

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

- **WE MUST BE ABLE TO COMMUNICATE WITH GOD AND INTERACT WITH ONE ANOTHER**
- **THE APPROACH WILL NOT BE CONTENT VS. RELATIONSHIP RATHER WE ENCOURAGE A BALANCE OF BOTH**
- **OPEN TO SUGGESTION**

OUR PRIVILEGES

- **The awesome privilege of being involved in the plans of God**
- **People are at the heart of God**
- **He desires increasingly intimate relationship with us**

- **1 TIMOTHY 2:4** “⁴who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth”
- **MATTHEW 5:16** “¹⁶In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.

How can we achieve these goals?

- **He desires for us to grow in Him**
- **He desires for us to be life witness of Christ to a searching world**
- **He desires for us to offer love and care to others**
- **He desires for us to be interdependent in meeting each other's needs**

THE PRINCIPLE OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH PROCESS

1. The Principle of the Spiritual Growth Process

As believers, we are called to make disciples ([Matt. 28:19-20](#)). If we examine Christ's command in [Matthew 28](#), we see that evangelism and discipleship are one process. The Bible uses the metaphors of farming and parenting to describe it. When the Scriptures speak of evangelism, almost without exception, it uses the picture of a farmer tilling the soil, planting seed and harvesting the produce.

Parenting begins after harvesting. For example, the apostle Paul writes, "My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ has formed you" ([Galatians 4:19](#)). To the church in Thessalonica he writes, "But we were gentle among you, like a mother caring for her children...for you know that we dealt with each of you as a Father deals with his own children..."

THE PRINCIPLE OF SPIRITUAL FARMING

The Principle of Spiritual Farming

Spiritual farming consists of **FOUR** phases: cultivating, sowing, harvesting and offering.

CULTIVATING – Before we can sow seed, we must break up the hard ground, removing rocks, roots and other debris. If the soil is the human heart, God must remove obstacles and prepare it to receive the Word. Cultivation begins with a relationship, and relationships work through common ground. Activities, sports, computers, cooking, music – all can become the common ground of a new relationship. In **1 Corinthians 9:19-23**, Paul tells how he related to different kinds of people in order to lead them to Christ. He met people at their point of need. Jesus did too. He went to them. In doing so, He was known as a friend of sinners. He didn't think that was such a bad thing. Our call is to do the same.

SOWING

SOWING – The goal of sowing is to bring the unbeliever to a place where they ask the question, “Who is Jesus?” It may take years. Along the way, believers must be patient and consistent. But when the unbelieving friend is comfortable enough with us, and they like what they see, we can sow the Word.

Remember, we are to be “salt and light” ([Matthew 5:13-14](#)). Salt causes thirst. Light illuminates. Operation Timothy is designed to sow the Word.

HARVESTING

HARVESTING – We can cultivate and sow for years and never see a harvest. We must leave that to God. Paul tells us in [1 Corinthians 3:6-7](#) that, “I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then, neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth.” This is a long process. It takes time to turn hard, rocky clay into fertile, crop-producing soil. As we walk in obedience, we still share in the joy of that person coming into the kingdom of God. When we see a person come to know Christ, the metaphor shifts from that of farmer to that of parent.

Off-the-chart

