



GROWN-UP FAITH

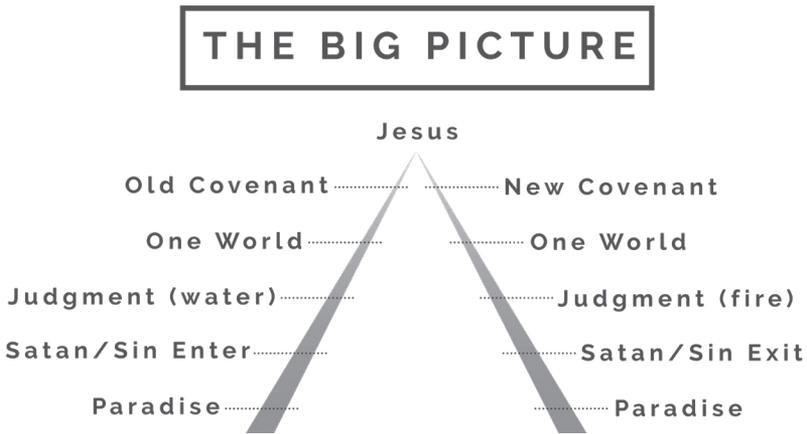
Discipleship Guide

GROWN-UP FAITH

*discipleship
guide*

WELCOME

What does it mean to “grow up” in faith? In this series, we’ll be referring frequently to God’s “big picture” as revealed to us through the *whole* story of Scripture. Few of us have been taught to approach the Word with this perspective. We read Bible verses quoted in devotionals, or we hear Scripture shared during sermons, but we don’t always connect back to the overall scope of what God is doing through all of human history—past, present, and future. That’s the “big picture” we’ll be discussing as we grow up in our understanding. Below is an illustration to help us visualize what we mean as we head into this series:





SERIES GOAL

To ask and answer some hard questions, embracing God’s big picture for a bigger life of mature faith in Jesus Christ.

By the grace of God and the power of His Holy Spirit in us, we can develop grown-up faith by taking action that affects our mind, heart, and will. To grow up, the *mind* requires biblical knowledge, the *heart* requires spiritual intimacy, and the *will* requires holy obedience. Throughout this discipleship guide, then, we’ll consider each of these three areas in relation to several hard questions of faith. Each week, we’ll embrace God’s big picture while actively engaging our mind (knowing), our heart (intimacy), and our will (doing). As we learn and grow in our individual stories, we’ll continuously ask God to help us grasp His bigger story—the one that shows us how to walk together in mature faith.

By His mercy,
Pastor Serenity Miller

OVERVIEW & SERMON DATES

Kick-Off: An Invitation to a Bigger Life | Sept. 13, 2020

Part 1: Are You Stuck? | Sept. 20, 2020

Part 2: Is Life an Accident or Am I Here on Purpose? | Sept. 27, 2020

Part 3: Why Do Bad Things Happen to Good People? | Oct. 4, 2020

Part 4: Can I Trust God? | Oct. 11, 2020

Part 5: Why Can't I Make My Own Rules? | Oct. 18, 2020

Part 6: Why Can't God Just Accept Me as I Am? | Oct. 25, 2020

Part 7: Isn't One Way to God Narrow-Minded? | Nov. 1, 2020

Part 8: What Does it Mean to Be Forgiven? | Nov. 8, 2020

Part 9: Why Don't Christians Look Different? | Nov. 15, 2020

Part 10: Who Needs the Church? | Nov. 22, 2020

Part 11: Are Heaven and Hell Real? (And What Now?) | Nov. 29, 2020

A WORD FROM PASTOR STEVE

I'm excited for us to take this journey toward a "grown-up faith." It is natural and good for a parent to want their children to grow up and become mature, responsible, contributing adults. Our heavenly Father has this same desire for us—that we become mature, responsible, contributing followers of Jesus. This discipleship guide, coupled with our weekly messages, will provide us with a wonderful opportunity to "grow up" in our faith. The Scripture reading listed at the end of each week's study is prep work for the next week's reflection. An additional resource is the book *Grown-Up Faith* by Kevin Meyers, pastor of 12Stone Church. Through this series, I encourage you to ask the Lord to grace you to be open and willing to experience His transformative work in your life.

Love in Jesus,
Pastor Steve Norby

STEPS FOR BIBLE STUDY

The Bible is God's living Word—Spirit-breathed Scripture—revealing the Lord's plan and purpose for all of Creation through His Son, Jesus Christ. That's why Bible reading is so important to knowing Who God is and what He has done, as we learn and grow in relationship with Him. Here's one basic approach to help you dig deeper in your Bible study habits.

Step 1: Observation—What does the passage say?

- Look carefully at what is actually being said, and how it is said. Ask questions about the content: who? when? where? why?
- Examine the structure of paragraphs, passages, and connections between main points.
- Pay attention to repetition. The number of times a word, phrase, or topic appears is an important indicator of its significance.
- Notice relationships between ideas: causes and effects, ifs and thens, questions and answers, comparisons and contrasts.

Step 2: Interpretation—What does the passage mean?

- Understand the context. At a minimum, read the verse immediately before and immediately after. Better yet, read the chapter immediately before and immediately after!
- Look up cross-references. Let Scripture interpret Scripture. Other passages in the Bible can shed a lot of light on the passage you're studying.
- Research biblical times. Some cultural/historical factors are explained in the Bible, but most are not. Look up unfamiliar words, read study notes, or search for historical information online.

Step 3: Application—What will you do with the meaning?

- How does the truth revealed in this passage affect your...
 - relationship with God?
 - relationships with other people?
 - responses to weakness or temptation?

FOR FURTHER STUDY

RightNow Media

www.rightnowmedia.org

Contact communitylife@gracepointwesleyan.org for free access to this extensive online video library full of Bible studies and group materials.

The Bible Project

www.thebibleproject.com

View short, animated videos for every book of the Bible, exploring storylines, main points, themes, and connections across all of Scripture.

Blue Letter Bible

www.blueletterbible.org

Dig deep into the Word with free, online Bible study tools including full commentaries, a dictionary, concordance, indexes, maps, and more.

BibleGateway

www.biblegateway.com

Read the whole Bible online, for free, in any version/translation, sign up for reading plans, devotionals, and newsletters, or download the app.

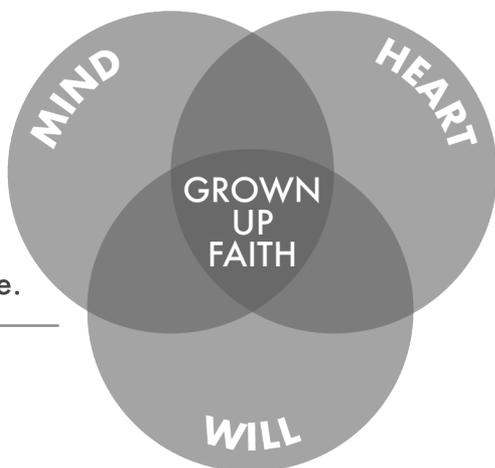
YouVersion

www.youversion.com

Download the free Bible App to share Scripture and reading plans with friends, including the ability to comment and connect over the Word.

AN INVITATION TO A BIGGER LIFE

To grow up, the *mind* requires biblical knowledge, the *heart* requires spiritual intimacy, and the *will* requires holy obedience.



Mind (Knowing): What do words like *full*, *rich*, *abundant*, or *big* bring to mind? How do these images relate to faith? What have you been taught about mature Christianity? In what areas of life do you suspect it's time to "grow up"? Biblically speaking, how do you know these are areas where you personally need to mature in faith? What do you currently know about God's Word that informs or influences your worldview?

Heart (Intimacy): Jesus promised we'd have life in Him and life to the full; is that what you're experiencing? Where are you experiencing difficulty in life or in faith? What questions do you find coming up time after time? Where do you feel there must be something "more" to faith? Are

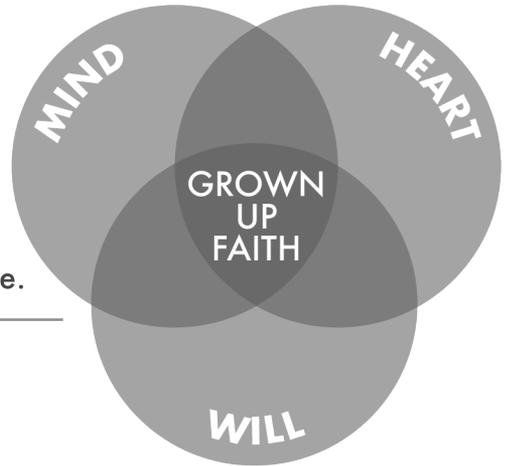
you open to the idea of a life that is bigger than you can comprehend?

Will (Doing): Reading through the topics to come in this series (found in the Overview at the beginning of this reflection guide), which questions are you looking forward to? Which ones would you rather avoid? What will it take to come into these conversations with your mind, heart, and will open to God’s leading and directing, rather than your own?

Reflect: What does a “bigger life” mean from where you’re currently at in faith? How do you respond to being invited into a life bigger than you can comprehend? What will it look like for you to *thrive*, not just *survive*?

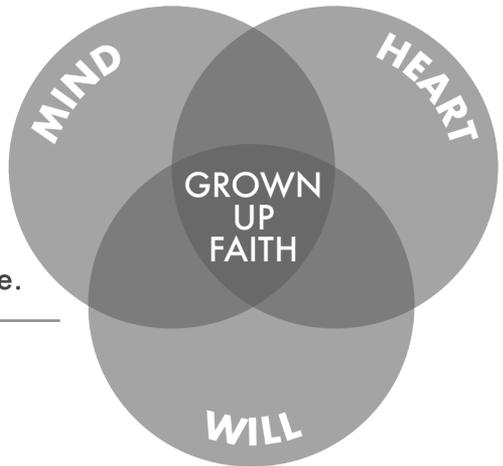
IS LIFE AN ACCIDENT OR AM I HERE ON PURPOSE?

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Mind (Knowing): How does “big picture” perspective help you visualize the whole story of Scripture? What are some biblical questions you’ve struggled with, in terms of why we are here or God’s plan for us? How does God’s “big picture” change the way you find purpose in your daily life? Which terms in God’s big picture (righteousness, sin, covenant, redeemed) bring up the most questions or uncertainties for you?

WHY DO BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE?

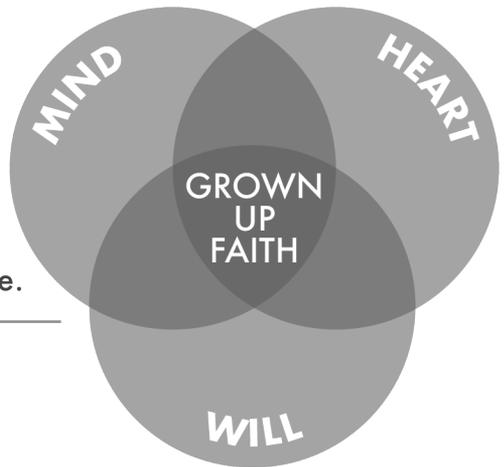


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Mind (Knowing): How do you define what is “good”? How does separation from God result in separation from one another? In what ways do you see sin and blame today emerging from what happened in the Fall? What reasoning have you heard people give to explain good and evil?

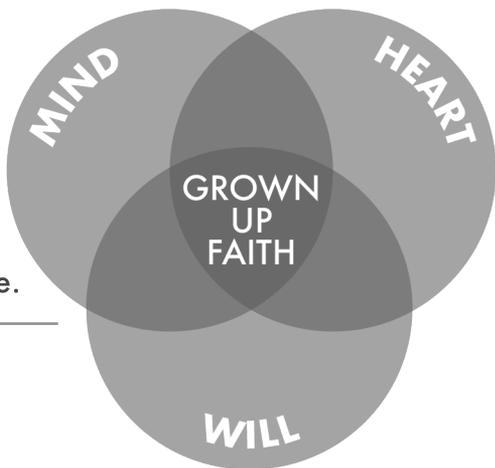
CAN I TRUST GOD?

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Mind (Knowing): Do you consider yourself to be a trusting person? Do you believe that God loves you? that He wants the best for you? that He can deliver on His promises? How is Genesis 12:1-3 a call for Abraham to trust God? What does this passage reveal about the “bigger picture” of God’s redemptive story? How does God’s promise in the old covenant inform our understanding of the promises fulfilled through Jesus?

WHY CAN'T I MAKE MY OWN RULES?

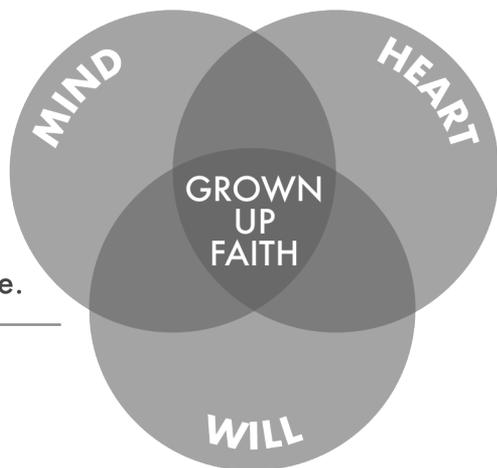


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Mind (Knowing): What are some “rules” our society doesn’t agree about? What “rules” of culture conflict with biblical wisdom? How has God shown Himself greater than idols and false gods in the history of His people? How do these themes of the movement of God carry into our current times? How does the holiness of God change your perspective about who you are and the “rules” you follow?

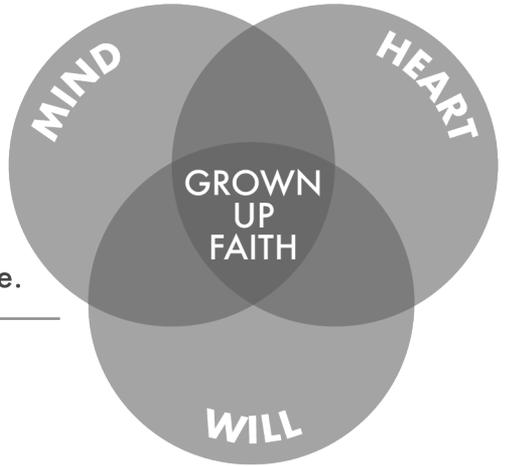
WHY CAN'T GOD JUST ACCEPT ME AS I AM?

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Mind (Knowing): What's the difference between loving people as they are vs. tolerating everything a person does? How does God make clear that He loves all people *and* hates all sin? How do the careful details of tabernacle worship (see last week's Scripture reading) reflect a God who is intimately concerned with the particular details of our lives?

ISN'T ONE WAY TO GOD NARROW-MINDED?

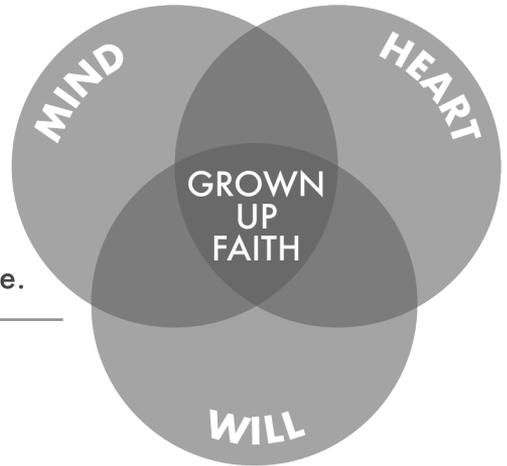


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Mind (Knowing): In what ways do people try to be “good enough” for God? Why doesn’t this work? Do you accept that Christ is one with God and therefore, His ways are the Way? How does Jesus’ fulfillment of prophecy in Scripture support His statement that He is Messiah and Son of God? How is it possible that so many prophecies could be fulfilled in one person by the law of chance?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE FORGIVEN?

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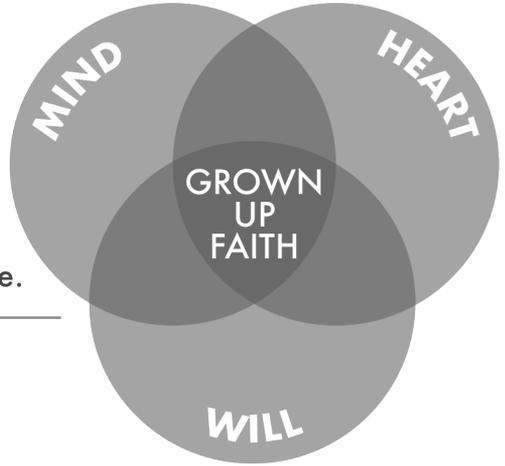
Mind (Knowing): How would you explain to someone our human need for forgiveness and God's plan of salvation through Jesus Christ? What is the significance of the tearing of the veil in the temple at the time of Jesus' death? What were some of the signs that Jesus fulfilled the covenant through His sacrificial death and resurrection

Heart (Experiencing): Consider the following pictures: 1) a fence keeping you in, 2) a ladder you have to climb, 3) a garbage can with your life in it, or 4) a door opening. Now consider your understanding (past or present) of God. How do these images resonate with the ways you've experienced Christianity (positively or negatively) over time? How are your perspectives shifting as Christ works in your life? How has He opened doors to you through His forgiveness? What areas of your life are in need of the power of the Resurrection?

Will (Doing): How does the way Jesus relates to people bring attention to the ways you relate with people? If you're reluctant to open the door to forgiveness (whether forgiving other people or being forgiven), what needs to happen in your prayer life for you to surrender to the Father's will? What opportunity is God giving you to live into the empowerment of forgiveness?

WHO NEEDS THE CHURCH?

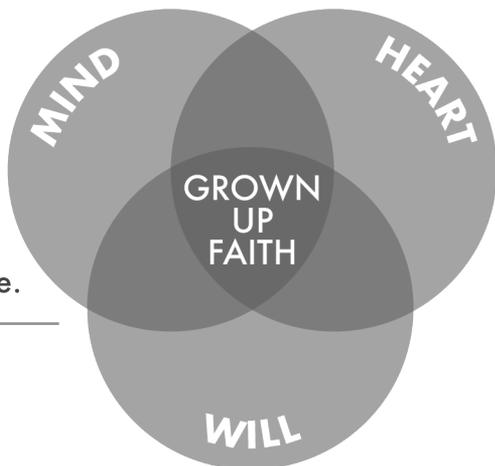
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Mind (Knowing): Do you consider yourself to be “sent” as a disciple of Jesus Christ? The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) tells us that one of God’s primary purposes for the Church is to send out followers of Christ as His witnesses everywhere we go. What does this mean for your involvement as a part of the family of God?

ARE HEAVEN AND HELL REAL? (AND WHAT NOW?)

To grow up, the *mind* requires biblical knowledge, the *heart* requires spiritual intimacy, and the *will* requires holy obedience.



Mind (Knowing): If you believe that heaven and hell are real, how does this belief motivate your behavior toward others? Understanding that believers will be the first to give an account before the throne, how then shall we live? How does understanding the character of our biblical enemy, Satan, help to equip us for spiritual battle in the name of Christ?



WHAT'S NEXT?

We hope this discipleship guide has been an encouragement to you in your walk with Jesus Christ.

If you'd like to speak with someone about more ways to learn, connect, serve, or lead in the local church, please call the GracePoint office at 605-692-6671, or email communitylife@gracepointwesleyan.org.

Grace and peace be with you,
GracePoint Staff



encounter grace. grow in grace. give grace.