

Share with Volunteers



New Christians grow at an amazing rate. Why? The information is all new; everything, from Bible stories to Sunday School lessons to prayer seminars, is fresh and alive. Nothing is more exciting than discipling new Christians and enjoying their wonderment and excitement. Later, the process of spiritual growth slows. Growth must become both planned and intentional. Regardless of the stage of spiritual development, every believer must continue to grow!

Sneak
Peek

360- Degree Disciple

BY ALTON GARRISON



HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU ARE STILL GROWING?

By evaluation. If growth is to be intentional, we must assess its progress to ensure that we are continuing to grow. The following questions will help you evaluate your personal spiritual growth over the last year.

IS YOUR LOVE EVIDENT TO OTHERS?

The disciples did not wear emblazoned T-shirts proclaiming them as disciples. They had no advertising, no television commercials, and no shoe contracts. But Jesus did teach them a way they could be identified. In essence, Jesus told them, "Guys, if you want people to know that you are associated with me, show them love and show love to each other." The disciples may have been disappointed that there was not a more exciting, glamorous way to be identified with Jesus. Loving people seemed so ordinary.

Love was the mark of discipleship then, and love is the mark of discipleship now. If you are growing, your love for others is increasing. If your love for others is not increasing, you are probably not growing! Have you shown love to people that the world considers unlovable? Do others characterize you as loving and kind? At church, on the job, and in your family, do the people around you know that you love them? Is your love visible, evident, demonstrated in both words and actions? If you are not sure of the answer, ask the people around you!

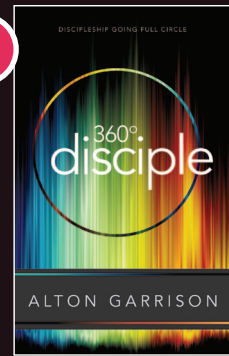
ARE THE HABITS OF A DISCIPLE EVIDENT IN YOUR LIFE AND INCREASING IN IMPORTANCE?

In the last year have you continued the five primary habits of a disciple?

1. Do you spend time every day in the Bible? A mature believer eagerly anticipates time in the Word.
2. Do you spend time every day in prayer? Are you spending more time than you were last year? If you are not praying, you are not growing!
3. Are you tithing to your local church? Do you enjoy giving, or has it become a chore? The growing believer is giving more and enjoying it more than ever before.
4. Are you attending church regularly?
5. Are you witnessing to others? In the last 12 months have you led anyone to Jesus or invited anyone to church? A growing disciple will produce other disciples. Our excitement about Jesus should always be evident to others.

ARE YOU MORE SENSITIVE TO GOD'S VOICE THAN EVER BEFORE?

Growing believers are aware that God can speak to them through His Word, through the Holy Spirit, through others, and through impressions. Are you asking God for and receiving His insight into situations and individuals?

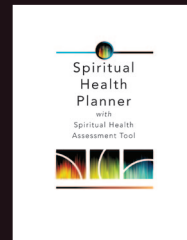


360-Degree Disciple by Alton Garrison

Discover how to produce transformed, godly disciples who circle around to draw others to Christ. This handbook will challenge you to evaluate your own spiritual walk as well as explore the various stages of discipleship—from knowing Christ to becoming a mature leader who disciples others. A special section covers discipling children, youth, families, and people of diverse ethnicities. (Updated and expanded, previously published as *Building the Winning Team*.) Paper.

02LK0562

\$9.99



Spiritual Health Planner with Spiritual Health Assessment

When was your last spiritual check-up? Assess where you are in your spiritual walk, where you want to be, and how to get there with this practical, personalized plan for growth in five key areas: worship, connect, grow, serve, and go. Use with your small group and entire church. Workbook includes a Spiritual Health Assessment, a Friend Feedback assessment, a Spiritual Health Plan, steps for spiritual growth ranging from goals you can easily meet to ones that challenge mature believers, and practical suggestions. Leader Kit includes CD-ROM, Spiritual Health Planner with Spiritual Health Assessment, and 10 two-ply tests.

Workbook. 02LK0937
Paper. 26 pages.

\$4.99

Test. 07LK5405

10 for \$7.95

Leader Kit. 08LK8460

\$34.99

Includes 1 workbook, 10 tests,
leader CD-ROM

ARE YOU HUNGRIER FOR GOD THAN EVER BEFORE?

“As a deer pants for water, so I long for you, O God” (Psalm 42:1, TLB). This is a wonderful word picture of desire for God. Do you hunger for God that strongly? Are you as excited about knowing Jesus as you’ve ever been?

Growth is intentional, not accidental!

IS THE QUALITY OF FORGIVENESS EVIDENT IN YOUR LIFE?

This is the question many people would prefer to skip. Forgiveness is not natural; it is supernatural. But mature believers are willing to forgive others in the same way Christ forgave them. John F. Kennedy once said, “Forgive your enemies, but remember their names.” That is not God’s idea of forgiveness! We must forgive completely, as we have been forgiven. Are you harboring bitterness toward someone who has wronged you? Are you unwilling to release a hurt that has occurred? Are there people in your workplace, your church, or your family that you have refused to forgive? Unforgiveness will stop your spiritual growth. It is a barrier we erect that keeps us from a complete relationship with Christ.

DO YOU HAVE A PLAN FOR GROWTH?

Growth is intentional, not accidental! Each year you should chart your path for spiritual growth in the coming year. For many people this is a primary reason they do not grow. They have the desire to grow and the time to grow, but they neglect to plan for growth. Consequently, upon evaluating their year, they find that little, if any growth has occurred.

ARE YOU FOLLOWING YOUR GROWTH PLAN?

For a plan to be effective, it must be followed. This question deals with self-discipline. Are you on track with your plan in the areas where you felt God was challenging you to grow?

ARE YOUR SPIRITUAL AUTHORITIES AWARE OF AND INVOLVED IN YOUR GROWTH?

Your growth will be enhanced by the involvement of your Sunday School teacher, small group leader, pastor, and spiritual leaders. Accountability is important to growth. Sometimes you may see little if any spiritual progress in yourself while others may see a great deal. At other times you may feel like you are right on track, without realizing you’re ignoring a glaring area of weakness. Determine to be vulnerable with others and allow them to assist you in your growth.

DOES THE WORD OF GOD GOVERN YOUR LIFE HABITS?

Are your actions consistent with God’s commands? Is your flesh winning the battle for control of your habits? If you are growing, your habits should be conforming to His Word more and more. Will we all continue to struggle in some areas? Of course! Paul did. He wrote, “I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do” (Romans 7:15).

ARE YOU BECOMING MORE CHRISTLIKE IN YOUR THOUGHTS, ATTITUDES, AND BEHAVIORS?

Simply put, are you less like the world and more like Jesus? Is your Christ-likeness increasing? This question speaks to the primary goal of Christianity: to be like Jesus! Each year, you should be more like Jesus than you have ever been before.

WHAT IS NEXT?

We will never reach a place of perfect maturity until we reach heaven. But our maturity is for a purpose. We do not grow in Christ for growth’s sake alone. Our growth is not part of some celestial contest whereby God proclaims a winner of the “Most Mature Award.” Instead, our growth should propel us to the next level—ministry! The natural outgrowth of maturity is ministry.

Our goal now is to be a disciple who makes disciples. That is discipleship coming full circle—a 360-degree disciple.