

Oakland International Fellowship Calvin Chiang

The Flow: Discipling of New Believers (1 John 2:12-14)

Session #5

# Spiritual growth is a process that requires careful planning and preparation. Imagine all the work expectant parents go through in anticipation of their new baby but at the last moment decided not to take the baby home from the hospital! Often times for new believers, this is exactly what happens. A lot of work goes into reaching out to non-believers but as soon as they become believers, they are left by themselves to grow.

# Children-New Believers

# 12) I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name’s sake.

# 13) I have written to you, children, because you know the Father.

* Spiritual growth develops in stages just like physical growth. Babies are not ready for table food within the 1st year of their life. They learn to crawl before they learn to walk. They are cuddled in care and bottle fed by the parents.
* ***“Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good” 1Pet 2:2-3***
* Children at this stage are unstable and need security just like the new believer is learning about what Christian life is all about.

**Challenges for New Believers**

* 3 specific things often confuse new believers:
  + Sin: Need to fight off doubts about their salvation which can cause great degrees of instability.
  + Forgiveness: Reject wrong concepts of true Christian faith.
  + Belonging to God’s family: Being able to relate to God as their Father.
  + Spiritual needs at this point are being encouraged, accepted, and belonging. These things should be covered in the initial trainings for new believers.

**Spiritual Growth for New Believers**

“You have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe.” (Hebrews 5:12-13)

* New life has begun and will continue to grow if rightly protected and nourished. We all have spiritual needs and these needs have to be fulfilled. It’s easy to fill our bodies with junk food and unhealthy things. New believers need to be cared for and trained up to eat the right things.
* The evil one is clever and strategically attacks a set group of weaknesses among new believers.
* The child stage should be temporary and not be stuck at this stage for a long time.

**OIF Goals for New Believers**

* OIF wants to help and establish the faith of all new/young believers during their stay in OIF and help to progress their growth to the next level.
* Join and get involved in the OIF discipleship program.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What did you experience at the new believer stage? Any special care or experience that you can share?

1. Did you find that security, encouragement, acceptance and belonging from God or are you still looking for it?
2. Do you know how to help new believers to grow through this crucial stage?