



The Trade

Part 5 – How to Mature Spiritually

Discussion Guide

We have been in this series The Trade, looking at how to recognize God's best for us and how to make a trade in order to grow in faith and spiritually mature. This week we will look at what it really takes for us to grow spiritually.

Jump Start

1. Have you heard the quote, "The difference between wanting and achieving is discipline"? In what areas of life does this speak to you?
2. *Be Disciplined.* Read [Colossians 2:5-7](#). When Paul says, "your spiritual roots go deeply into His life," what does this mean?
3. *Walk in Gratitude.* Read [Colossians 2:7 and Solomon 2:15](#). Take a few moments to go around the group and share two or three positive things that have happened in 2020. What do the "little foxes" represent?
4. *Control My Emotions.* Read [Colossians 3:8,10](#). Who is in control of your emotions? Is it you, your job, your spouse, your friends, your in-laws? Read [2 Corinthians 10:5](#). How does this verse teach us to surrender those emotions and make them obedient to the Word of God? Read [Matthew 26:39](#). How do we see Jesus being strengthened during a time of weakness?
5. *What is Your Next Step?* **Pray:** "God, thank you that you're a God who loves me and is always working in my life to develop me and show me truth. I also know that You have a next step in mind for me, to help me develop my relationship with You. Right now, I give you permission to search my heart. Let me know what that next step is. Father, show me where I am lacking in spiritual maturity; show me how I can be better. In Jesus' name, Amen"

Deeper

We will learn how to complete a **S O A P Bible Study** by looking at a passage of Scripture and breaking it down. **S O A P** stands for **S**cripture **O**bservation **A**pplication **P**rayer. Let's get ready to sit down with the Bible and see to what God wants to show us. Completing this study during your quiet time, then sharing with your Life Group, can allow for deeper understanding and revelation of new perspectives. **Things you will need:** Bible, Notebook, Pen.

6. **Scripture.** Read [Luke 15:11-32](#). What stood out to you the most about this parable?

Take time to read these passages and allow God to speak to you. Jot down anything that made you stop and pause or anything that you questioned. When you are done, look for a verse that particularly spoke to you and write it out fully in your journal.

7. **Observe.** What is God saying to you in these verses? What overarching theme or promise did you see? What did the specific verse that you were drawn to teach you?

What do you think God is saying to you, personally and specifically, in these Scriptures? (You can even have a short prayer at this point, asking the Holy Spirit to teach you and reveal Jesus to you. Remember that He promised to give us wisdom and reveal truth to us when we ask.)

8. **Application.** How will you apply this and how does this encourage you in your journey to spiritual maturity?

Personalize what you have read by asking yourself how it applies to your life right now. Perhaps it is instruction, encouragement, a new promise, or corrections in an area of your life. Write down how this Scripture applies to you today.

9. **Pray.** Pray about what you have read in [Luke 15:11-32](#). Pray about what God revealed to you, asking Him to help you understand and apply it.

This prayer can be as simple as asking God to help you use this Scripture, or even a prayer for a greater insight on what He may be revealing to you. Remember, prayer is a two-way conversation, so take time here! Be sure to listen to what God has to say! Now, write it out. Journaling your quiet time helps you to see what God is teaching you over time.