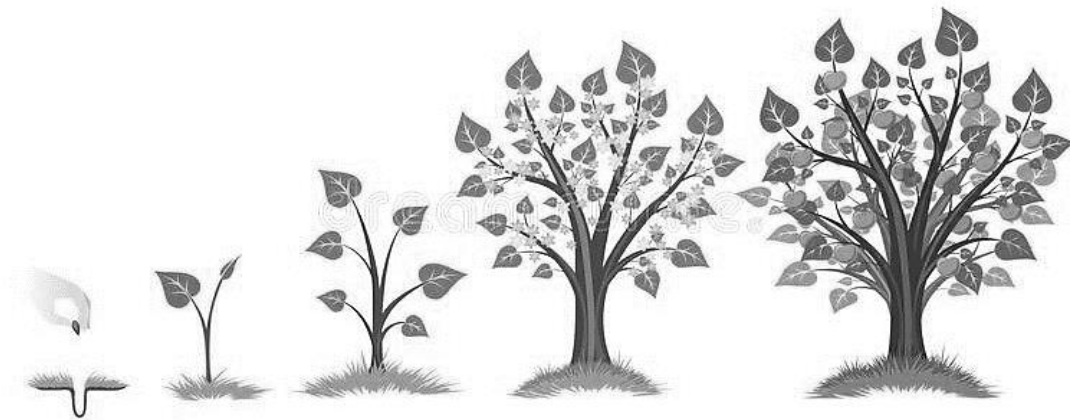


# Discipling New Believers

## A New Child of God

What a joy! Your student received Christ as their Savior! They are so grateful to God. They have a sense of peace. They are now going to heaven! Celebrate with them! But then, stop and remember that this is only the beginning.

A born-again Christian is in many ways just like a physical newborn infant. This is a joyful event, but a lot of growth still needs to happen. In the same way, your student must grow in Christ – but the burden is on you to teach them the basics.



## A New Life in Christ

Nearly all new Christians go through the following stages. Only with God, through His Word, through prayer, and being in fellowship with other believers; can the new believer be victorious through all stages of the Christian walk.

### 1. Excitement Stage

The new convert is happy, has a new life, new friends in the body of Christ, sharing their faith and experience with others. Has victory over sin and old habits.

### 2. The Fight Stage

Old habits begin to resurface. Cover-up and fake joy may be expressed. The new nature has entered, but the old nature has not died.

### 3. The Doubting Stage

Failure to realize that salvation is a lifelong process and requires growth through the Knowledge of God's Word and prayer, will set thoughts of doubt and questioning into the new believer.

#### 4. The Panic Search-for-Truth Stage

The new believer is easily swayed by other's suggestions to rely on reason, experience, or tradition rather than God's Word. The true source of authority must be the Bible.

#### 5. The Silent Christian Stage

Excitement and emotions give way to where the Christian becomes silent. Unless the Christian fights, continuously seeking God's help to reach others, there is great danger of falling into silence.

### Helping the Child Grow

Explain to the child that just like our physical bodies need food, water, exercise, etc. to be healthy, our soul does as well. As a child of God, he or she now needs to live a new life.

1. **Devotional Time** - Every Christian needs to build and develop their relationship with Christ. This is done through a daily devotional time where they read and study the Bible and pray.
  - a. **Bible** - Teach the child to read the Scripture attentively - looking for and listening to what the Lord will reveal to them. Keeping a journal of Scripture references and notes as well as questions is helpful.
  - b. **Prayer**- Teach the child to pray as a conversation with God. In your lessons talk about the need for praise and adoration, asking for needs, asking for forgiveness, etc.
  - c. **Journaling**- Not a must, but it is highly encouraged! Ask the child to write down what God is teaching them as they live out their new life in Christ. This also gives you an opportunity to ask them what kinds of things they have written down.
2. **Time with believers** -In order to grow, every Christian needs fellowship with others and receiving teaching (much of this is done in class).
3. **Living it out** -the believer needs to be taught about the importance of not just learning *about* God, but living *for* Him in obedience to His Word. Teach the child that they are not too young to share Christ with others at school or in their neighborhood.
  - a. **What if I sin?** 1 John 1:9 says that if we confess, God forgives our sin
  - b. **How do I know what is right and what is wrong?** The Bible is our guide - it tells us and teaches us how to live. If we don't understand something, we need to pray for the Holy Spirit to reveal it to us either through His Word or through His servants - pastors, parents, etc.

## Feelings...

Newborn Christians go through a rollercoaster of emotions - from excitement and joy, to depression and loneliness. Teach your students that we rely on God's promises, not our feelings.

- Some days we will feel **joy** - that is great - praise the Lord on such days.
- Other days we feel like God abandoned us - don't **despair** - He never left - stand on His word.
- If **guilt** is eating away at you, come to God and repent. If needed speak or confess something to a pastor or teacher, do so and - let them pray for you.
- Sometimes **questions** or **worry** takes over us - speak to someone about it. Pray and remember God's promises.
- **Fear** or **anxiety** can't take root in our heart if the Lord is with us. If these feelings come, tell Jesus about them and don't try to be brave on your own!
- If ever you feel **delighted** that God has answered your prayer, let Him know how **thankful** you are. He wants to know not only the bad things that happen to you, but the good too!

### To the teacher:

Teachers, as you disciple your 'newborn' believers, remember that growth doesn't happen automatically, or in one day. Sometimes it takes years. Be faithful, don't give up. Pray for every child and keep on teaching them. Be, "confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." (Phil. 1:6)