



Spiritual Formation

DON'T BECOME SO WELL ADJUSTED TO YOUR CULTURE THAT YOU FIT INTO IT WITHOUT EVEN THINKING. INSTEAD, FIX YOUR ATTENTION ON GOD. YOU'LL BE

“So here’s what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life – your sleeping, eating, going-to-work and walking around life – and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don’t become so well adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, **fix your attention on God**. You’ll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what He wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.”

Romans 12 Message

“It is true that there may be an outward correctness of deportment without the renewing power of Christ. The love of influence and the desire for the esteem of others may produce a well-ordered life. Self-respect may lead us to avoid the appearance of evil. A selfish heart may perform generous actions. By what means shall we determine whose side we are on?’ Who has the heart? With whom are our thoughts? Of whom do we love to converse? Who has our warmest affections and our best energies? If we are Christ’s, our thoughts are with Him, and our sweetest thoughts are of Him. All we have and are is consecrated to Him. We long to bear His Image, breathe His spirit, do His will, and please Him in all things.”

E G White, Steps To Christ

WHAT SHAPES YOUR HEART?

Today, millions of young people will wake up and live their day without a thought for God. Many will wear trendy clothes, go to school/uni/work, enjoy their friends, listen to music, spend time on the net, eat, watch some television and go to bed having had another 'good' day. Maybe many of your days are spent in the same way. If people without a relationship with Jesus can experience 'successful' and 'enjoyable' lives then why bother with Him?

Why? Because, **we were made for more.** We were made for deep connection with God. It is only this connection that gives life ultimate significance. Often our daily pursuits merely mask a spiritual hollowness that we choose to ignore.

Some people, however, choose to step into deep connectedness with God and for them life takes on a whole new meaning and purpose.

Sadly many people who call themselves Christians may never experience a life of connection with God. They may know lots about God, be able to excel in theological discussion, explain various prophecies even attend church services every week however miss the life changing vitality that comes from connectedness with God. Too often we settle for a mediocre spiritual life or find other ways to be what we might wrongly call 'spiritual'.

What about the young people in your youth group? What does an ordinary day look like for them? Where does God fit into their day? What factors are shaping their hearts? Are they growing or decaying spiritually? Sure, on the outside they can be attending Sabbath School, church programmes and socials but who or what really has their heart? We can be very good at giving information and growing people in an intellectual understanding however what about their inner spiritual growth? How is your ministry shaping your youth group for spiritual vitality?

This workshop will look at some aspects of spiritual formation and think through what it would look like for us to be in deep connection with God. We will also think through how we can create environments that help the youth group we are part of go on the adventure of living in Christ.

'PUT ME FIRST, BUILD YOUR LIFE ON ME' GOD, COMMANDMENT 1

IF YOU WERE GIVEN AN EXTRA HOUR EACH DAY, HOW WOULD YOU SPEND IT?

WHAT WOULD YOUR FRIENDS SAY ARE YOUR TOP THREE PRIORITIES?

IF IN THE FUTURE AN ARCHAEOLOGIST WAS TO STUDY YOUR CREDIT CARDS STATEMENTS AND SCHEDULE WHAT WOULD THEY CONCLUDE YOUR PRIORITIES WERE?

What would you say are the top five factors that influence the everyday life of your youth group?

What percentage of your youth group do you think would make space in their day for quiet time with God?

Out of ten, where would you rate your youth group in terms of spiritual growth?

What factors led you to give the score you gave?

What factors, do you believe, hinder your youth group in deepening their connectedness with God?

How would you know if you were growing or decaying spiritually?

WE CAN PLACE OUR TRUST IN CAREERS, FUNDS AND INVESTMENTS, THE WAY WE LOOK, A PARTICULAR POSITION OR TITLE, PHYSICAL PLEASURE, MARRIAGE OR FAMILY – YET IN THE ETERNAL SCHEME THESE THINGS, WHILE GOOD, DON'T COME

THROUGH FOR US. IT SEEMS THAT WE GO TO ANYONE AND TRY ANYTHING BEFORE BEING ALONE WITH JESUS.

WHAT IS SPIRITUALITY?

“He has showed you O man what is good. And what does the Lord requires of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

Micah 6:8 (New International Version)

In thinking about spiritual formation we need to have a right understanding of what spirituality actually is.

If you were a dictionary writer, how would you define the word spirituality?

Sometimes when we think about spirituality we think of something separate from our everyday reality. Perhaps we imagine a monk living a life of daily rituals and strict discipline. Perhaps we think of some ‘super-spiritual’ person who seems to be forever reading the Bible and praying. However a spiritual life is God’s plan for the way you live all of your life now.

Spirituality is not something you “have.” Rather, it is a path you are on, where you are continually learning from and growing closer to Christ.

What Spirituality Is Not – Pseudo Transformation.

How many people are radically and permanently repelled from the way by Christians who are unfeeling, stiff, unapproachable, boringly lifeless, obsessive and dissatisfied? Such Christians are everywhere. What they are missing is the wholesome liveliness springing from a balanced vitality with the freedom of God’s loving rule... Spirituality wrongly understood or pursued is a major source of human misery and rebellion against God.

Dallas Willard, *Spirit of The Disciplines*

Obviously it’s not supposed to be this way, yet for many it’s the sad truth. When people are not being authentically transformed – when they are not becoming more loving, joyful, Christlike persons – they often settle for what might be called ‘pseudo-transformation.’

We know that somehow we are supposed to be different but if our heart isn’t changing, we will look for more superficial ways of demonstrating that we are spiritual. We might think spiritual maturity is simply about how much

biblical information we have acquired. We think we should be doing 'spiritual things' that will prove how spiritual we are. We end up looking down on people who are not working at their spiritual lives as hard as we are and can become more judgemental rather than more loving. We focus on outward behaviours, making them the test of godliness while ignoring deeper and more destructive sins of the heart.

We need only to hear Jesus' words to the religious leaders of his day to know that pseudo-spirituality is a deadly disease and a common and contagious one at that.
(Ortberg, Pederson & Poling, *Fully Devoted*)

By strong will or through pride we can readjust our outward appearance or behaviour, however this is not what spirituality is about.

It is true that there may be an outward correctness of deportment without the renewing power of Christ. The love of influence and the desire for the esteem of others may produce a well-ordered life. Self-respect may lead us to avoid the appearance of evil. A selfish heart may perform generous actions. By what means shall we determine whose side we are on?'
E G White, *Steps To Christ*

What Is A Right Understanding Of Spiritual Life?

Ellen White continues with this answer.

Who has the heart? With whom are our thoughts? Of whom do we love to converse? Who has our warmest affections and our best energies? If we are Christ's, our thoughts are with Him, and our sweetest thoughts are of Him. All we have and are is consecrated to Him. We long to bear His Image, breathe His spirit, do His will, and please Him in all things.

To pursue a spiritual life means simply to order your life in such a way that you stay connected to Christ, thinking as He thought, speaking as He spoke and walking as He walked. This life will look different for each person but there is a common core – 'Love God with all your soul, mind and strength and to love people as you love yourself.' Mark 12:30-31
(New Living Translation)

When someone asks you how your spiritual life is going, the real question is: 'Are you becoming more loving toward God and people?'

Spirituality Is About Real Life

Your spiritual life is simply your whole life – every minute and detail of it – from God’s perspective. God is interested in your entire life.

Too often we compartmentalise our life into various, seemingly disconnected, segments. We talk about our physical, social, mental, emotional and spiritual life as if our spiritual life is somehow a separate area of our life. Paul assures us in the opening of Romans 12 that this is not how we are to approach spirituality. All of our life is to be placed before God. Spirituality is all of your life.

Your physical life is your spiritual life

Your social life is your spiritual life

Your emotional life is your spiritual life

Your mental life is your spiritual life

Your ordinary, everyday life is your spiritual life. While we will talk about heart building habits and special times of spiritual renewal our big challenge is to have our youth experience what it means to live their ordinary, everyday lives with God. Their “eating, sleeping and walking around lives”. Romans 12, Message

Your spiritual life is simply all of your life from God’s perspective.

Don’t remove spirituality from the realm of real life. Often we relegate God’s life in us to special times, places and states of mind – we’ve become so used to this style of life that we’re hardly aware of it.

Spirituality is integrating and interacting with God. It’s not about being in a trophy case in heaven but that we may be in relation to God and others now.

Richard Foster, *Celebration Of Discipline*

Ideas for teaching this concept in your youth group.

Discuss what pictures come to mind when your group thinks of the world spirituality?

Choose a member of the group and go through what an ordinary day looks like for them with the rest of the group thinking through how these ordinary, everyday moments can be lived in a way that allows Christ to be part of that moment?

CONNECTING WITH GOD

"Remain in Me and I will remain in you...." John 15:4

Vine and Branches

In John 15 Jesus describes the connection that is possible with us like being a vine and its branches. He explains that if we, the branches, remain connected to Him then through us He will bear much fruit. A truly fruitful, fulfilling life is one where, because of our intimate connection with Jesus, He is able to work in and through us to produce spiritual growth with its resulting fruits of the spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23)

In the same analogy Jesus also talks about how He prunes those who are connected to Him. Part of being in relationship with Jesus is to allow the pruning of things such as pride, jealousy, and bitterness. The result of not abiding in this connection is 'outer darkness'.

When you are 'abiding/staying connected' in Christ, then Christ promises to work in you. When this happens you just find yourself being the person God designed you to be – the things Christ would have you do become the things you want to do. Jesus promises that by beholding Him change will happen. See John 15

vine/branches diagram

Our job is to abide/remain connected

What habits/life patterns/thoughts allow you to abide/remain connected?

THREATS TO SPIRITUAL PASSION

“What does it matter if you gain the whole world but do so at the expense of your soul?”

Most of us have no problem recognising that a relationship with Jesus is important. In fact, we would agree that it's vital. The problem is that in the process of living life we end up settling for a stunted relationship, a mediocre relationship that is far short of God's purpose for us.

We are stopped by distractions, having no plan, exhaustion, chores, wandering thoughts, bad timing or a sense of obligation rather than enjoyment of God. We are like the seeds that Jesus described in His parable recorded in Matthew 13, choked by the cares of this world.

Often we live life with no regard for God's perspective of us. Even sadder is that instead of looking to God for our purpose and fulfilment we chase the next thing that promises to fill the void – it might be a new body shape, car or relationship. That hollow feeling, instead of being filled with God, is filled with noise, busyness, success, and achievements – each promising a sense of fulfilment and none delivering.

What would you say are the biggest threats to spiritual growth?

Some common threats to spiritual passion include:

Consumerism/Materialism

We live in a world that tells us that to get ahead we need to buy the latest products. We get caught in the trap of wanting more and we keep riding that same old merry-go-round of chasing things even though some very smart people, including Solomon, tell us that fulfilment is not found on this ride. Nevertheless, we think that if we could just get the next thing and try it, it could work for us. It is kind of like worshipping the created things rather than the Creator - Romans 1:25. Sometimes it's worthwhile to remember that there will come a time when the products we chase now will burn – they will be far less valuable then.

The dangerous thing about chasing possessions is that we end up living a life that is focused on self. Consumerism destroys community. Consumerism erodes our heart for serving and we begin to think that we are on this planet to be served. Spiritual formation is about giving our life

away, serving and putting others first which goes against the message our consumer driven society promotes.

It's All About Me Thinking

"May Christ be formed within you." Galatians 4:9

One of the biggest threats of consumerism is that it leads us to think that life is about us. In pursuing Spiritual Formation we need to realize that we are not on this planet for ourselves. Your life is not about you! You were made by and for God and it is only in God that life makes sense.

For everything, absolutely everything, above and below, visible and invisible,... everything got started in Him and finds its purpose in Him. (Colossians 1:16, *The Message*)

Finding real meaning in life is about letting God use you for His purposes rather than you using Him for yours. The ironic thing is that when we give control of our lives to God and let Him shape, lead and guide, we end up with a life that is far more fulfilling than would otherwise be the case. God is not just the starting point of your life – He is the source of it.

Noise

We are the noisiest society in the history of the planet. Ipods, radio and television ensure we don't have to be quiet. Noise defeats solitude and time when we can come face to face with ourselves. It muffles the still small voice that speaks of our need for significant purpose. Psalm 46:10 reminds us to "Be still and know that I am God." We often leave no time to be still and know – we sacrifice meaningful relationships at the altar of busyness and noise.

In our media-drenched, data-rich, channel surfing, computer gaming age we have lost the art of doing nothing. We are addicted to stimulation. Take away stimulation and we get bored, we fidget and fiddle,

Where does the still, small voice of God fit into your life? When do we give God the chance to lead, guide, correct and affirm? And if this seldom happens, how can we lead authentic Christian lives?

Hurry

Again and again as we pursue spiritual lives, we must do battle with hurry. These days our culture teaches that faster is better. But in the race to keep up everything suffers including our relationships and health. We are in such a hurry that anyone or anything that slows us down becomes the enemy.

Ellen White is so right when she says in her little book, *Happiness Digest*, that "Hurry will keep us consumed by the cares, riches and

pleasure of life and prevent [God's] way from taking root in our lives."

The hurry trap is the sense of importance that it gives – I'm busy, I must be important.

The most serious sign of hurry sickness is a reduced ability to love. Love and hurry are incompatible. Love always takes time and this is one thing hurried people don't have.

If Satan can't make us turn from God he will make our lives too busy and unfocused that we skim in our devotion to the Lord.

Externalism.

When externals are the main emphasis, spiritual formation doesn't really happen. The process easily falls into life draining legalism. Peculiar modes of dress and behaviour don't change the heart. The Pharisees in Jesus time give us a case study of how externalism can kill spiritual formation. They were so interested in the outside that they neglected what was happening on the inside. Their hearts had become hard even though outwardly they appeared to be doing everything right.

Comfort

One of the biggest causes of spiritual stagnation is **comfort**. Sometimes we're just plainly too comfortable. There is nothing wrong with being comfortable, however, when our spiritual growth gets sacrificed to comfort it's a problem. "We get too comfortable and just drift, we settle into a mushy belief that something better is eventually just going to happen to us. You can drift, get up, go to work, come home, eat, watch TV, retire and die or you can take each moment and say, 'God, this is yours.'" (Bill Hybels *Honest To God*)

Christianity is a supernatural walk with a living, dynamic, speaking, personal God. A vital relationship with Jesus Christ takes time – not leftover throwaway time, but quality time for solitude, contemplation and reflection.

BE STILL AND KNOW THAT I AM GOD PSALM 46:10

REFLECTION TIME

What would you say are the biggest threats to spiritual growth in your youth group?

What do you think it means to 'find rest for your soul'?

What ideas do you have for living life at a less frantic pace?

Consider a time when you have been running on empty, what were the worst symptoms?

If you drew a picture of your life would it be characterised more as a flowing stream or a stagnant pond? Why?

What activities have you found which help you avoid stagnation in your relationship with God?

How does it make you feel when you remember that God owns everything?

What space can you make in your day to allow God to penetrate this world's 'all about me' culture and be intimately involved in your life?

A LIVING SACRIFICE LIFE – THE FIVE PURPOSES

In the opening section of Romans 12 Paul outlines what it means to be a 'living sacrifice' and making everything we do an offering to God. He then moves on in the chapter to describe what a 'living sacrifice' life looks like. Basically he describes five aspects of life. These five life purposes are the same five for the church (see Adventist Fundamental 12).

Paul describes a 'living sacrifice' as someone who shapes their life around:

Worshipping

Connecting

Serving

Growing

Reaching

Revelation 12 and 14 (three angels) give these purposes extra significance for Adventists and our mission.

As we seek to have Christ formed in us we will pay particular attention to shaping our lives around these purposes. We will get involved in activities and environments that promote these activities. In balancing these five aspects we will also be ensuring we are growing as wholistic Christians and not becoming so involved in one aspect that we forget its relationship with other aspects of the Christian life.

As leaders of youth groups we will pray, dream about, explore and implement ways our youth group can grow in these five areas.

Recognising that the purposes for our life are the same as for the church we will aim to grow out youth group to become:

1. **Connecting Believers** - Hebrews 10:24-25, Ephesians 2:19
(Community, Fellowship)
2. **Growing Believers** - Colossians 1:28, Ephesians 4:15
(Spiritual Growth, Discipleship)

3. **Serving Believers** – Ephesians 4:11-13, 1 Corinthians 12:7
(Serving as Part of The Body)

4. **Sharing Believers** – Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 20:24
(Evangelism, Outreach)

5. **Worshipping Believers** – Romans 12:1 & 2, Psalms 27:6
Group Activity:

Ideas for growing your youth group in these purposes:

Connecting: _____ →

Growing: _____ →

Serving: _____ →

Sharing: _____ →

Worshipping: _____ →

If a new person turned up to your youth group next week, how will they have grown in these five areas by this time next year?

RENOVATION OF THE HEART

Jesus replied, "love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." Matt 22:37

Cultivating a Well-Ordered Heart

Spiritual formation involves cultivating a well ordered heart, We look externally for order and balance and blame outward situations – if my job was different, if my parents weren't so demanding.... However, when we are brutally honest with ourselves we have to admit that the truly significant disorder is in our heart. Solomon said: 'Keep your heart with all diligence – out of it flow the issues of life.' Imagine what the world would look like if it were filled with people who had well-ordered hearts.

A well-ordered heart will ask questions like:

- How can I fill my daily tasks with a sense of the presence of God?
- How am I involved in Christian community?
- How do the people closest to me experience God working in and through me?
- Am I growing in a love for God and people?
- How will I handle money in a way that draws me closer to God?

The answer lies in being intentional about our spirituality. This is not some works trip but rather orienting our lives around practices that allow us to live a life more purposeful and abundant. "Fixing your attention on Jesus, so that you will be changed from the inside out." (Romans 12 Message) Ellen White suggests we should make time each day to contemplate the life of Christ, especially the closing scenes – it is by beholding that you are changed. Maybe you need to take a look at your life and schedule and determine what needs to be changed so that you have the time to "be still and know". Maybe some good things will need to be eliminated from your life to give God the chance to work in and through you.

When this change happens you find yourself being concerned for what concerns God. Your heart beats and breaks for what God's heart beats and breaks for. Scripture tells us that people and the church are very high on God's priorities and therefore they should be high on ours too.

TRAINING V'S TRYING

"...rather train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come."

1 Timothy 4:7b-8 (New International Version)

Athletes don't just try hard, they train. In spiritual formation many people try, fail and think this life of connectedness with God is not for them even if it exists at all. Spiritual Formation is not a matter of trying harder but rather entering a life of 'training in Godliness'. This thought lies behind Paul's advice to the church at Corinth: 'Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever'.

Trying hard can accomplish only so much. If you are serious you have to enter into a life of training. To enter a life of training means to arrange your life around certain exercises and experiences that will enable you to do eventually what you are not yet able to do, even by trying hard.

REACHING BOILING POINT

Imagine a beaker of water that we wanted to boil. What would happen if once a week we turned the heat on and let the water get to 50-60 degrees and then left it for another week. Some weeks we might hit 70degrees and other weeks only get 30degrees. The truth is the water would never be transformed into steam. However many of us treat Spiritual Growth in just this way. We might go to Sabbath School and a Worship Service and maybe get heated up spiritually however we cannot expect what happens on Sabbath morning alone to heat us up to spiritual boiling point where transformation happens.

Churches made up of people expecting the service to give them the spiritual jolt they need for the week will never develop passionate spirituality. There is no drive-thru service where you can order instant spirituality.

Beaker Diagram:

HEART BUILDING HABITS

Let your roots grow down into Christ and draw up nourishment from Him. See that you go on growing in the Lord, and become strong and vigorous in the truth. Colossians 2:7 (Living Bible)

In Pursuing spiritual formation we need to orient our lives around practices and habits that remind us of what matters and gives God space to work in us. Some people refer to these practices as 'spiritual disciplines', here we will call them Heart Building Habits.

Being Intentional

We are unlikely to deepen our relationship in a haphazard manner – some intentional commitment and reorganization is necessary. Spirituality cannot be orchestrated or controlled with a generic formula but neither is it random. All of us know the frustrations of random, haphazard efforts that lead nowhere in spiritual life. We don't drift, we decide.

Our spiritual life, like our bodies has a requirement for health and growth. Some people don't want to pay the price for developing good spiritual habits. Sadly, they end up paying a much higher price - spiritual disease.

We need to be intentional about our spiritual life. We don't become healthier and increase our muscle tone by just sitting back and seeing what happens.

What Heart Building Habits Are Not

Heart Building Habits are not a measure of your spirituality, rather they are the habits/practices that we put in place in order to grow in the fruits of the Spirit. Heart Building Habits should end up being fun. The fruits of the Spirit are joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control, all of these things are enjoyable, therefore the practices required to develop these fruit can be enjoyable too.

Heart Building Habits will not earn God's favour. This is an important point. You already have His favour. Keep in mind that these heart building habits do not save you. They are not a pursuit in themselves. They are to help us grow towards the life God desires for us.

Many have an idea that they must do some part of the work alone. They have trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of sin, but now they seek by their own efforts to live aright. But every such effort must fail. Jesus says, 'Without me you can do nothing.' Our growth in grace, our joy, our usefulness all depend upon our union with Christ.

E G White, *Steps To Christ*

What Heart Building Habits Are

Heart Building Habits include any activity that helps me gain the power to live the life Jesus taught and modelled. There are as many heart building habits as there are people. God desires a unique relationship with you. However there are some basic habits that we see modelled in Jesus' life and which people throughout history have found useful in connecting with God.

SOME FOUNDATIONAL HEART-BUILDING HABITS

Nurture your relationship with God by making space for extended times to meet with him – devotional study, worship, prayer or anything that allows you to be still and know that He is God.

Some foundational heart-building habits include:

Solitude

The society we live in is filled with ideas, values, pressure and temptations about success, security, comfort and happiness that we do not even notice unless we withdraw on occasion. Solitude is about taking quiet, uncluttered time – just you and your Creator. Seek time to 'wait on the Lord' Isaiah 40:31.

In the 'rat-race' that can so often be our society, solitude is vital if we are to re-calibrate around God's purposes. Solitude is the one place where we can gain freedom from the forces of society that will otherwise relentlessly mould us. Solitude provides time out to think about how we are being influenced and shaped. In Solitude there are no friends, mobiles, emails, ipods or TV, it's 'Just As I Am', just me and my desire or lack of desire, for God.

We rarely stop and wonder if God might want to speak to us. God speaks through His word, through people and direct leading of the Holy Spirit. He will bring a verse to mind and guide you through thoughts and feelings. When did you last turn off the TV, CD and hear nothing but the fridge humming? When did you last turn off the soundtrack of your mind and come away from numbers, machines, words, schemes or whatever it is that occupies your waking thoughts. When were you last available to God in order to give Him a chance to speak to you.

Scripture

It's not about just knowing more; it's about change in our lives. The Pharisees prayed and studied, however they did so in a self-seeking way rather than looking for a connection with God. You can know that

hydrogen and oxygen make water, but that makes no difference if you're dying of thirst. Knowledge is good, but only if it causes a change that leaves you with a stronger love for God and people.

Read a small section slowly and repetitively to see what God might want to say to you. Take notes as you read if that is helpful. Some people find it helpful to re-write the passage in their own words. Different forms of study include book studies, word studies, character studies or following through a theme.

Some useful questions to ask as you read are:

- Does this text reveal how...
- I should believe about God?
- I should praise, thank or trust God?
- I should pray for myself and/or others?
- I should have a new attitude?
- I should make a decision?
- I should do for the sake of Christ, others or myself?

Worship

We often think of worship as an event that happens in the church on Sabbath mornings. However, worship is about lifestyle. In this lifestyle regular spots of praise and thanksgiving to God keep things in perspective. Maybe it's listening to a piece of music that draws you closer, maybe it's in nature. Find whatever it takes that brings you to worship God.

Journaling

Some people have found journaling to be very valuable in connecting with God. A spiritual journal might include thoughts about how God is working in your life, self-understanding and evaluation. Maybe it will include thoughts and feelings about God. One of the useful things about journaling is the ability to be able to look back and see how the Lord has led.

Prayer

Prayer is the opening of the heart to God as to a friend. Not that it is necessary, in order to make known to God what we are, but in order to enable us to receive him. Prayer does not bring God down to us, but brings us up to him.

E G White Steps To Christ

Jesus retreated from crowds for both solitude and prayer. Prayer provides a vital connection to God.

In Luke 11:1 there is a record of the disciples' request that Jesus teach them how to pray. The Lord's Prayer was the result of their interest. Jesus took a

number of opportunities to give the disciples advice on prayer. Some of the advice He gave included:

- (a) Pray regularly – it is a matter of when, not if
- (b) Pray privately – don't get involved in displays of piety
- (c) Pray sincerely – He wants to hear your heart
- (d) Pray specifically – invite God into specific situations

Prayer has been likened to leaving the smog of this world to breath the pure air of heaven. Let's grab the opportunity for a breath of fresh air regularly. It will sharpen the mind and allow for a fresh perspective and a refreshed purpose.

"Get down on your knees before the Master, it is the only way you'll get on your feet." James 4:10 (Message Bible)

Fellowship

Christian growth is not to be done alone. It is a discipline to choose people who you can be spiritually accountable for and can grow together with. This often happens best in a small group.

Service

Being involved in service to others is a discipline that is beneficial to many in drawing closer to God.

Other Heart Building Habits can include:

What heart building habits have you tried and what made them work or not work?

For you, what makes the difference between a spiritual exercise being a drudgery or being an experience in freedom?

What is your favourite part of Scripture? What makes this passage come alive for you?

SPIRITUAL PATHWAYS

Adapted from John Ortberg and Haley Barton, *An Ordinary Day With Jesus*, Zondervan, 2001 and Gary Thomas, *Sacred Pathways*, Zondervan, 2000

God seeks a unique connection with each of us and there are as many different ways to connect with God as there are people. However there are some general ways these connections work. A spiritual pathway is the way we most naturally connect with God and grow spiritually. The main pathways are:

- Intellectual
- Relational
- Serving
- Worship
- Contemplative
- Creation

Most people connect with God best through at least one or two of these main pathways and there is usually at least one pathway that is very unnatural for us.

While we must shape our life around heart-building habits that connect us with God we must also recognise the opportunities to extend ourselves in our relationship with God in the areas that are not our natural pathways.

Intellectual

Characteristics

You draw close to God as you're able to learn more about him.

The study of theology comes naturally. However at times you have little patience for emotional approaches to faith.

You are a thinker

Biblical Example:

Paul

Grow:

Read great books that challenge you.

Expose yourself to lots of teaching.

Find like minded people with whom you can learn.

Cautions:

Guard against becoming all head and no heart

"One of the hardest things in the world is to be right and not to hurt anybody with it." Dallas Willard

Don't confuse being smart with being spiritually mature.

Ways to Stretch:

Devote your self to corporate worship and to private adoration and prayer.

Engage in self-examination to assess whether or not you are being loving.

Relational

Characteristics

Spiritual growth comes most naturally when you're involved in significant relationships.

Small groups and other community life experiences are the key.

Your life is an open book.

Being alone can drive you crazy.

In key times of growth, God will often speak to you through people.

Biblical Example:

Peter

Strengths:

You need a relationally rich life

Pray with others in community

Learn with other people – in a small group

Use your network of contacts to further God's kingdom

Cautions:

Guard against superficiality

You can grow too reliant on others and become a spiritual chameleon.

Ways to Stretch:

Keep some of your experiences with God secret so that you don't become addicted to what other people think.

Study Scripture for yourself so you are grounded in God's Word rather than in others' opinions

Invite close friends to speak truth to you so that your relationship is more than just social.

Serving

Characteristics

God's presence seems most tangible when you're involved in helping others

You're often uncomfortable in a setting where you don't have a role.

If you have a role, then you sense God's presence and delight.

You constantly look for acts of service you can engage in and often don't even need to be asked.

Biblical Example:

Dorcas

Strengths:

Get plugged into a church body so you have opportunities for meaningful service to offer God.

Look for glimpses of God's presence in the people you serve and in the execution of your tasks.

Prepare to serve first by praying so your service is genuinely spiritual service.

Cautions:

Be careful not to resent other people who don't serve as much as you do.

Remember that God loves you, not because you are so faithful in serving him, but because you are his child.

Don't confuse serving with earning God's love.

Ways to Stretch:

Balance your service with small group and community life.

Learn how to receive love even when you're not being productive

Practise expressing love through words as well as actions.

Worshipping

Characteristics

You have a deep love of corporate praise and a natural inclination toward celebration

In difficult periods of life, worship is one of the most healing activities you engage in.

In worship, your heart opens up and you come alive and enthusiastically participate.

Biblical Example:

Miriam

Strengths:

Experience great worship on a regular basis

Use worship DVD's or CDs and make your car/room a private sanctuary.

Learn about other worship traditions and incorporate what you learn into your personal worship time.

Cautions:

Be careful not to judge those who aren't as expressive in worship.

Guard against an experience-based spirituality that always has you looking for the next worship "high".

"The danger in finding a way to God is that people grow to love the way more than they love God." Meister Eckhart

Ways to Stretch:

Engage in the discipline of solitude

Serve God in concrete ways as an extension of your worship.

Remain committed to your church even when worship isn't all you would like it to be.

Contemplative

Characteristics

You love uninterrupted solitude

Reflection comes naturally to you.

You have a large capacity for prayer.

If you get busy or spend a lot of time with people, you feel drained and yearn for times of solitude.

Biblical Example:

Mary, Martha's sister

Strengths:

You need regular, protected, intense time of solitude and stillness.

Act on what you hear from God in the silence

Cautions:

You have a tendency to avoid the demands of the real world because it doesn't live up to your ideals.

Be careful not to retreat to your inner world when friends, family or society disappoint you.

Resist the temptation to consider your times of private prayer and solitude as less important than the more public acts of ministry performed by others.

Ways to Stretch:

Choose a regular place of active service.

Stay relationally connected, even when those relationships become difficult or challenging.

Connect with those who have a service pathway

-Pray for them

-Get involved in some aspect of their ministry activity.

Creation**Characteristics**

You respond deeply to God through your experience of creation.

Being outdoors replenishes you.

You're highly aware of your physical senses.

You tend to be creative.

Biblical Example:

King David

Strengths:

Find a location for getaways.

Make beauty a part of your spiritual life.

Cautions:

You may be tempted to use beauty or nature to escape.

You will find that people are sometimes disappointing.

Guard against the temptation to avoid corporate worship because you think to yourself, "I can worship God in nature, on my own."

Ways to Stretch:

Stay involved in a worshipping community.

Be willing to help out in less-than-beautiful settings.

Take Scripture with you into nature, and meditate on God's Word as you enjoy his creation.

When do you feel closest to God?

What area would be good for you to extend yourself in?

AN ORDINARY DAY WITH JESUS

“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 3:17 (New International Version)

Too often people spend months or years or even decades feeling guilty about how they're approaching their spiritual lives – this is not God's will for his children – he has another plan. His great desire is to walk together with each child through the ordinary days of their lives.

John Ortberg & Ruth Barton *An Ordinary Day With Jesus*

We think if only the pressures of everyday life were lifted then we could be the kind of people God wants us to be. For the apostle Paul the reverse was true. He believed the place to grow close to God is right now in our EVERYDAY lives!

Every moment is an opportunity to say 'Here's my chance to learn from Jesus. He's right here, right now, ready to live in magnificent partnership with me.'

Imagine what it would be like to spend an ordinary day of your life doing the things you normally do, but actually doing them with Jesus. What if, for one day, you were to work, eat and sleep just like normal – except somehow Jesus was by your side each moment? When it was all over and you put your head on the pillow that night, what would you look back on the day with excitement and joy? What would make you cringe? Most of us would acknowledge that such a day would feel different.

In Paul's day a name signified the whole person – it was a label for the person's character. When Paul says to do everything in Jesus' name, he's saying to do these things according to Jesus' character – the same way Jesus would if He were in our place.

Paul's statement in Colossians 3:17 is very clear. 'Whatever you do' he says. Then in case we miss how broad that is, he adds 'in word or deed.' If anyone is still looking for a way out, he says 'do it all' in the name of Jesus.

Of course, this isn't something we attempt in our own power. We don't just do things for Jesus in His name – as if He were far away, like a spectator watching while we act on stage. When we become Christians, Jesus takes up residence within us. We do life with Him, in partnership, not as a performance.

What would an ordinary day with Jesus look like in your life?

- If someone were to observe you waking up, would they say it was pretty much like seeing Jesus wake up?
- What would it mean to eat breakfast in Jesus' name? Maybe it means you would actually eat breakfast! Would that affect the amount of gratitude you feel or the pace at which you eat?
- What would it look like to drive in Jesus' name? If you could actually see Jesus in the passenger seat next to you, would He look nervous? Would you drive slower than normal?
- How about work? Whether in an office or at home, school or retirement village, how might your daily work be different if you were to do it in Jesus' name?
- Watching TV. How would you watch TV – what sort of programmes?
- What would it mean to vacuum and pay the bills in Jesus' name?
- Everyday relationships. Think about your relationships with your family, friends and neighbours. Think of the words you've spoken so far today. If speaking in Jesus' name, how many words would you have had to hold back?

Living with Jesus comes in one-day doses – we can only live in Jesus' name one day at a time. We need to learn to find God in each moment of the day. Just like a 'Where's Wally' book, where you search the picture for the red and white beanie wearing character, we need to develop the skill of identifying God's presence in our lives. Take moments to be still and quiet in your mind. Be mindful of God's blessings and His presence in the things around you. Focus on Jesus' presence with you as you go through the seemingly inconsequential moments of your day. Take moments to direct your thoughts back to Him: ask for His help or His guidance, or simply share your heart with Him.

REFLECTION TIME

Would you like to spend a day with Jesus in person? Why or why not?

What are some of the ordinary things you can thank God for which have happened in the last 24 hours?

Would your friends say that being around you is a bit like being around Jesus? What would have to change for this to be the case?

Adapted from John Ortberg and Haley Barton, *An Ordinary Day With Jesus*, Zondervan, 2001

This is an excellent resource that would be useful to work through with your youth group.

THREE 'R' QUESTIONS TO ASK EACH DAY

1. Have I Renewed?

Renew your invitation to Jesus

When you wake up, check in with yourself. What fears or anxieties are you carrying even before your feet hit the floor? Even while your head is still on the pillow, at the beginning of every day invite Jesus to spend it with you. Jesus honours our freedom, so He usually doesn't impose himself on people who aren't open to Him. He goes where He's invited, so invite Him into your day.

Your invitation might be as simple as 'Lord, before I get up I want to invite you to join me in everything I do today. Thank you for your willingness to live in and through me.'

2. Have I Re-calibrated?

Throughout the day take some time to stop your work, be quiet and focus on God. Build in some margins.

Maybe you need wisdom for a tough decision or you just need to remind yourself of who God is. 'Cast all your anxieties upon Him because He cares for you.' 1 Peter 5:7 (New International Version)

3. Have I Reviewed The Day With God?

One of the best tools available to help you find God in each moment is a review of your day. Sports teams review their games to see how they played and, as the apostle Paul reminds us, our spiritual life is far more important than a game. Learn from mistakes and be encouraged in progress. Reflect on the attitudes you regret and ask God to 'prune' these things in you. We often don't take time to reflect on anything, let alone our lives. You'll begin to be awed by God's presence in the ordinary moments of your day.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German pastor martyred by the Nazis wrote: 'It is a decisive rule of every Christian fellowship that every dissension that the day has brought must be healed in the evening. It is perilous for the Christian to lie down to sleep with an unreconciled heart.' We reconcile cash registers at the end of each day – what about reconciling your heart.

Spirituality is about allowing God to work in and through us. It is about being connected to Christ, like the vine and the branches in John 15. Ellen

White recommends time each day contemplating Jesus – especially the last scenes of His life. When was the last time you ‘beheld’ Jesus?

LEADING SPIRITUAL FORMATION IN YOUR YOUTH GROUP

It Starts With You!

“The most effective way to bring renewal to the church is to facilitate renewal in the hearts and lives of leaders” Robert Logan, Refocusing The Church 4-6.

“When it comes to being a church leader, people will listen to what you teach but they will become what you are.” Wayne Cordeiro

How will you go about your spiritual growth journey? Remember you do not grow just because you are the leader but that God desperately desires to connect with you.

Ask God...

To help you grow deeper in your connection with Him.

To help you live accountably before your church family.

To stir up holy passion for Him.

To increase your hunger for Him personally and as a youth group.

To help you express your passion through mission to a hopeless world.

Make Spiritual Formation a Value on Your Team

Have you helped increase the faith of others on your team?

In Your Group

Take time to listen to and respond to the voice of God.

Encourage the sharing of inner conditions, not just outward situations

Make lots of time in your group meetings to pray about and think through the spiritual growth of your group. You’ll come up with ideas unique to your situation.

Think through the five purposes of life and the church and with your team pray about and put in place plans for how your youth group will grow in each of the areas.

Identify the Blockages to Spiritual Growth in Your Group

How will you address these blockages. What environments do you have to teach spiritual concepts? What environments can you create for your youth group to think about their spirituality? Maybe a camp or special worship event where people are challenged in their spiritual walk.

Spiritual Growth Plans

How will you help your youth develop spiritual growth plans? The plan included in the back of this handout might be useful in getting started. How will the programmes you run provide space for people with various pathways to connect?

Provide a place for youth to use their gifts

Think about how you will have your youth group understand and apply:

What it means to be spiritual

The dangers of our lifestyle

What it means to be a living sacrifice

How we shape around the five purposes

Heart Building Habits

Spiritual Pathways

Small Groups

Small Groups provide a wonderful environment to nurture passionate spirituality. How will you go about developing a small groups ministry in your youth group? There are lots of great resources to help you on this one. Contact your conference personal ministries director for great small groups resources.

Prayer and Worship

What plans do you have to increase the place of prayer in the life of your youth group?

USEFUL BOOKS FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH

At the Adventist Book Centre you will find a wide range of resources that will be helpful in your spiritual growth.

Anderson Ray S, *Living The Spiritually Balanced Life*, Baker Books, 1998

Blackaby, Henry, T, and King, Claude V. *Experiencing God*, Broadman and Holman, 1994.

Blake Chris, *Searching For A God To Love*, Sycamore/Pacific Press, 1999

Foster Richard, *Celebration of Discipline*, Hodder & Stoughton, 1989

Frazer Randy, *Making Room for Life*, Zondervan, 2004

Haffner Karl, *The Cure For Soul Fatigue*, Pacific Press, 2000

Hybels Bill, *Too Busy Not To Pray*, Inter-Varsity Press, 1998

Maxwell Randy, *If My People Pray*, Pacific Press, 1995

Mulholland M. Robert, *Invitation to a Journey* IVP, 1993

Ortberg John & Barton Ruth, *An Ordinary Day With Jesus*, Zondervan, 2002

Ortberg John, *The Life You've Always Wanted*, Zondervan, 1997

Ortberg John, *Love Beyond Reason*, Zondervan, 1998

Warren Rick, *Purpose Driven Life*, Zondervan, 2002

White Ellen, *Steps To Christ*, Pacific Press

White Ellen, *Christ's Object Lessons*, Pacific Press

White Ellen, *The Desire of Ages*, Pacific Press

White James Emery, *You Can Experience A Purposeful Life*, Word 2000

Whitney Donald, *Spiritual Disciplines For The Christian Life*, Navpress, 1984

Willard Dallas, *The Spirit of the Disciplines*, Harper Collins, 1988

Willard Dallas, *Hearing God*, Fount, 1999

Willard Dallas, *Renovation of the Heart*, Inter-Varsity, 2002

Willard Dallas & Johnson Jan, *Renovation of the Heart in Daily Practice*, Navpress, 2006,

Willard Dallas & Simpson Don, *Revolution of Character*, Inter-Varsity, 2006

Spiritual Health Check

Test yourselves to make sure you are solid in the faith. Don't drift along taking everything for granted. Give yourselves regular checkups... Test it out. If you lack spiritual maturity, do something about it. 2 Cor 13:5 (The Message, adapted)

Our greatest wish and prayer is that you will become mature Christians 2 Cor 13:9(NIV)

Spiritual health is all about having Christ's character formed in you. It's not how much you know but rather your continued growth in living the way God designed you. Knowledge is useful only if it transforms you into a person with a greater love for God and people.

So often Christians aimlessly drift along in their spiritual journey. They assume that they will grow but they rarely do. The Spiritual Health Check is designed to get you thinking intentionally about your spiritual health. It's designed to help you talk through your spiritual growth with a trusted friend or mentor. Remember your salvation is not about your actions or achievement - it is purely by the grace of God. However, if you're serious about following Christ and developing in His likeness, you will allow God to shape your life in ways that allow Him to powerfully work in and through you.

Who is responsible for your spiritual growth?

You are. While being part of a church community is vital and seminars are valuable, you cannot leave the responsibility for your spiritual health to anyone else. It's your life, so **you** need to put in place plans that build you spiritually.

Spiritual Growth

This year we are committed to increasing the spiritual maturity of our congregation. Our goal is to have every member moving along a track of spiritual growth. This means identifying where you are spiritually, meeting with and being accountable with a spiritual partner and then forming a plan so that you allow Christ to prune and be formed in you. Because each of us is different, with different spiritual pathways and at different life stages, a one plan fits all approach will not work. However, there are some basic foundations for spiritual growth that apply to all of us.

Our spiritual growth plan is based on the belief that spiritual growth:

- is a gradual, ongoing, process
- happens differently for each person
- involves developing heart building habits
- is stimulated by relationships (happens best in small groups)
- requires participation in all 5 purposes of the church to achieve balance.

Therefore, each of us needs a regular check of the five key signs of a healthy Christian life – our Worship, our Fellowship, our Discipleship, our Ministry and our Evangelism.

Remember, spiritual growth doesn't happen by accident. It requires us to be intentional. Deliberate. Committed. Accountable.

My Spiritual Health Check

To help you take an accurate snapshot of your spiritual life, answer the questions in this Spiritual Health Check then tally your results. Repeat this exercise on a regular basis (monthly or quarterly) to do a health check of your spiritual life.
 Note: This is your personal check and the results will not be collected or shared

Fellowship: You Were Formed for God's Family

		Low				High
1	I am intentionally developing deep and meaningful relationships with Christian friends and mentors	1	2	3	4	5
2	I am cultivating authentic community by speaking the truth in love and creating healthy boundaries	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am more loving, grace giving and forgiving than I was twelve months ago	1	2	3	4	5
4	I genuinely connect with my immediate family (parents, siblings, children, spouse)	1	2	3	4	5
5	I resolve conflict with others in a Biblical manner	1	2	3	4	5
6	I regularly use my time and resources to care for the needs of others	1	2	3	4	5
7	I am honest with myself (and a few significant others) about the feelings, beliefs, doubts, pains and hurts beneath the surface of my life	1	2	3	4	5
8	I gather regularly with a group of Christians for fellowship and accountability	1	2	3	4	5
9	I have an easy time receiving advice, encouragement, and correction from others	1	2	3	4	5
10	There is nothing in the way I talk or act concerning others that I would not be willing to share with them in person	1	2	3	4	5
Fellowship Total						

Discipleship: You Were Created to Become Like Christ

		Low				High
1	I put aside time each day to invite Jesus to be involved in my day and to reflect on how my day with God went and thank Him for being there	1	2	3	4	5
2	I am quick to confess anything in my character that does not look like Christ	1	2	3	4	5
3	I have people who hold me accountable for my spiritual growth	1	2	3	4	5
4	I ensure that my physical well-being is such that I can focus on God	1	2	3	4	5
5	I am consistent in pursuing habits that are helping me model my life after Jesus	1	2	3	4	5
6	I am honoring God with my finances, time and abilities and my first fruit giving of these to God	1	2	3	4	5
7	I avoid using addictive behaviours (television, busyness, substances etc) that crowd out my spiritual growth	1	2	3	4	5

8	I allow God's word to guide my thoughts and change my actions	1	2	3	4	5
9	I am able to praise God during difficult times and see them as opportunities to grow	1	2	3	4	5
10	I have found that prayer has changed how I view and interact with the world	1	2	3	4	5

Discipleship Total

Worship: You Were Planned for God's Pleasure

		Low			High	
1	The way I live my life shows that God is my highest priority	1	2	3	4	5
2	My thoughts actions and feelings are a daily expression of worship to and dependence on God	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am not afraid to worship God from the core of my being. Worship is an expression of my feelings for God based on my knowledge of Him	1	2	3	4	5
4	I regularly meditate on God's word and invite him into my everyday activities	1	2	3	4	5
5	There is nothing in my life that I have not surrendered to God	1	2	3	4	5
6	I am honoring God with every dimension of my life by balancing His purpose in my life	1	2	3	4	5
7	I am faithfully attending church worship services	1	2	3	4	5
8	I am growing in my personal worship to God through music and praise	1	2	3	4	5
9	I love to worship God by myself as well as with others	1	2	3	4	5
10	I have a deep desire to spend time in God's presence	1	2	3	4	5

Worship Total

Ministry: You Were Shaped for Serving God

		Low			High	
1	I sense the unique gifts and passions God has given me and am actively using my spiritual gifts for his service	1	2	3	4	5
2	I know the area of service that energises me and I serve in it	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am regularly serving in a ministry to the church body	1	2	3	4	5
4	I regularly reflect on how my life can have an impact for the Kingdom of God	1	2	3	4	5
5	I have dedicated all that I have and am to God	1	2	3	4	5
6	I enjoy meeting the needs of others without expecting anything in return	1	2	3	4	5
7	I volunteer time in community service	1	2	3	4	5
8	Those closest to me would say my life is a reflection of giving more than receiving	1	2	3	4	5
9	I see my painful experiences as opportunities to minister to others	1	2	3	4	5
10	I am quick to support and encourage other people in their ministry areas	1	2	3	4	5

Ministry Total

Evangelism: You Were Made for a Mission

		Low				High
1	I look for opportunities to build genuine relationships with people who do not know God	1	2	3	4	5
2	I am confident in my ability to share my faith	1	2	3	4	5
3	I willingly share Jesus with people	1	2	3	4	5
4	I invite people to attend my church and share my story with them	1	2	3	4	5
5	I introduce people to those who can help them at a particular stage in their spiritual journey	1	2	3	4	5
6	I pray specifically and regularly for my unchurched friends to come to know God and for opportunities to share my faith with them	1	2	3	4	5
7	I consistently integrate my faith in the marketplace and world	1	2	3	4	5
8	People would describe me as someone who makes 'loving well' my number one aim	1	2	3	4	5
9	People close to me would describe me as a responsive listener	1	2	3	4	5
10	I find that my relationship with Jesus comes up frequently in my conversations with those who don't know him	1	2	3	4	5

Evangelism Total _____

Enter your scores in the Table below for each of the five purposes. Then using the scale below identify if your Just Beginning, Well Developed or somewhere in between. Don't be discouraged if you're Just Beginning because doing your Spiritual Health Check and then deciding to work on specific areas of your spiritual life is a major life decision. Remember, spiritual growth doesn't happen by accident.

Purpose	Score	
Fellowship		
Discipleship		
Worship		
Ministry		
Evangelism		

Then for **each area** use the following scale as a guide

Just Beginning 0-10	Needs more intentionality 11-20	Getting Going 21-30	Happening Well 31-40	Well Developed 41-50
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Optional Extra: Have your spouse, group leader, parent(s) and/or Christian friend fill out a copy of this form based on you.

My Spiritual Health Plan

Now that you've completed your Spiritual Health Check you're ready to take the next step towards being a fully devoted follower of Christ - completing the Spiritual Health Plan with your Spiritual Partner. The Spiritual Health Plan is a tool to enable you to think **intentionally** about your growth in the five key purposes.

In the first column of your Spiritual Health Plan is the key question for each purpose. The first column list some possible actions or behaviours you can implement to help you in your spiritual growth. These are just suggestions as you may identify other actions or behaviours. In the third column list the actions that you have decided to work on. Remember, be realistic in your expectations as its easy to become discouraged.

Spiritual Partner

We all start with good intentions but often lack to discipline to follow through will our plans. Working with a Spiritual Partner will help you follow though with the growth steps that you have chosen. "A Spiritual Partner is an individual, usually of the same gender, who is committed on an on-going basis to help you deal with life and all that it offers. This person should be a good friend who encourages, you helps with accountability when needed, and actively supports you as you take spiritual risks and face challenges unique to your life. One of your fellow small group members is likely to be this kind of friend"¹. Alternatively, your small group leader could be your Spiritual Partner.

Steps to Your Spiritual growth

Here's the steps you need to follow:

- 1 Work through the your Spiritual Health Check. This is to get you thinking about your opportunities for spiritual development
- 2 Look at the Spiritual Health Plan. Prayerfully identify some possibilities for growth under each Purpose where you need spiritual growth
- 3 With your Spiritual Partner complete the Spiritual Health Plan by putting in place some steps you think will help you achieve these values.
You may find it useful to look through the purpose development plan for the Kellyville church and highlight the activities/programmes you need to be part of in developing your purposes.
- 4 Check back periodically with your Spiritual Partner (weekly/monthly) and honestly evaluate your progress
- 5 Adjust the Spiritual Health Plan to maintain your growth

¹ Gladen, S. and Olthoff, T., Spiritual Health Assessment and Spiritual Health Planner.

My Spiritual Health Plan

After completing the *Spiritual Health Assessment*, focus on the areas where you feel you need to plan for growth, and complete this *Health Plan*. Fill in the possible ideas for developing your spiritual life in each area, then translate those possibilities into actual steps you plan to take to grow or develop in each purpose. Share your plan with your spiritual partner, then check on your progress periodically.

Purpose	Possibilities	Plans
<p>Fellowship How can I deepen my relationship with others?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family/Friends • Relational/Emotional • Small Group Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend Sabbath School regularly • Participate regularly in a small group • Attend church camp • Actively seek to engage visitors and new members 	
<p>Discipleship How can I grow to be like Christ?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual Disciplines • Financial Stewardship • Character Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in <i>Contagious Christianity Seminar/Ordinary Day with Jesus Seminar</i> • Develop a personal stewardship plan • Pray daily • Get baptized • Journal 3-4 times a week 	
<p>Worship How can I live for God's pleasure?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular church attendance • Worship tapes and devotionals • Personal health and balance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read through the Psalms and note how focus on dependency on God • Set up a plan for giving up one things that you have held back from God • Spend 15 minutes each day reflecting on the life of Christ/reading the Bible • Practice the presence of God in your everyday life • Have times of solitude 3 times a week 	
<p>Ministry How can I serve God and others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry to the church body • Leadership training • Continuing training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take a spiritual gifts survey to discover your strengths • Volunteer at our church • Commit to serve/leading in a church ministry • Participate in community volunteer activity - Do Something for Someone Else Days/Drug Arm 	
<p>Share (Evangelism) How can I share my faith regularly?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission to the world • Seeker friends/family, work, neighborhood involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a territory to evangelise – Adventist Appeal, handbill • Intentionally develop a relationship with at least 2 non Christian friend • Invite a non Christian friend to a Kellyville church service/event • Develop my 30sec personal story 	