

WHO WE ARE: GROW

8/9/2026

1. Prayer

- Ask the Holy Spirit to help your group learn and hear what He would teach and encourage

2. Weekly Sermon Discussion (20-40 minutes)

- Read the scriptures, and discuss what stood out to you.
- Engage with one another by reflecting and sharing what our Church is learning together.
- Example insights and questions are provided to help generate discussion if needed.
- Focus your conversation on the scripture and how it applies to you. Be careful of straying off the topic, and if you do, encourage one another to ask "How does this scripture apply to this?". Key Thought: The goal is growth, not perfection.

Growing Together (Colossian 1:9-10, Eph 4:15-16)

- Growth is not an individual pursuit. Paul prayed believers would know God's will, bear fruit, and grow in the knowledge of God. Ephesians 4 teaches that the whole body grows as every member does its part.
 - **What are the benefits of community that make it necessary for spiritual growth?**
 - **What about community is most difficult to navigate for you?**

Preparing the Soil

- Jesus' Parable of the Sower teaches that God's Word is the seed and our hearts are the soil. The question is not whether God is speaking, but whether our hearts are ready to receive His Word.

The Four Soils (Mark 4:3-20)

- The Footpath – A Hardened Heart
 - God's Word never takes root.
 - Distractions, sin, and pride keep the heart hard.
 - Response: Humble yourself and repent.
 - **What areas in your life feel hard or closed to God's Word?**
- Rocky Soil – A Shallow Heart
 - Excited at first but falls away under pressure.
 - Inspiration is good; application is better.
 - Deep roots grow through obedience and community.

- **What are some stones that God has removed from your heart?**
- **Has anyone ever exposed a stone you weren't aware of?**
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- Thorny Soil – A Crowded Heart
 - Worries, wealth, and distractions choke spiritual growth.
 - The tragedy is not death, but fruitlessness.
 - Remove whatever competes with Christ.
 - **What thorns do you recognize as the most prominent in your life?**
 - **What has helped you to weed your heart in the past?**
- Good Soil – A Receptive Heart
 - Hears, accepts, and obeys God's Word.
 - Produces lasting spiritual fruit.
 - Healthy soil can be cultivated through repentance and the work of the Holy Spirit.
 - **What areas of your heart are you most sensitive to God's leading?**
 - **What areas do you see as the most spiritual fruitful?**

Key Takeaways

- God desires growth, not pretending we've arrived.
- Spiritual growth happens best in community.
- The condition of our hearts determines our fruitfulness.
- Repentance prepares the soil.
- Community helps remove rocks and weeds.
- Every believer should cultivate a heart that receives God's Word.

Closing Questions

- **Why is 'growth, not perfection' so freeing?**
- **What rocks or hidden obstacles need removed?**
- **What thorns are competing for your attention?**
- **How has Christian community helped you grow?**
- **What step can you take this week to cultivate good soil?**

3.Share & Prayer (20-40 minutes)

Time to 'take off the mask'! Jesus doesn't want us to be hypocrites who wear masks.

- A personal life update, your current spiritual condition. Use emotional language to be real!
- Challenges or victories that you are experiencing
- What's really going on in your life? How are you doing? How can your group pray for you?
- Are there applications from the Discussion that you need prayer support?

- How can your Group support you this week?

When sharing prayer requests, include your personal prayer needs. Example – rather than simply sharing “Please pray for my friend’s cancer journey”, include personal prayer: “Please pray as I’m struggling with my friend’s cancer journey, and I need guidance on how to encourage her in this season”.

Have someone, or everyone, close your time out in prayer for one another.