETTING CHILDREN "NEW BELIEVERS"

IF A CHURCH DOES NOT HAVE ANY NEW BORN BELIEVERS - THERE IS A PROBLEM. IT'S UNHEALTHY. WE WERE CALLED TO GO OUT AND MAKE DISCIPLES. TO FIND THE PERSON OF PEACE. YOU CAN'T KEEP ON TEACHING THEOLOGY & FOUNDATION.

ONCE YOUR FAMILY STARTS TO GROW, YOU SHIFT FROM THE FOCUS OF MAKING DISCIPLES TO DISCIPLESHIP



WHAT USED TO BE YOUR FOCUS MUST NOW CHANGE. YOU HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO THAT "INFANT" IN CHRIST THAT NEEDS ATTENTION, THAT NEEDS MILK.

ONCE YOU HAVE BABIES...



WHAT YOU **WERE** DOING - GETTING OUT THERE - SHARING THE GOSPEL, ETC HAS TO SHIFT FOR A PERIOD OF TIME. WHY?

YOU NEED TO INVEST IN THEM. THEY NEED A SHEPHERD, A TEACHER.

SOMEONE TO HELP THEM GROW UP, LEARN, MATURE - PEOPLE AROUND THEM.

TO HELP THEM MOVE PAST MILK. TO LEARN TO FEED THEMSELVES. DON'T GO OUT LOOKING FOR MORE BABIES BUT TAKE CARE OF THE ONES YOU HAVE.

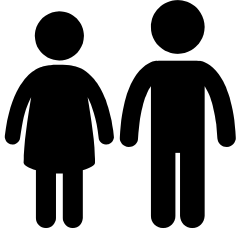
A NEW BELIEVER CRAVES



THEY HAVE A **HUNGER** FOR THE MILK "THE TRUTH" - THE WORD OF GOD. AND

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AS THEY BECOME INCREASINGLY MORE MATURE INTO YOUNG ADULTS,



NOW THEY BEGIN TO TAKE ON MORE RESPONSIBILITY. NOT ONLY ARE THEY ABLE TO STAND ON THEIR OWN, THEY CONTRIBUTE.

A YOUNG MAN & WOMAN IN THE FAITH NEED TO BE MATURE TO BE SKILLED & READY TO TEACH OTHER PEOPLE

IF THEY HAVE TRULY BEEN RAISED UP



IT'S TIME TO LET GO. TO NOT CONTROL THEM TO LET THEM LEAVE. TO BE DEPENDENT ON GOD FOR THEMSELVES. TO START THEIR OWN FAMILY.

AND GRANDPARENTS HAVE A DEEP LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE, NOT ONLY DO THEY KNOW HOW TO SHARE THE GOSPEL, THEY KNOW HOW TO MAKE DISCIPLES, TO GROW BELIEVERS UP & HOW TO BEGIN THEIR OWN FAMILIES

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GOD NOT ONLY KNOWS THE NEEDS OF A BELIVER, BUT HE HAS ALSO SUPPLIED THE TOOLS NECESSARY FOR GROWTH

GOD GAVE SPECIFIC GIFTS TO THE CHURCH FOR THE CHURCH

And [His gifts to the church were varied and] **He Himself appointed some as apostles** [special messengers, representatives], **some as prophets** [who speak a new message from God to the people], **some as evangelists** [who spread the good news of salvation], **and some as pastors and teachers** [to shepherd and guide and instruct], ~ EPH 4:12-13

WHAT IS THEIR PURPOSE?

¹² [and He did this] to fully equip and perfect the saints (God’s people) for works of service, to build up the body of Christ [the church]; ¹³ until we all reach oneness in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, [growing spiritually] to become a mature believer, reaching to the measure of the fullness of Christ [manifesting His spiritual completeness and exercising our spiritual gifts in unity]. ~ EPH 4:12-13

EPH 4:14-16

¹⁴ So that we are no longer children [spiritually immature], tossed back and forth [like ships on a stormy sea] and carried about by every wind of [shifting] doctrine, by the cunning and trickery of [unscrupulous] men, by the deceitful scheming of people ready to do anything [for personal profit]. ...

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EPH 4:14-16

¹⁵ But speaking the truth in love [in all things— both our speech and our lives expressing His truth], let us grow up in all things into Him [following His example] who is the Head— Christ. ¹⁶ From Him the whole body [the church, in all its various parts], joined and knitted firmly together by what every joint supplies, when each part is working properly, causes the body to grow and mature, building itself up in [unselfish] love.

WHY ARE WE TOGETHER?

FOR THE EQUIPPING OF THE SAINTS, SO WE GROW UP & ARE NO LONGER CHILDREN, GROW UP INTO JESUS CHRIST - JOINED TOGETHER BY EVERY JOINT & PART WORKING PROPERLY

1 JOHN 2:12-14

I am writing to you, little children (believers, dear ones), because your sins have been forgiven for His name's sake [you have been pardoned and released from spiritual debt through His name because you have confessed His name, believing in Him as Savior]. ¹³ I am writing to you, fathers [those believers who are spiritually mature], because you know Him who has existed from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men [those believers who are growing in spiritual maturity],

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1 JOHN 2:12-14

because you have been victorious *and* have overcome the evil one. **I have written to you, children [those who are new believers, those spiritually immature], because you have come to know the Father.** ¹⁴ **I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has existed from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong *and* vigorous, and the word of God remains [always] in you, and you have been victorious over the evil one [by accepting Jesus as Savior].**

FATHERS

THEY know Him who has existed from the beginning.

YOU REALLY KNOW GOD. YOU HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM. YOU SEE THINGS THAT CHILDREN DON'T SEE, YOU UNDERSTAND THINGS THAT BABIES DON'T UNDERSTAND. YOU ARE MATURE IN THE FAITH & OTHER PEOPLE NOW LOOK UP TO YOU & YOU HAVE YOUR OWN CHILDREN. FATHERS NEED TO BE ENCOURAGED TO BE THERE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION - THEY NEED TO HELP RAISE OTHERS UP TO BE LIKE THEM IN THE FAITH.

WHAT SPIRITUAL LEVEL ARE YOU ON?
WHAT LEVEL ARE THE PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE ON?

LEARNING TO GROW SPIRITUALLY & THEY ARE MORE DEPENDENT ON GOD & LESS ON YOU.

AND AS SCRIPTURE SAYS... FATHERS, CAN USE THEIR SENSES, THEY ARE VERY MATURE WHEN IT COMES TO RIGHT & WRONG, THEY CAN DISCERN GOOD FROM EVIL, THEY KNOW GOD, THEY KNOW THE BIG PICTURE & THEY HAVE LEARNED A LOT & ARE GETTING THEIR OWN CHILDREN. PEOPLE LOOK UP TO THEM. THEY HAVE THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT. WE NEED FATHERS WAY MORE THAN WE NEED LEADERS, FATHERS WHO HAVE OVERCOME SATAN, WHO ARE STRONG IN THEIR FAITH & SEE THE BIG PICTURE.

EVEN IN A PERFECT FAMILY...

PEOPLE FIGHT
THERE ARE PROBLEMS & CHALLENGES
BUT, IN THIS WALK - AS YOU MATURE - YOU WILL LEARN TO FORGIVE EACH OTHER, AS YOU MATURE - YOU WILL LOVE EACH OTHER... WHY? BECAUSE YOU'RE FAMILY
YOU'RE **Koinónia**

WHICH BRINGS US TO THE LAST PARTS OF THIS LESSON

A FAMILY WITHOUT CORRECTION & DISCIPLINE IS CHAOTIC & DISFUNCTIONAL - EVEN DAMAGING

BIBLICAL METHODS OF DISCIPLINE

- The Discipline of fellow believers &
- God's Discipline

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Which one would you want?

2 TIMOTHY 4:2

² preach the word [as an official messenger]; be ready when the time is right and even when it is not [keep your sense of urgency, whether the opportunity seems favorable or unfavorable, whether convenient or inconvenient, whether welcome or unwelcome]; correct [those who err in doctrine or behavior], warn [those who sin], exhort and encourage [those who are growing toward spiritual maturity], with inexhaustible patience and [faithful] teaching.

JEREMIAH 7:27-28

²⁷ “You shall speak all these words to them, but they will not listen to you; and you shall [also] call to them, but they will not answer you. ²⁸ You shall say to them, ‘This is the nation that did not obey the voice of the Lord their God or accept correction and warning; truth and faithfulness have perished and have completely vanished from their mouths.

AND YES...

GOD uses adversity and affliction

HEB 12:11

For the time being no discipline brings joy, but seems sad and painful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness [right standing with God and a lifestyle and attitude that seeks conformity to God’s will and purpose].

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1 PETER 4:1

[*Keep Fervent in Your Love*] Therefore, since Christ suffered in the flesh [and died for us], arm yourselves [like warriors] with the same purpose [being willing to suffer for doing what is right and pleasing God], because whoever has suffered in the flesh [being like-minded with Christ] is done with [intentional] sin [having stopped pleasing the world],

IT COMES DOWN TO ONE ANSWER...

DO YOU WANT TO BE LIKE CHRIST?

IN ANY COMMUNITY, PEOPLE WILL EVENTUALLY OFFEND ONE ANOTHER OR LET ONE ANOTHER DOWN. THE CHURCH IS NO EXCEPTION. THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT THE BIBLE OFFERS A ROAD MAP FOR RESPONDING TO OFFENSE, SIN, AND DIVISION WITHIN THE CHURCH. SOMETIMES THIS ROAD MAP IS REFERRED TO AS "CHURCH DISCIPLINE" OR "ACCOUNTABILITY." BUT THE GOAL IS ALWAYS THE SAME: TO ENCOURAGE REPENTANCE, HEALING AND RESTORATION."

THIS IS UNCOMFORTABLE.

IT'S NOT SOMETHING THAT SHOULD MAKE YOU EXCITED TO DO
& IF YOU ARE - I JUST WANT TO CHALLENGE YOU TO CHECK WHERE YOUR HEART IS. IT SHOULD BE SOMETHING THAT YOU SPEND A LOT OF TIME IN PRAYER OVER & IT'S NOT TO BE TAKEN LIGHTLY. UNFORTUNATLY, THE RESULTS AREN'T ALWAYS PRETTY. PEOPLE DON'T ALWAYS WANT TO HEAR TRUTH - BUT

I JUST WANT TO ENCOURAGE YOU TO NOT COMPROMISE.

WITH THAT BEING SAID, THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A BELIEVER & NON-BELIEVER. WE CANNOT HOLD SOMEONE WHO DOES NOT BELIEVE IN GOD TO THE SAME STANDARDS AS THOSE WHO DO. I HAVE LEARNED TO ASK A COUPLE OF VERY IMPORTANT QUESTIONS. STARTING WITH:

“IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT YOU BELIEVE IN JESUS, AM I CORRECT IN THIS STATEMENT?”

PHIL 2: 12 | SAYS... So then, my dear ones, just as you have always obeyed [my instructions with enthusiasm], not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence, continue to work out your salvation [that is, cultivate it, bring it to full effect, actively pursue spiritual maturity] with awe-inspired fear and trembling [using serious caution and critical self-evaluation to avoid anything that might offend God or discredit the name of Christ].

IF THEY SAY YES THAT THEY ARE... I WILL ADD THE FOLLOWING TO MY QUESTION.

“THE BIBLE TELLS US THAT WE SHOULD, use serious caution and critical self-evaluation to avoid anything that might offend God or discredit the name of Christ.” Does that matter to you?

HOW SOMEONE ANSWERS THESE QUESTIONS DETERMINES WHERE THEIR HEART IS. I HAVE SEVERAL PEOPLE IN MY LIFE THAT I HAVE GIVEN PERMISSION TO CONFRONT ME BECAUSE I WOULD NEVER WANT TO KNOWINGLY OR UNKNOWINGLY OFFEND GOD OR DISCREDIT THE NAME OF CHRIST.

WHAT IS GOD’S MOTIVE BEHIND DISCIPLINE & CORRECTION?

HEBREWS 12:6

For the Lord disciplines and corrects those whom He loves. And He punishes every son whom He receives and welcomes [to His heart].”

HEBREWS 12:10

¹⁰ For our earthly fathers disciplined us for only a short time as seemed best to them; but **He disciplines us for our good**, so that we may share His holiness.

WITHIN GOD’S MOTIVE WHAT ARE THE WAYS THAT HE USES BELIEVERS?

There are several scenarios of discipline:

- Self-discipline
- In the home
- Between friends
- Among believers
- Within the church

--rebuking publicly

--having nothing to do with

--removing sinners

SELF-DISCIPLINE

¹³ for if you are living according to the [impulses of the] flesh, you are going to die. **But if [you are living] by the [power of the Holy] Spirit you are habitually putting to death the sinful deeds of the body,** you will [really] live forever.

ROMANS 8:13

DISCIPLINE AT HOME

He who withholds the rod [of discipline] hates his son,
But he who loves him disciplines and trains him diligently and appropriately [with wisdom and love].

PROVERBS 13:24

MUTUAL DISCIPLINE | BETWEEN FRIENDS

Better is an open reprimand [of loving correction] Than love that is hidden. ⁶ **Faithful are the wounds of a friend [who corrects out of love and concern],** But the kisses of an enemy are deceitful [because they serve his hidden agenda].

PROVERBS 27:5-6

MUTUAL DISCIPLINE | AMONG BELIEVERS

³ Pay attention *and* always be on guard [looking out for one another]! **If your brother sins and disregards God's precepts, solemnly warn him; and if he repents and changes, forgive him.**

LUKE 17:3

Lined writing area consisting of 20 horizontal lines.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE | THROUGH THE WORD

¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed [given by divine inspiration] and is profitable for instruction, for conviction [of sin], for correction [of error and restoration to obedience], for training in righteousness [learning to live in conformity to God’s will, both publicly and privately—behaving honorably with personal integrity and moral courage]; ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be complete and proficient, outfitted *and* thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17

CHURCH DISCIPLINE | DIRECT MEASURES

²⁰ As for those [elders] who continue in sin, **reprimand them in the presence of all [the congregation],** so that the rest will be warned.

1 TIMOTHY 5:20

CHURCH DISCIPLINE | DIRECT MEASURES

¹⁷ I urge you, brothers and sisters, to keep your eyes on those who cause dissensions and create obstacles *or* introduce temptations [for others] to commit sin, [acting in ways] contrary to the doctrine which you have learned. **Turn away from them.**

ROMANS 16:17

CHURCH DISCIPLINE | DIRECT MEASURES

⁶ Now we command you, believers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ *and* by His authority, that you withdraw and keep away from every brother or sister who leads an undisciplined life and does not live in accordance with the tradition and teaching that you have received from us.

2 THESSALONIANS 3:6

CHURCH DISCIPLINE | DIRECT MEASURES

¹⁰ After a first and second warning reject a divisive man [who promotes heresy and causes dissension—ban him from your fellowship and have nothing more to do with him],

TITUS 3:10

CHURCH DISCIPLINE | DIRECT MEASURES

¹³ God *alone* sits in judgment on those who are outside [the faith]. Remove the wicked one from among you [expel him from your church].

1 CORINTHIANS 5:13

THERE IS NO PLAN B
WE ARE GOD'S INSTRUMENT
FOR ADVANCING HIS KINGDOM!
THIS HAS EVERYTHING TO DO WITH
YOU, YOUR LEVEL OF MATURITY,
YOUR ENGAGEMENT IN FELLOWSHIP
& YOUR CONTRIBUTION WITHIN THE
BODY OF CHRIST.

Lined writing area consisting of 20 horizontal lines.

GOING DEEPER

From pages 1-4, there are several Scriptures that document who we [as true believers] are to God. Define who you are according to Scripture: _____

On page 6 there is this sections, **LET'S LOOK AT HOW WE "GROW" UP AGAIN**

Dive into each of these area of Scripture and evaluate yourself:

- By studying God's Word **1 Peter 2:1-3** _____
- By increasing your knowledge of God **Colossians 1:10** _____
- By deepening your faith **Ephesians 4:13** _____
- By showing love **Ephesians 4:15-16** _____
- By developing Christian character **2 Peter 1:5-8** _____
- By growing & bearing fruit **John 15:2,4-5, 16** _____

What "Spiritual age" are you? How long have you been there?

What do you need to do to move to the next step in maturity?

"Discipline" can have very negative connotations, study the Scripture on pages 32-38. How willing are you to be corrected? _____

What has this lesson stirred in you?

Now that you have completed this lesson:

- Briefly give a definition of your Biblical stance for your belief.
- Write down 3 specific places in Scripture that clearly states your understanding.

As defined by the Bible, who is FAMILY is _____

Scripture that supports this statement is:

As defined by the Bible, what is SPIRITUAL MATURITY? _____

Scripture that supports this statement is:

As defined by the Bible, what "GIFTS WERE GIVEN TO THE CHURCH & WHAT IS THEIR PURPOSE? _____

Scripture that supports this statement is:

As defined by the Bible, what is Biblical DISCIPLINE & CORRECTION? _____

Scripture that supports this statement is:

NOTE: YOU MAY FIND THAT YOUR UNDERSTANDING WILL GO DEEPER AS YOU MOVE THROUGH THE FOLLOWING LESSONS. FEEL FREE TO REVAMP & ADD TO YOUR STATEMENTS AS YOU GROW SPIRITUALLY MATURE.