

# Grow

*Building Life-Changing HABITS*





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BIBLE CENTER | CHURCH<sup>®</sup>

1st Edition ▪ 2024

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# *Introduction*

This resource guide and devotional is designed to help you grow as a disciple of Jesus and to make more disciples of Jesus.

Jesus started His ministry by making disciples. He said,

*Follow Me,  
And I will make you  
Fishers of men.*

**MATTHEW 4:19**

Jesus based His entire ministry strategy on a few who would **follow Him and make more disciples**. **Making disciples** is the central mission and strategy of the church until Jesus returns. At Bible Center, we live out this mission by helping everyone to **Connect, Grow, and Multiply**.

**Connect** - (Follow Me) **The Gospel is Central**, so we live to share the Gospel with everyone so that they may follow Jesus and participate in His church.

**Grow** - (and I will make you) We build HABITS by always taking our next step of growth.

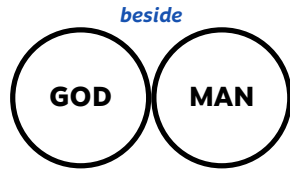
**Multiply** - (fishers of men) We intentionally make more disciples by helping others to connect and grow. We continue this process until we saturate the state with the Gospel. We are **#ForCountryRoads**.

# Connect

**We follow Jesus and participate in His church.** The Gospel communicates how we start a relationship with Jesus and how to grow in our relationship with Him. The Gospel is the central message of the Bible and is summarized below in 10 Words.

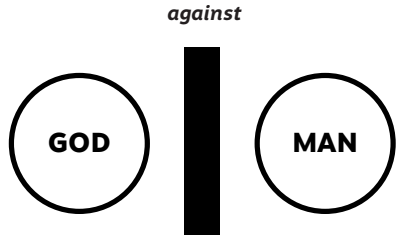
## God Creates

God **beside** us! God created all things—including mankind—in His own image to have a relationship with Him. *Genesis 1, Colossians 1:15-17, Psalm 139*



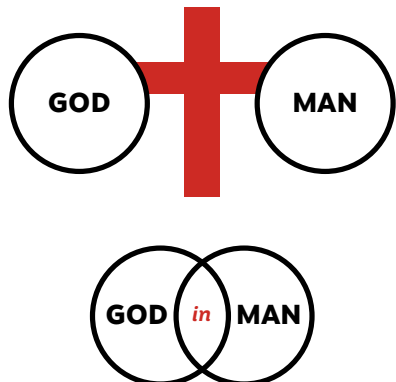
## Sin Breaks

God **against** us! Sin broke our relationship, and we are enemies and hostile toward God, separated from Him. *Romans 3:10, 3:23, 5:8, Colossians 1:21*



## Jesus Saves

God **in** us! Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose from the dead. He forgives and saves all who place their faith in Him and gives them the Holy Spirit. *Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 10:9-10*



Jesus offers salvation to all who believe in Him. You can express your faith by praying to Him now... *“Jesus, I have sinned against you and ask for your forgiveness. I believe you died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead.”*

## Jesus Transforms

Jesus **for** us! Jesus is for us! Jesus transforms us to be more like Him through a process of growth and calls us to make more disciples of Him. *Matthew 4:19, Philipians 1:6*



## God Restores

God **with** us! God with us! One day Jesus will return and will renew and remake all things—including you, the church, and all of creation! *Colossians 3:4, Revelation 21-22*



Life is designed to be lived with one another, **participating in the church** through learning and living the Bible, prayer, and worship.

# *Grow*

Jesus transforms us through a process of growth throughout our lives. The way we consistently spend our time and engage with God and others form our habits. Growth takes place as we break bad habits and build healthy habits. It has been said,

**“Shape your habits and then your habits will shape you.”**

The Bible speaks to our priorities and values. At Bible Center, we use the acronym, **HABITS**, to focus on six ways to grow. As we grow, our love for God, one another, and our neighbors will become more evident in our actions, desires, and words.

We grow by taking steps to build biblical HABITS. In this booklet, the HABITS are defined and described. A couple of devotionals, developmental resources, and opportunities are also included.

Our **HABITS Assessment** is available to help you determine which HABITS are going well and which could use some attention and growth (pg. 23).



## *Additional Tools for Growth*

**Next Step Team** — Members of the team are available after each service to help you determine your next step. They can answer questions, give you ideas, and even provide accountability, encouragement, and feedback. The team will give you access to numerous resources along with suggested books that may help you in your journey.

**Bible Center App & Website** — The information provided by the Next Steps Team is also available digitally on our app and website.

**HABITS Progress/Accountability Card** — A card is available to help you keep track of your progress and next steps. The accountability card provides a way for the Next Steps Team to encourage you and celebrate your progress.



**HABITS Assessment** — The assessment is found at the end of this booklet. It will help you discover your strengths and areas that can be improved. There is also a digital version available. (Its QR code is found at the bottom of pg. 23.)

**50 Day Devotional to Know Jesus More** — This devotional is a walk through Scripture, studying the *10 Words of the Gospel* as well as each of the HABITS. It is a great way to get started on your journey.

# *Have a Group*

As followers of Jesus, we are **centered on the Gospel** by actively, consistently, and intentionally spending time with other Christians and living life together.

## **TAKE YOUR NEXT STEP** .....

### **Find a Life Group and Attend**

Life Groups are available on Sundays and during the week. Sunday morning groups tend to fit the needs of people during different seasons of life (College students, Young Professionals, Young Families...), but anyone is welcome to get involved with any group.



[biblecenterchurch.com/groups](http://biblecenterchurch.com/groups)

Life Groups also meet during the week. Connect with others through conversation and care, whether in a men's group, women's group, support group, or other type of group. Groups which meet in homes are available.

### **Start a Group**

Contact Pastor Mike (email: [mgraham@biblecenterchurch.com](mailto:mgraham@biblecenterchurch.com)) and have a conversation about the possibility of starting a new group!

### **Let Us Know About Your Group**

Many already have intentional friend groups that live life together. Letting us know about your group gives us the ability to support and pray for you and your group. It also helps us know how many at Bible Center are actively growing through Christian fellowship.

## RESOURCES

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### Explore Possible Content for Your Group

- Core Classes
- Bible Studies



[biblecenterchurch.com](http://biblecenterchurch.com/core-classes)  
/core-classes

### Recommended Books

- ***Transformational Groups***, Ed Stetzer & Eric Geiger
- ***Community: Taking your Small Group off Life Support***, Brad House
- ***Relationships: A Mess Worth Making***, Tim Lane & Paul Tripp
- ***Side by Side: Walking with Others in Wisdom and Love***, Edward Welch

The Bible describes believers as a unified body, interdependent upon one another, and contributing to the growth of the whole. Therefore, your involvement matters! Having a group means that you grow, those around you grow, and the body of Christ as a whole grows.

# *Attend Regularly*

**We Gather** in the local church as God's family to actively participate in worshiping, learning, and serving one another. Attend regularly and be recharged and refreshed spiritually.

## TAKE YOUR NEXT STEP .....

**Serve on Sundays**



*biblecenterchurch.com/serve*

**Sign up for Baptism**



*biblecenterchurch.com/baptism*

**Serve on our Welcome Team**

Help welcome new guests.

**Start by attending a service 3 weeks in a row.**

**Get caught up on a sermon**



*biblecenterchurch.com/sermons*

**Take a membership class.**

Membership says, "I'm in" at Bible Center.

## RESOURCES

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### Recommended Books

- *We Want You Here*, Thom Rainer
- *Above All: The Gospel is the Source of the Church's Renewal*, J.D. Greear
- *I Am A Church Member*, Thom Rainer

The church is the living, growing, and active body of Christ. The church is given the two offices of Elders and Deacons. We remember and celebrate the person and work of Jesus through the two ordinances of baptism and communion. Church leadership is called by God to shepherd, equip, and teach the flock; membership communicates who considers Bible Center their church.

# *Be in the Bible*

God's Word is divine, inerrant, and authoritative. As **Humble Learners** we read, study, meditate on, memorize, apply, and share it with others. The Word is preached on Sundays, studied and applied in our groups, and everyone is encouraged to spend daily time in the Bible.

## TAKE YOUR NEXT STEP .....

### **Start a Reading Plan**

- *The Bible Recap: A One-Year Guide to Reading and Understanding the Entire Bible*, Tara Lee Cobble
- The Chronological Bible
- Discipleship Journal
- Ligonier Ministries – [Ligonier.org/posts/Bible-Reading-Plans](http://Ligonier.org/posts/Bible-Reading-Plans)
- You Version – [Bible.com/Reading-Plans](http://Bible.com/Reading-Plans)



[biblecenterchurch.com/nextsteps/bible](http://biblecenterchurch.com/nextsteps/bible)

### **Take a Core Class**

- Family Nights - *How to Study the Bible*
- God's Word Class
- Doctrine 201 Classes



[biblecenterchurch.com/core-classes](http://biblecenterchurch.com/core-classes)

### **Begin reading the Bible with a family member or friend.**

### **Volunteer at AWANA and help kids memorize Scripture.**

## RESOURCES

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### Online Resources

- The Bible Project – [BibleProject.com](http://BibleProject.com)
- The Gospel Coalition – [TheGospelCoalition.org](http://TheGospelCoalition.org)
- YouVersion Bible App – [YouVersion.com](http://YouVersion.com)

### Recommended Books

- ***How to Read the Bible for All its Worth***, Gordon Fee & Douglas Stuart  
Teaches how to read the different types of literature in the Bible)
- ***Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps & Charts***, Nelson's  
Gives basic historical and background information on each book of the Bible
- ***30 Days to Understanding the Bible***, Max Anders  
Walks through the big picture of the Bible in 30 days

### Slightly More Advanced

- ***Living by the Book***, Howard Hendricks
- ***How to Study Your Bible: Inductive Approach***, Kay Arthur
- ***Understanding the Big Picture of the Bible***, Grudem, Collins, and Schreiner

# *Invest Faithfully*

In response to God's love for us, we generously and joyfully give of our time and resources to the mission of God. For the Christian, **Generosity is Normal.**

## TAKE YOUR NEXT STEP .....

- Give for the first time or begin giving faithfully (recurring)**



[biblecenterchurch.com/give](https://biblecenterchurch.com/give)

- Find a place to serve:**  
Children's Ministry (K-Grade 5);  
MSM or HSM (Grades 6-12);  
Outreach Ministries or  
specific events;  
Sunday mornings



[biblecenterchurch.com/serve](https://biblecenterchurch.com/serve)

- Take a Spiritual Gifts test.**  
Learn about how God has gifted you.



[biblecenterchurch.com  
/core-classes/spiritual-gifts](https://biblecenterchurch.com/core-classes/spiritual-gifts)

### **Grow in your generosity**

Is there someone in your life that you would consider a generous person? What traits or values do you notice as they serve others? How will you grow in generosity?

Consider someone in your life today who would benefit from your generosity. How can you demonstrate generosity to that person today or this week?



## RESOURCES

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### Take a Class

- *Spiritual Gifts* Core Class
- Biblically-based finance class

### Recommended Books

- ***Money, Possessions, and Eternity***, Randy Alcorn
- ***Financial Peace***, Dave Ramsey
- ***Treasure Principle***, Randy Alcorn
- ***Redeeming Money***, Paul David Tripp

# *Talk to God*

We talk to God as our Maker, Savior, Lord, and Friend. At any moment and at all times, we can continue to stay connected to our Lord openly and honestly by sharing everything in our life and heart with Him.

We pray to God bringing praises, requests, and repentance on behalf of ourselves and others, knowing that God hears and **God Can**.

## **TAKE YOUR NEXT STEP** .....

**Get a journal and begin writing out your prayers.**

**Pray through ACTS:**

Adoration:

Confession:

Thanksgiving:

Supplication:

**Begin praying before your meals.**

**Begin praying with a family member or friend.**

**Commit to praying for a neighbor, friend, or one of our Global Partners.**

**Choose a consistent time and place to pray.**  
What time of the day can you pause and spend time talking to God?

We don't always need to come to a full stop to pray. We can meet with God while we drive, while we shower, while we... We can meet with God anywhere, but it is nice to have a place or a couple places that decrease distractions and give us the space to pause and focus.

Use a **Prayer Accountability Chart** (pg. 21).

## RESOURCES

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### Take a Core Class

- Family Night Talk to God Core Class
- Prayer Core Class



[biblecenterchurch.com](https://biblecenterchurch.com/core-classes)  
/core-classes

### Recommended Books

- *A Praying Life*, Paul Miller
- *Praying the Bible*, Donald Whitney
- *A Praying Church*, Paul Miller

### Additional Books

- *Prayer*, Timothy Keller
- *The Necessity of Prayer*, E. M. Bounds
- *Prayer*, O. Hallesby

# *Share Your Faith*

As we follow Jesus and **Love our Neighbors**, Jesus transforms us into “fishers of men.”

## TAKE YOUR NEXT STEP

### Invite

Give a friend a “Join Me at Church” invitation card.



### Become a part of our **Connect Team**

Help welcome new people to our church. There will be many opportunities to talk about Jesus and the church.

### Share the **Good News in 10 Words** gospel tract.



### Practice sharing the Gospel

- Write out the *10 Words of the Gospel* on the next page.
- Draw out the circles and key words (pgs. 2-3) to communicate the Gospel.
- Memorize several verses about the Gospel (pg. 20)

### Serve the Community

- Participate in one of our community events or local outreach ministries and/or;
- Serve some of the parents at our preschool or school.



[biblecenterchurch.com/serve](http://biblecenterchurch.com/serve)

**Pray**

Make a list of non-Christian friends and pray for them. You could place these names on prayer cards located in the back of the auditorium; the pastors and staff would love to join you in praying for your friends.

 **Build Relationships**

- Invite someone to coffee, for a walk, for a meal, into your home...
- Find a way to meet more folks who do not know Christ

## RESOURCES

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**Take a Core Class on sharing your faith.**



*biblecenterchurch.com  
/core-classes*

### **Recommended Books**

- ***Tell Someone: You Can Share the Good News***, Greg Laurie
- ***How to Give Away Your Faith***, Paul Little
- ***Mamma Bear Apologetics: Empowering Your Kids to Challenge Cultural Lies***, Hillary Ferrer
- ***The 9 Arts of Spiritual Conversations***, Mary Schaller & John Crilly

Christians are sent by Jesus to continue His mission of calling others to repentance and faith through the Gospel. It is important that we are equipped to share the Gospel and lead others to Christ. We live our lives inviting, sharing, serving, praying and building relationships with others.



# Share Your Faith

Fill in the missing words:

**God** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sin** \_\_\_\_\_

**Jesus** \_\_\_\_\_

**Jesus** \_\_\_\_\_

**God** \_\_\_\_\_

**Fill in the blanks again and draw the corresponding diagrams.**

**God** \_\_\_\_\_

God \_\_\_\_\_ us! God created all things—including mankind—in His own image to have a relationship with Him.

**Sin** \_\_\_\_\_

God \_\_\_\_\_ us! Sin broke our relationship, and we are enemies and hostile toward God, separated from Him.

## Jesus \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ us! God in us!  
Jesus died on the cross for our sins and rose from the dead. He forgives and saves all who place their faith in Him and gives them the Holy Spirit.

## Jesus \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ us! Jesus is for us! Jesus transforms us to be more like Him through a process of growth and calls us to make more disciples of Him.

## God \_\_\_\_\_

God \_\_\_\_\_ us! God with us!  
One day Jesus will return and will renew and remake all things—including you, the church, and all of creation!



# Share Your Faith

## VERSES TO MEMORIZE

The verses below are in NIV, but choose any translation.

*"Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, in Our likeness.'"*

**GENESIS 1:26**

*"For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities, His eternal power and divine nature have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse."*

**ROMANS 1:20**

*"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."*

**ROMANS 3:23**

*"But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us."*

**ROMANS 5:8**

*"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God not by works, so that no one can boast."*

**EPHESIANS 2:8-9**

*"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."*

**ROMANS 10:9-10**



# *Prayer Accountability Chart*

	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
Verse or Psalm							
Area of Personal Growth							
Family							
Friends							
Ministry or Church							
Events							
Other							

Prayer Accountability Partner: \_\_\_\_\_

# HABITS Assessment Test

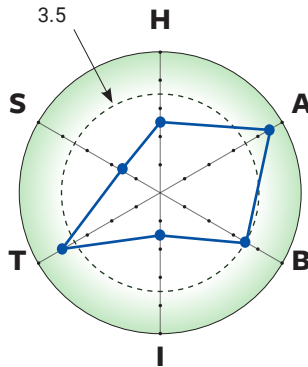
On the following pages, you will be self-assessing for each of the values of “HABITS.”

## Directions

1. Based on the table in the green box, **answer all the questions on pgs. 24-29**. Write your answers on the blank lines provided.
2. Turn back to page 24. **Find out the average** by adding up your answers to questions #1-8 of each page and then dividing the total by 8. **Write down your average on the remaining blank line**. These averages are your scores for that particular value.
3. **Turn to pg. 30**. Copy your scores onto the blank lines.
4. **Put a dot on the corresponding HABITS value line** in accordance to your score.
5. **Connect the dots** with straight lines. An example is provided below.

Any score 3.5 or higher means you are actively growing (i.e., you have a good headstart!) for that particular value. Any score lower than 3.5 is called your “growing edge” and is an area in which you can improve.

H	<u>2.6</u>	I	<u>1.4</u>
A	<u>4.2</u>	T	<u>3.9</u>
B	<u>3.5</u>	S	<u>1.8</u>



## Want to Take the Test Online Instead?

Scan the code to the left. It is the same test as what is shown on pgs. 24-29. <https://app.agolix.com/assessment/25649/start>

<b>If your answer is:</b>	Never, No, or 0 times	Rarely, Unlikely, or 0 times	Sometimes, Possibly, or 1 time	Frequently, Likely, or 2-3 times	Always, Yes, or 4+ times
<b>then your score is:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

## ***Have a Group Questions***

**We are centered on the Gospel by actively, consistently, and intentionally spending time together with other Christians in the Word and in life.**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. *Do you have a group of believers that you spend time with on a regular basis?*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. *Do your Christian friends know how you are doing spiritually?*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. *How many people in your life know you and talk with you about the spiritual growing edges in your life?*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. *Are you actively involved with a group at the church?*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. *How many times a month do you attend a group?*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. *Is there a group of people that you pray for regularly and who regularly pray for you?*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. *If something difficult happened to you, do you have believers in your life who would jump into action to help you and care for you?*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. *How many people have you invited to join a group this year?*

\_\_\_\_\_ **#1-8 total**

÷ 8 = \_\_\_\_\_ ***This is your score for H.***

# **Attend Regularly Questions**

**We gather in the local church to actively participate in worshiping, learning, and serving one another.**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. *How many times a month do you attend Sunday morning services?*
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. *Do you look forward to Sunday morning services?*
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. *Are you actively contributing to and serving others on Sunday mornings?*
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. *Are you a member or actively pursuing membership?*
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. *How many new folks have you met this month during Sunday services?*
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. *Do you do anything that helps you remember and apply the Sunday sermons?*
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. *Do you believe that your presence matters on Sunday mornings?*
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. *How many people have you invited to come with you to a service this year?*

\_\_\_\_\_ **#1-8 total**

**÷ 8 = \_\_\_\_\_ This is your score for A.**

<b>If your answer is:</b>	Never, No, or 0 times	Rarely, Unlikely, or 0 times	Sometimes, Possibly, or 1 time	Frequently, Likely, or 2-3 times	Always, Yes, or 4+ times
<b>then your score is:</b>	1	2	3	4	5

## ***Be in the Bible Questions***

We humbly learn from God’s Word through reading, studying, meditating, memorizing, applying, and sharing it with others.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. *Do you believe that the Bible is God’s inspired, perfect, and holy Word?*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. *Do you desire and work to live your life under the authority of the Bible?*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. *Do you know how to accurately understand, interpret and apply God’s Word?*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. *How many times in a week do you spend time in God’s Word?*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. *Does God’s Word influence your prayers, conversations, and life decisions?*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. *Do you have a plan for learning the Bible?*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. *Have you learned something new this week from God’s Word?*
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. *Have any of your motivations, actions, or words recently changed because of your time in God’s Word?*

\_\_\_\_\_ **#1-8 total**

÷ 8 = \_\_\_\_\_ ***This is your score for B.***

## **Investing Faithfully Questions**

In response to God's love for us, we generously and joyfully give of our time and resources to the mission of God.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Do you know and can you list your spiritual gifts?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Are you serving and actively using your spiritual gifts?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Have you received positive assessments or feedback from others when you serve using your spiritual gifts?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Have you identified a particular population, age, or group that you feel especially passionate about helping and serving?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Do you regularly give financially to the church?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Do you financially give to the point of personal sacrifice?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Do you experience joy and gratitude when you give?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Do you feel like you understand and live out God's unique call and role for you in the body of Christ?

\_\_\_\_\_ **#1-8 total**

÷ 8 = \_\_\_\_\_ **This is your score for I.**

<b>If your answer is:</b>	Never, No, or 0 times	Rarely, Unlikely, or 0 times	Sometimes, Possibly, or 1 time	Frequently, Likely, or 2-3 times	Always, Yes, or 4+ times
<b>then your score is:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

## Talk to God Questions

We pray to God bringing praises, requests, and repentance on behalf of ourselves and others knowing that God hears and God can.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Do you pray on a daily basis?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Do you experience intimacy with God in your prayer life?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Do you believe God hears and answers your prayers?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Would you characterize your prayers as worshipful and grateful?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Do you pray for your daily needs?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. How many times a week do you pray with others (family, friends, neighbors, or in your group)?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. How many different people do you pray for on a typical day?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Are you willing and happy to pray out loud with brothers and sisters in Christ?

\_\_\_\_\_ #1-8 total

÷ 8 = \_\_\_\_\_ **This is your score for T.**

## **Share Your Faith Questions**

**We love our neighbors by meeting needs and sharing Christ, inviting others to share their spiritual journey and connecting them to Jesus.**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. *Are there intentional and specific ways that you demonstrate the love of Christ to non-Christians in your life?*
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. *If given the opportunity, could you clearly explain the Gospel to lead someone to a saving knowledge of Christ?*
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. *How many non-Christians do you pray for each week?*
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. *How many non-Christians do you have in your life that you would consider friends?*
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. *Do you know verses that could be used to help someone understand the major components of the Gospel (God Creates, Sin Breaks, Jesus Saves, Jesus Transforms, God Restores)?*
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. *How many spiritual conversations have you had with non-Christians in the last two months?*
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. *How many times have you hung out with a non-Christian (outside of required situations) in the last two months?*
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. *Have you invited a non-Christian to church, your group, an event, or to a service opportunity lately?*

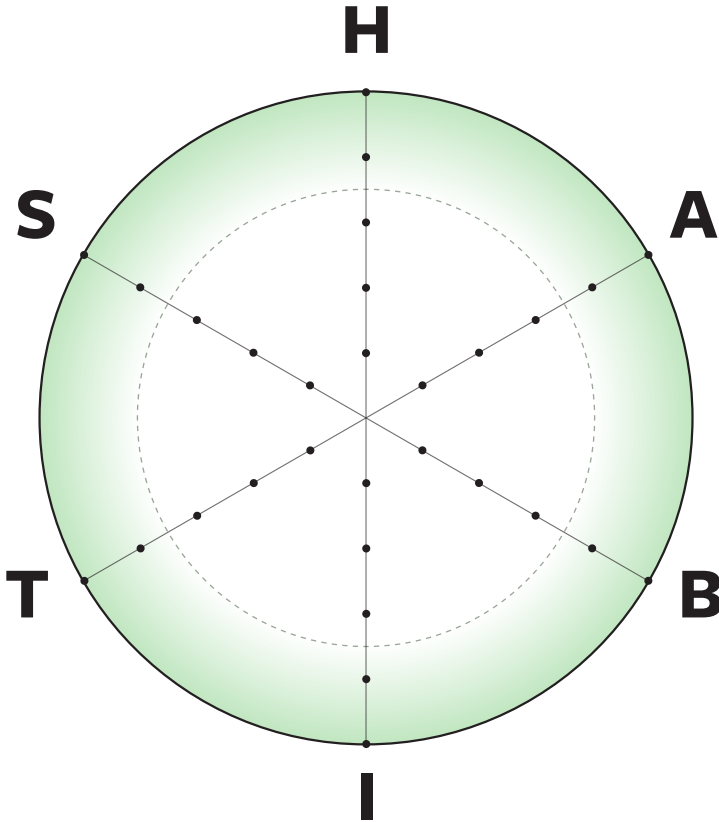
\_\_\_\_\_ **#1-8 total**

÷ 8 = \_\_\_\_\_ **This is your score for S.**



# ***HABITS Radar Chart***

**TAKE YOUR NEXT STEP OF GROWTH**



*Write down your values here:*

---

**H                    A                    B                    I                    T                    S**

1. In which HABITS are you actively growing (outer circle)?
2. Which HABITS are your growing edge (inner circle)?
3. Which HABITS would you like to focus on?
4. What is the Next Step that you will take?



# *How Do We Grow?*

## **Jesus Transforms**

We can plant seeds and water, but it is Jesus who causes the growth (1 Corinthians 3:5-6). As we behold Him, He transforms us (2 Corinthians 3:18). Spiritual growth is never something we accomplish on our own (Galatians 3:2-3, 1 Peter 4:11). Jesus is the One who saved us and He is the one who will grow us (Philippians 1:6). God is actively at work in our lives (Philippians 2:13). Thankfully, it is Jesus who ultimately transforms His children. Scripture also calls us to action, so we ask the question: ***What part do we play in our spiritual growth?***

## **We Participate**

Jesus transforms us through His power and presence, but He also calls for our **participation**. We are responsible for our growth or lack of growth (Hebrews 6:1-6). We are encouraged or cautioned, depending on how we are doing (1 Corinthians 3:1-3). Each Christian is to work (actions) with all of their hearts (motives and desires) for the Lord (Colossians 3:23) in thankfulness and in the name of Jesus (Colossians 3:17). Though the Lord is the One who changes us (Philippians 2:13), we are to work to grow with diligence (Philippians 2:12). We consistently, day after day, present ourselves as living sacrifices to Jesus (Romans 12:1).

- **We Have Disciplers** – Spiritual disciplers and leaders protect and guard the flock (Acts 20:28). Paul labors for others to grow (Galatians 4:19, Colossians 2:1). Paul recognizes his role as an example (1 Corinthians 11:1, Philippians 3:17, 4:9, 1 Thessalonians 3:9). We labor until everyone hears about Jesus and grows to the fullness of maturity in Him (Colossians 1:28-29).
- **We Mature** – A biblical process of growth takes place, which can be described in several ways:
  - a. In 1 Corinthians 3:1-3, some are called carnal, and they are expected to be mature. Instead of spiritual food, they are only able to handle spiritual milk. Paul assesses their maturity and then writes to encourage and warn them to take their next steps of spiritual growth.
  - b. Growth is described as the movement from spiritual infancy to spiritual maturity (Hebrews 5:12-14).
  - c. John addresses people at different levels of spiritual maturity: little children (*teknia*), children (*paida*), young men (*neaniskos*), and fathers (1 John 2:12-14). Each has a particular word given and a

next step to take. The biblical authors **assess** spiritual maturity, **measure** growth, and then **encourage** people to take their next step of growth.

- **We Consider** – “And let us **consider** how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds” (Hebrews 10:24). The ability to truly determine the best way to encourage someone is through knowing and understanding them. Relationships are key in this process. As a spiritual family, as disciples, and as those needing discipleship, we are to daily **consider** how to encourage one another toward spiritual growth and increased faith (Hebrews 3:13). Each of us is motivated in different ways based upon our **maturity, personality, and stage of life**.
- **We Assess and Measure** – Taking time to thoughtfully and honestly consider our strengths and weaknesses is essential in our journey of spiritual growth. HABITS create a grid to ask questions and measure progress. Paul would consistently assess the spiritual health of a church (and often, individuals in a church) and call them to take next steps. Only God knows the heart, so the best thing we can do is point people to **actively participate** in the life-changing HABITS the Bible gives us for growth. Individuals living out 3 of the HABITS or more are considered **actively growing**. Jesus wants everyone to be **actively growing** in the church (Colossians 1:28). The church will seek to measure progress and help more people each year to actively grow!
- **We Encourage, Set Goals, and Celebrate** – Believers are called to encourage one another daily (Hebrews 3:13). This often takes place through quality conversations, setting goals, and celebrating steps of faith. With each step, Jesus receives the credit and gets the glory. Since all of us have different personalities, motivations, and life situations, encouragement and goals may differ. Some may need a group for accountability. Others may want someone to help them verbally process their next step. Some will be **intrinsically** motivated while others may first need **extrinsic** motivation to get them going on their journey.  
**We seek to provide many opportunities to help you on your journey!**

Jesus transforms, and we are called to participate. We journey together.

**We Grow!**

**Take your Next Step...**