



Week 4 // Young Adulthood

In this Post-Easter series we explore the first Epistle written by Jesus' disciple John. This love-filled letter prompts us to explore five distinct stages of life in Christ: spiritual death, infancy, childhood, young adulthood, and reproducing parenthood. Learn to identify the stage of someone's spiritual growth based upon the key phrases they use. This series is sure to lead to self-reflection and greater growth toward spiritual maturity.

Connect

- 1) Select three words that might be used to describe you when you were a teenager. Go around your small group and share your three words. Make sure you don't get lost in answering peoples' questions or telling side stories!
- 2) Were there any themes that emerged from your descriptions of being a young adult? How would you characterize this time of life, in comparison to the stages that precede and follow it?

Digging Deeper

- 3) Read 1 John 2:14. Notice how the apostle Paul addresses his listeners according to their stage in life. What messages might be directed toward a teenager that would not be fitting to tell a child or a mature adult?
- 4) In this 'Stages' series, we are becoming aware that certain phrases identify a person with a particular stage of discipleship. Below are a few samples of the 'Phrase from the Stage' that tell us a person might be traveling through a 'young adulthood' phase in their spiritual growth.
 - In my devotions, I came across something I have a question about.
 - I really want to go to Uganda on a mission trip this summer. I know I'm ready for it. I know God has big plans for my life.
 - I have these friends I've been witnessing to, and our small group would be too big for them, so can we birth a new group so they can come?

- Brandon and Tiffani missed our small group, so I called them to see if they're okay. Their kids have the flu, so maybe our group can make a meal for them. I'll start.
- I just love being a worship leader. I think it's something I'm really gifted in.

Based on these sample phrases, how might you sum up the 'young adulthood' stage of spiritual growth?

- 5) Read the following description of the 'young adult' stage, provided by pastor and author Jim Putman. How does this description line up with the summary that you just came up with?
 - As spiritual children grow up, they mature into the spiritual young adult stage. At this stage, they have grown tremendously from where they started. They are eager to serve, think independently, and look much like adults; however, they still have much to learn about responsibility and about how to care for the spiritual needs of others. They are zealous for God and can be characterized as being "God-focused" and "other-centered." They are becoming intentional or strategic about sharing their faith and will see people converted, but they are not yet able to reproduce disciples who can make disciples. They serve intentionally but don't make disciples intentionally. They want their independence, and in some cases, they should have it, but they need continued coaching/parenting.
- 6) Read 1 John 4:13-18 together. What one ingredient does the apostle John identify for anyone who wants to move toward maturity in Christ?

Live It Out

- 7) It's a beautiful thing to see someone motivated to change the world! Yet the spiritual 'young adult' typically benefits from having a more mature disciple-maker come alongside them. What they need at this stage is encouragement and insight into who God has made them to be, along with a place where they can serve.
 - Think how about how this has taken place in your own spiritual journey. Can you think of a time when someone came alongside you and helped you to understand your unique gifts and then released you to try something big? Share stories!
 - Name someone you know who would benefit from receiving this type of training and encouragement.

Lifting it up

Pray by name for someone God is calling you to invest in. What do they need, based on their stage of growth in Christ? What are you able to offer them?