

The Tree of Discipleship

Acts 2:42-47

6. Fruit

(Sharing Christ with Others)

5. Branches

(Ministry)

4. Trunk

(Spiritual Practices)

3. Roots

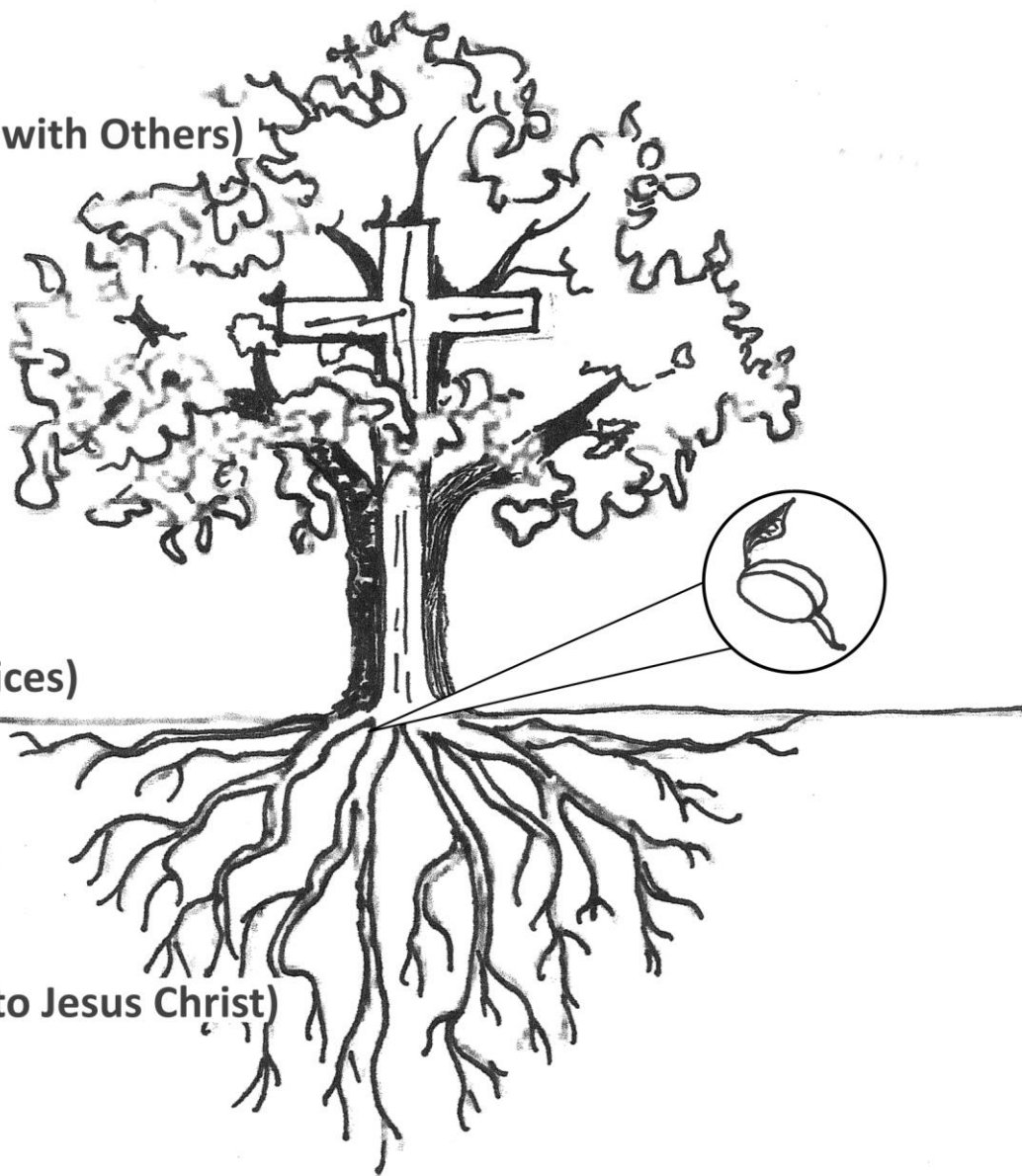
(Relationships)

2. Seed

(Commitment to Jesus Christ)

1. Soil

(Worship)



Tree Rings of Faith

Exploring Christ ("I believe in God, but I'm unsure about who Jesus is")

Growing in Christ ("I am getting to know Jesus personally")

Close to Christ ("Jesus is a part of my daily life")

Surrendered to Christ ("Jesus is greater than anything else in my life")

What Can I Do to Follow Jesus?

The Tree of Discipleship helps us see that following Jesus involves every aspect of our lives, and the Tree Rings of Faith help us look at our faith growth over a long period of time, but what role do we personally play in our own faith growth?

Following Jesus Involves Change

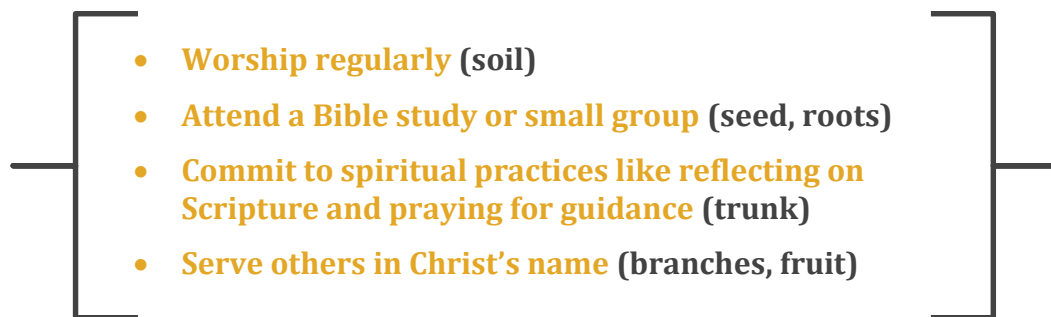
Romans 12:2 says, “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

While we will never be perfect, we are expected to continually move our lives closer to Jesus. It’s not enough to be *informed* by a sermon, or a Bible study, or the words to a song. We are expected to move from information to transformation.

You Have a Role to Play in Your Own Faith Growth

Philippians 2:12-13 says, “¹²Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed me, not only in my presence, but much more now in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³for it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.”

We aren’t just passive observers waiting for something to happen. We have an active role to play. Using the Tree of Discipleship as a model, we can choose to...



The Holy Spirit Is Unpredictable

Isaiah 64:3-4 says, “³When you did awesome deeds that we did not expect, you came down, the mountains quaked at your presence. ⁴From ages past no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who works for those who wait for him.”

No matter how much we do to grow in our faith, we can’t guarantee that the Holy Spirit will do something noticeable every time. There will be times when we don’t feel the Spirit’s presence in worship. There will be times when we are regularly reading Scripture, praying with perseverance, and doing everything “right” and still we don’t have a breakthrough. God does the unexpected, and it happens at an unexpected time. Don’t be discouraged if you feel like you’re not “getting anything” for a while.

The Holy Spirit Will Show Up If Your Heart and Mind Are Ready

Acts 1:8 says, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

It’s good to keep in mind that the disciples had to wait forty days after hearing this before it was fulfilled, so we don’t know when God will show up. But we do know that placing our hearts, minds, souls, and bodies before God is how God changes us over time.