

# **Five practices, one experience, and the Holy Spirit: Exploring spiritual growth amongst 18- to 35-year- olds in the UK church**

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**Eido**  
RESEARCH



The Gregory Centre  
for Church **Multiplication**

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# Foreword from the Gregory Centre for Church Multiplication

*The fruitful, creative and intentional formation of disciples is foundational to The Gregory Centre for Church Multiplication's (CCX) vision – to see the whole church built up and sent out in love, to plant and grow churches that equip all Christ's people for his work.*

*The church is now seeking innovation in spiritual formation and disciple-making. With this in mind, CCX commissioned Eido to lead research into what is actually helping people to grow as missionary disciples – growing in Christ-likeness, making disciples, and enabling multiplication. We are grateful to the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England for their financial support, which has enabled this research to take place.*

*With its focus on the lived experience of those seeking wholeheartedly to follow Jesus, we hope that this research will enable more creativity, innovation, and focus on disciple-making across the whole of the Church.*

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 The Gregory Centre  
for Church Multiplication

# Our most important recommendation for church leaders

If church leaders want to promote the spiritual formation of 18- to 35-year-olds, **the most effective thing they can do is to help them find community.**

**But not just any community.** The research particularly pointed to the value of:

- 1 **Interaction with peers, characterised by trust and authenticity**, Christians modelling growth to each other, and mutual challenge and accountability
- 2 **Investment from a more mature Christian**, who models following Jesus, provides opportunities to try new things, meets with the younger Christian regularly, and whom the younger Christian trusts

Often, leaders try to help their congregations grow by recommending individual practices, such as personal Bible reading or prayer. While this research has shown the value of these practices, it has also shown that community is both more frequently cited and, often, **leads Christians to take up individual practices.**

*If church leaders want to promote the spiritual formation of 18- to 35-year-olds, the most effective thing they can do is to help them find community.*

Leaders can help their congregations find community by:

- 1 **Creating opportunities for 18- to 35-year-olds to meaningfully interact with other Christians** (as described under “interaction with peers” above). **Leaders should set the norm that these groups exist for the purpose of making disciples of Jesus and that they are not short-term, revolving door communities** (as these communities are incompatible with trust and authenticity, mutual modelling of growth, and challenge and accountability). Leaders can also help create cultures of sharing and listening to facilitate deeper relationships between group members
- 2 **Matchmaking 18- to 35-year-olds with potential mentors or spiritual directors.** The research suggests that in addition to meeting the criteria described in 2. above, the mentor/spiritual director needs to be a **safe** person (the primary barrier to spiritual growth we found was unhelpful community)

Crucially, while leaders can invite their congregations to participate in this type of community, they cannot compel growth: while we found that the primary driver of spiritual growth was community, **the second-most-common cause was an individual’s decision to grow.** Therefore the most effective thing leaders can do is provide an invitation to deep, inspiring, and challenging community for those who choose to accept it.

*Crucially, while leaders can invite their congregations to participate in this type of community, they cannot compel growth: while we found that the primary driver of spiritual growth was community, the second-most-common cause was an individual’s decision to grow.*

# Executive summary



## What causes growth?

Respondents primarily attributed spiritual growth to **five practices, one experience**, and **the Holy Spirit**.<sup>1</sup> Community was by far the most frequently mentioned cause of growth.

### Five practices<sup>2</sup>

Practice	How did this practice lead to growth?	% interviewees mentioning	% survey respondents mentioning
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Trust and authenticity</li><li>Others modelling growth</li><li>Challenge and accountability</li><li>Opportunities to try new things</li><li>Regular interaction</li></ul>	80%	65%
Choosing to grow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Submitting to Jesus</li><li>Making time for God</li><li>Taking ownership of faith</li></ul>	38%	29%
Bible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Refocusing on what it means to be a Christian</li><li>Vehicle for the Spirit</li><li>Study leading to deeper understanding of God</li></ul>	32%	30%
Time spent with God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Creates opportunity for God to speak, act, and be present</li><li>Keeps mind on God</li><li>Creates opportunity for self-reflection</li></ul>	28%	48%
Calls to action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Realising need for something beyond self</li><li>Realising capabilities, growing in confidence</li><li>Sense of responsibility to God and others</li></ul>	24%	23%

<sup>1</sup> Other practices (e.g., prayer, church attendance, Christian resources, and having a rule of life) were also discussed, but this report focuses on the causes of spiritual formation most frequently mentioned by respondents.

### One experience

Experience	How did this practice lead to growth?	% interviewees mentioning	% survey respondents mentioning
Suffering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Realising a need for something beyond self</li></ul>	30%	28%

### The Holy Spirit

Agent	How did this practice lead to growth?	% interviewees mentioning	% survey respondents mentioning
Holy Spirit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Revealing God</li><li>Showing power of God</li><li>Convicting of sin, leading to repentance</li></ul>	32%	25%

## What hinders growth?

**Two of the four most common barriers also had to do with community:** either unhelpful forms of community, or a lack of any community at all.

Barrier	% interviewees mentioning
Unhelpful community	64%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>With Christians</li></ul>	48%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>With non-Christians</li></ul>	14%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Romantic relationships</li></ul>	8%
Busyness	30%
Lack of community	20%
Suffering as a barrier	20%

<sup>2</sup> As can be seen in the table below, interviewees and survey respondents mentioned these practices at different frequencies. For simplicity, we have ranked the practices by the frequency with which they were mentioned by interviewees. Interestingly, survey respondents mentioned nearly all themes less frequently. This was probably because their responses on average were shorter: it is easier to cover multiple ideas in a long response to an interview question than it is in a shorter, typed survey response. This does suggest that when survey respondents mentioned a theme more frequently than interviewees (as they did for Time with God) they felt especially strongly about the issue.

## Recommendations

### 1 Help 18- to 35-year-olds find formational community,

marked by:

- a. **Interaction with peers**, characterised by trust and authenticity, Christians modelling growth to each other, and mutual challenge and accountability
- b. **Investment from a more mature Christian**, who models following Jesus, provides opportunities to try new things, meets with the younger Christian regularly, and whom the younger Christian trusts

### 2 Think about pathways, not just practices.

Which pathways undergird your church's practices for spiritual growth? How might you intentionally activate these pathways to help promote further growth?

### 3 Cast a vision for spiritual growth,

which inspires congregation members to choose to grow, and helps them see the connection between mission, and spiritual formation

### 4 Build in practices that encourage spiritual growth:

- a. Teach your church to find creative ways of spending purposeful, regular time with God – are there practices you could commit to corporately?
- b. Teach your church to read the Bible in ways that are not purely informational
- c. Provide calls to action for those who are willing to take them: mission, leadership, service, corporate prayer, etc.

### 5 Teach on suffering: How, specifically, can suffering lead to growth? How can you support your congregation in responding to it (addressing questions of why God allowed it and how to follow Jesus at times when they feel overwhelmed)?

### 6 Remember the Spirit as an active, independent cause of growth, revealing God's power and leading to repentance

## Reflection questions for church leaders

### Community

1. How might you create opportunities for 18- to 35-year-olds to meaningfully interact with Christian peers – forming long-term, committed communities which exist for the explicit purpose of making disciples of Jesus?
2. How might you:
  - a. Find (or train) mature, trustworthy Christians who can model following Jesus, provide opportunities to try new things, and meet with a younger Christian regularly?
  - b. Help to connect younger Christians with these mentors and spiritual directors?

### Pathways, not just practices

1. How, specifically, do the practices your church relies on for spiritual formation cause growth? If you were to spell out the pathways, what would they be?
2. How might you intentionally activate these pathways to help promote further growth?

### A vision for spiritual growth

1. Adults are motivated to learn and change when they have a specific goal. How might you cast a vision for spiritual growth such that 18- to 35-year-olds are motivated to take ownership of their own spiritual formation?
2. How could you help your church see the connection between mission and spiritual formation?

### Building in the practices

1. How might you teach your church to find creative ways of spending purposeful, regular time with God? Are there practices (e.g., Bible before phone, a daily examen, praying the Lord's Prayer at lunchtime) to which you could commit as a church?
2. How might you teach your church to read the Bible in ways that do not merely provide information but change them as people?
3. The research showed that 18- to 35-year-olds often grew when they received appropriate calls to action. How might you invite young people in your congregation to lead, serve, and participate in mission (evangelism and justice) so they have an opportunity to grow?

### Suffering

1. If you were to spell out how suffering can (a) lead to and (b) hinder growth, what would you say?
2. How would you respond – intellectually and pastorally – to the questions 18- to 35-year-olds are asking about suffering (why God allows it, and how to follow Jesus at times when they feel overwhelmed by suffering)? Where might you look for resources that would enable you to respond well?
3. How might you support your congregation (through teaching, etc.) in responding to suffering?

### Remembering the Spirit

1. How can you create spaces for your church to encounter the presence and power of God through the Holy Spirit?
2. How do you see the Holy Spirit's role in bringing about spiritual growth relating to your role as a leader?

# Introduction and research methods



## Research purpose

In 2010, Dallas Willard taught an intensive course at Denver Seminary called *The Human Side of Holiness: What is our Part in Putting off the Old Person and Putting on the New*. At the beginning of those lectures, he described his vision to:

Develop models of the human person and spiritual formation practices that place spiritual formation on the same par as psychology, as a sphere of knowledge. Not some little thing that some Christians think about, but something that can be tested as objectively true.

While it was not designed to accomplish Willard's goal as such, this research was intended to provide an empirical understanding of how Christians grow. The Gregory Centre for Church Multiplication (CCX) commissioned Eido Research to:

1. Provide an initial evidence-based assessment of how Christians (especially Christians between the ages of 18 and 35) grow spiritually
2. Equip churches to facilitate spiritual growth in Christians in their congregations

## Research questions, method, and population

To accomplish these purposes, our research focused on the following questions:

- What causes growth?
- When Christians said they had grown spiritually, what did they mean? What signs did they point to of growth having occurred in their lives?
- What inhibited growth?
- When someone grew spiritually, what influence did their growth have on others?
- What was required for someone who had experienced an initial period of growth to continue to progress in maturity?

We began by reviewing existing literature on the causes of spiritual growth, before investigating all of the questions above through interviews and a survey with three groups of people (as summarised in the following table).

Group	Interviews or survey?	Number of respondents
Young adult Christians (between ages of 18 and 35, one 38-year-old) <sup>3</sup>	Both	Interviews: 20 Survey: 84
Leaders from churches or ministries working with 18- to 35-year-olds	Interviews	14
Anglican leaders	Interviews	16

Aware that the various traditions of the Church of England define spiritual growth differently, we consciously let research participants interpret the term for themselves, asking only for a story of how they had experienced spiritual growth, or (for leaders) facilitated growth in others. A full examination of the definitions of spiritual growth implied in participants' stories may be found in the **What did participants mean by "growth"?** section below.

Finally, to ensure that we spoke to people with significant experience of spiritual growth, participants were selected for their experience in facilitating spiritual growth (for leaders) or as having experienced meaningful spiritual growth themselves (for 18- to 35-year-olds). Most commonly, participants were recommended by dioceses and Christian ministries in Eido's and CCX's networks, but in a few cases Eido and CCX hand-selected interviewees with significant experience of spiritual growth. A fuller discussion of our research methods and limitations may be found in **Appendix 1** below.

<sup>3</sup> Since the research originally focused on Christians in their 20s and 30s before changing scope to concentrate on Christians between the ages of 18 and 35, one 38-year-old was included in an early interview. Since this participant's views did not differ significantly from those of the 18- to 35-year-olds we spoke to, we included his views in our analysis. References to 18- to 35-year-olds in this research should be taken to include this interview.



# Literature review



## Approach to the literature review

As part of this commissioned research, we conducted an initial review of empirical and spiritual literature around the core research question of: "What facilitates spiritual growth in Christians?"

Given the wide historical breadth and depth of writing on the topic, a full literature review on all the empirical and spiritual literature was out of scope. Therefore the research maximised three opportunities available:

1. A review of a recent and well-known Christian literature and training around spiritual growth<sup>4</sup>
2. A review of all the evaluations and research read or conducted by Eido since 2018 that provided empirical evidence around spiritual growth
3. A review of any material recommended to us by interviewees in the interview process

Through these avenues, the goal was not to identify detail or contrast in these different sources and traditions, but to seek to map at a high level commonalities of what has been suggested or argued as influential for spiritual growth, with a particular focus on 18- to 35-year-olds in the UK context.

In the literature review, we drew from 13 external research reports, seven internal Eido research reports, 36 Christian books from across a wide range of Christian traditions and periods of time, and three group resources on spiritual growth and formation.

The full list of literature we reviewed can be found in Appendix 2. research maximised three opportunities available:

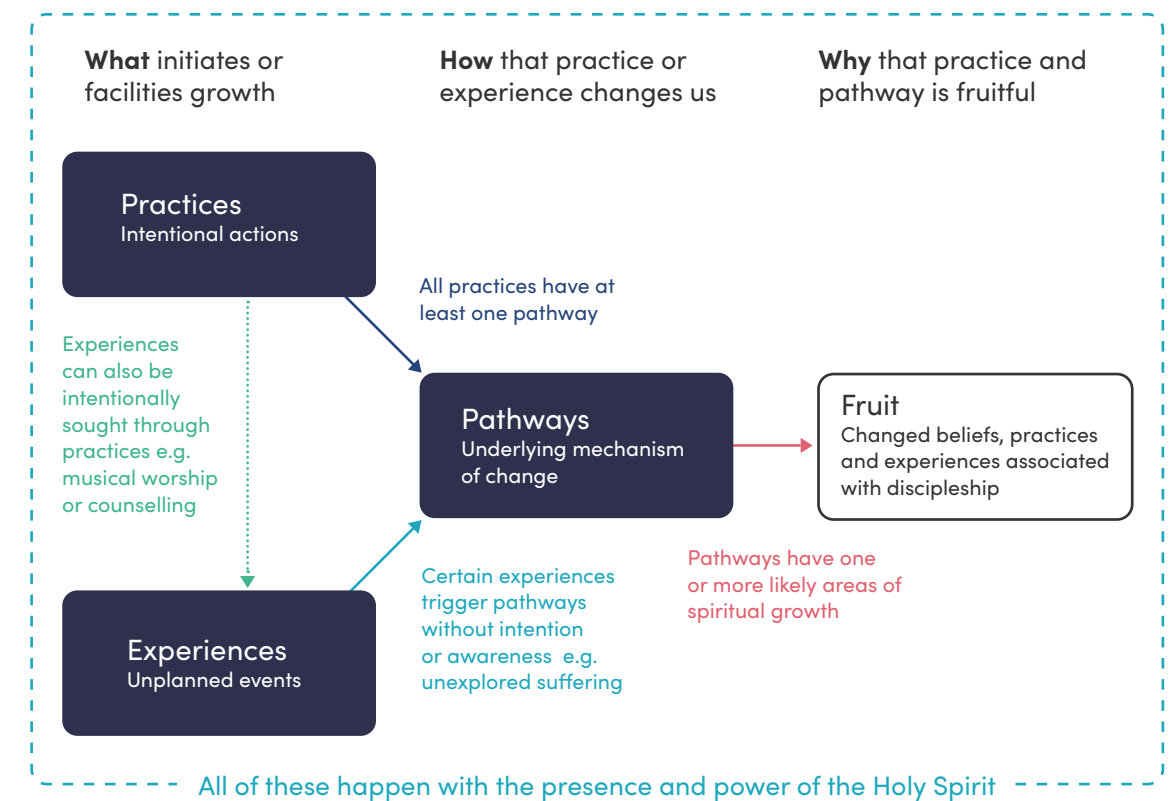
<sup>4</sup> The lead on the literature review at Eido is also a trained spiritual director and therefore had a strong knowledge of classic and recent literature and training on spiritual growth and formation.

## Observing a framework

Our review identified four concepts which help to explain how spiritual growth occurs. Interestingly, while all four of these concepts were commonly discussed in the texts we reviewed (in the sense that these texts provided evidence for them and assumed their importance), none of the texts clearly listed the concepts or distinguished between them.

These four concepts were:

- Practices
- Experiences
- Pathways
- Fruit





## Practices

These are the “what” behind spiritual growth: the specific actions people engage in to become more mature, such as solitude, social action, fasting, attending church, joining a small group, conducting exegetical Bible study, proclaiming their faith to others, and various forms of prayer and meditation with the Bible. While these activities can be identified as actions to promote spiritual growth, they do not explain how they contribute to the growth process.

## Experiences

These are events or experiences that happen to individuals, often serving as catalysts for spiritual growth (also the “what”). Examples include suffering, major life events, or charismatic spiritual experiences. While these name what can trigger a period of spiritual change or growth, they also do not explain how the growth occurs.

## Pathways

These are the “how” – the mechanisms through which these practices and experiences foster spiritual growth or how God uses them for growth. Examples include intentionality, peer support and motivation, self-awareness, gaining a new understanding of God, habit formation, and developing a new vision for the spiritual life.

## Fruit

Lastly, these refer to dimensions of the spiritual life that serve as evidence or indicators of spiritual growth. Examples include character development, passion for evangelism, commitment to social justice, inner peace, a desire for prayer, and more. They represent the results or signs of spiritual growth (the “so what” of spiritual growth).

## A pathway to commonality

The key takeaway is that existing evidence and literature thoroughly cover all four aspects of spiritual growth, often addressing more than one at a time, but without clear distinctions between them. For instance, one book may discuss practices without explaining pathways, while another might cover pathways but omit practices, or focus on experiences without mentioning practices.

Few Christian leaders argue that there is a universal set of practices for all believers at all times, but the question remains: are there common pathways that can be accessed through different practices, both traditional and modern, or that are catalysed through specific experiences?

This approach moves beyond debates about the importance of practices like church, relationships, prayer and Bible study; few would deny their value. However, the question arises: why are these practices fruitful for some, but not for others?

Consider two commonly mentioned practices for spiritual growth: Bible study and suffering. One is a practice, and the other is an experience. Both are recognized, through testimony, wisdom, and research as valuable for spiritual growth, but they appear to create growth in some people but not in others. The real question is: why?

The concept of pathways allows us to explore this deeper question and seek insight into common ways Christians grow.

## Mapping the pathways

We therefore looked at the literature, not for practices or experiences or fruit, but for pathways. What was common across the material? And how might these pathways be described?

We have identified eight. They are described below.

1. **Envisioned** – Christians grow when we have a biblical and theological understanding of who God is and who we are in relationship to Him which motivates us to grow spiritually.
2. **Repentant** – Christians grow when we have a clear-minded, personalised awareness of our sin-affected nature and God’s will and power for us to be transformed.
3. **Relational** – Christians grow through committed relationships of safety, encouragement and challenge with other Christians.
4. **Attentional** – Christians grow through stewarding our thoughts and experiences towards those that turn us towards God’s character and away from those that do not.
5. **Practical** – Christians grow when we have practical and realistic plans and practices to prioritise our spiritual growth.
6. **Cultural** – Christians grow when we spend time in church cultures that are designed for spiritual growth.
7. **Psychological** – Christians grow when we address emotional health and difficulties that hold back spiritual growth.
8. **Submitted** – Christians grow as we continue to choose to lay down our will for the sake of God’s.

We believe the eight pathways are presented as independent in the literature, yet they are interconnected. Some pathways clearly increase the likelihood of others, and certain ones are unlikely to occur without others happening first. An exploration of their interconnectedness is a task for another paper.

# Empirical findings



While this analysis of existing thinking on spiritual growth provides important context for understanding our empirical findings, the bulk of this paper will concentrate on the empirical findings themselves. In the sections below, we examine first what participants meant by spiritual growth, what they saw as the causes of and barriers to growth in their own lives, the influence their growth had on others, and how they thought spiritual growth could be sustained.

## What did participants mean by “growth”?

Aware that Christians disagree on how to define spiritual growth, we let interviewees and survey respondents define it for themselves, asking only that they (1) tell us a story of a time that they had grown spiritually and (2) list the signs that they had grown.

Participants described spiritual growth in the following terms:

Aspect of spiritual growth	% interviewees mentioning	% survey respondents mentioning
Improved relationships	94%	89%
• With God	82%	73%
• With self	70%	48%
• With others	22%	7%
Making decisions that allow for growth	92%	53%
• Adopting practices	76%	29%
• Turning away from sin	30%	10%
• Improved treatment of others	22%	11%
Outwardly focused faith	64%	11%
• Mission	40%	11%

Of survey respondents, just under nine in ten (87 percent) reported having grown to a large or very large extent, and more than three-quarters (78 percent) thought their growth had helped other Christians around them to mature.<sup>5</sup>

## Improved relationships

For participants, the most common sign that spiritual growth had occurred was improved relationships with God, self, and others.

### God

As can be seen above, eight in ten interviewees (82 percent) and seven in ten survey respondents (73 percent) mentioned an improved relationship with God as a marker of spiritual growth. Specifically, they noted that they (or those whose spiritual growth they had observed) had:

1. **Experienced God**, seeing his power and enjoying his presence. There was a “step of feeling that God is in my life”, one interviewee said. “[I knew] his presence, rather than hearing about it from other people’s experiences”.
2. **An increased desire for God**. Specifically, these participants mentioned a greater desire to read their Bible, pray, know more about God intellectually, and be with him experientially
3. **Greater understanding of God**. Participants spoke about this theme in different ways, but the commonality seemed to be that something changed in how they comprehended God to make God more attractive to them
4. **A strengthened faith in God**. Participants owned their identity as a Christian and felt secure in what they believed. “I was getting to a point where I wasn’t sure being [a Christian] was worth it, but I came out of that season... with fresh faith and hope”, one interviewee said.

### Self

With regard to their relationship with themselves, participants noted that they now had more peace, confidence, joy, and freedom – as well as a stronger sense of their identity and a clearer sense of their vocation. Leaders, in particular, observed a growth in confidence in those with whom they worked, while many 18- to 35-year-olds commented on more internal changes. “That joy of Jesus is better than any other joy”, one said; others shared about their security in the love of God:

I can sit on the sofa all day, and God loves the socks off me, or I can see ten people come to know Jesus in a day, and God loves me all the same.

<sup>5</sup> Interestingly, survey respondents mentioned nearly all causes of spiritual growth less frequently than interviewees. As we shall see for other questions below, this was almost certainly due to question phrasing: to avoid survey fatigue, survey respondents were given three small boxes to list the signs that they had grown spiritually on the form, while interviewees were invited to reflect on these questions at length.

Somewhat less commonly, participants also said that they had grown in resilience, hope, humility, and patience, and that their mental health had improved.

## Others

When participants spoke of improvements in their relationships with others, they almost exclusively referred to having more and deeper relationships with other Christians. This theme was mentioned by 20 percent of interviewees and 5 percent of survey respondents. “I was being around people who walked alongside me, and they came seemingly from nowhere”, an interviewee remembered; similarly, an interviewee shared that “my closest friends are [now] Christians; we talk about faith so much”.

While most participants simply did not comment on the effects of growing spiritually on their relationship with non-Christians, in a few cases spiritual growth seemed to lead participants to distance themselves from non-Christians in their life. A leader, for example, recalled how a younger Christian she had mentored:

Lost a lot of her non-Christian friendships... If you meet her now, she looks like all the people she met [after she came to faith].... The danger is that she's now in a silo, even though she was so against that at the beginning, and has lost impetus for mission.

A way of thinking which might lead to this change was also evident amongst some 18- to 35-year-old themselves: for instance, one survey respondent described how they started “only wanting to be around people of God”.

While this was a very minor theme in the data, mentioned by perhaps four or five respondents, and while there are undoubtedly situations in which it may be wise to distance oneself from harmful friendships, it is important to emphasise. Church leaders should be alert to the danger of Christian community (effective as it is in itself as a means of spiritual growth) turning insular and isolating younger Christians from relationships with non-Christian friends and family members.

## Making decisions that allow for growth

Nine in ten interviewees, and about half of survey respondents, also mentioned making decisions consistent with growth as a sign that spiritual growth had occurred.

Specifically, these participants discussed:

1. **Adopting practices**, such as prayer, Bible reading, participating in Christian community, and church attendance
2. **Turning away from sin**. In many cases, participants said that they not only had chosen not to sin, but that they had lost their desire to commit specific sins. One survey respondent, for example, described “a desire to run from sin that would cause me not to commune with God”; another observed that “things I struggled with were no longer a struggle”.
3. **Improved treatment of others**. This theme differed from the “improved relationship with others” category above in that it concentrated on how participants treated others, not on the quality of their relationship with them. Participants said that they had become more loving, kinder, gentler, and more likely to show grace to others, and more patient
4. **Choosing God's will over their own**. Participants described how they had surrendered their will to God's: “I told him, ‘Wherever you go, I will go. When you say move, I will move’”, one recalled. “It was the first time I submitted myself wholeheartedly to him”
5. **Asking questions**. Leaders, especially, noted that choosing to ask questions was often a sign of spiritual growth: “We should be wary of people in church not asking questions because that means they're not engaging”, one leader said. “The more you look at God, the more questions you have”.

## Outwardly focused faith

Finally, participants recounted how spiritual growth had led not only to improvements in their own lives (and the lives of those in their immediate sphere), but in a desire to benefit people through mission, service and leadership, and mentoring others. This theme of outwardly focused faith was mentioned by three in five interviewees, and one in ten survey respondents.

Participants discussed:

1. **Mission**. As they grew, Christians began to care much more about evangelism and sometimes also justice, and to prioritise it in their lives. “I was on fire for God, almost overnight”, one respondent remembered. “I realised I wanted everyone to know Jesus”.
2. **Service and leadership**. For many participants, spiritual growth coincided with beginning to serve (or serving more) at church and taking on leadership responsibilities
3. **Mentoring others**. Participants also noted that they now had the desire and confidence to help others grow: “I was nurtured by other people and then [I was becoming] the person doing the nurturing”, one said.

# What causes growth?

Interviewees and survey respondents primarily attributed spiritual growth to **five practices, one experience, and the Holy Spirit**.

## Five practices<sup>6</sup>

Practice	How did this practice lead to growth?	% interviewees mentioning	% survey respondents mentioning	Literature review pathway
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Trust and authenticity</li><li>Others modelling growth</li><li>Challenge and accountability</li><li>Opportunities to try new things</li><li>Regular interaction</li></ul>	80%	65%	Relational  Cultural  Envisioned  Practical
Choosing to grow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Submitting to Jesus</li><li>Making time for God</li><li>Taking ownership of faith</li></ul>	38%	29%	Submitted  Practical
Bible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Refocusing on what it means to be a Christian</li><li>Vehicle for the Spirit</li><li>Study leading to deeper understanding of God</li></ul>	32%	30%	Envisioned  Attentional
Time spent with God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Creates opportunity for God to speak, act, and be present</li><li>Keeps mind on God</li><li>Creates opportunity for self-reflection</li></ul>	28%	48%	Envisioned  Attentional
Calls to action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Realising need for something beyond self</li><li>Realising capabilities, growing in confidence</li><li>Sense of responsibility to God and others</li></ul>	24%	23%	Submitted  Envisioned  Practical

<sup>6</sup> As can be seen in the table below, interviewees and survey respondents mentioned these practices at different frequencies. For simplicity, we have ranked the practices by the frequency with which they were mentioned by interviewees. Interestingly, survey respondents mentioned nearly all themes less frequently. This was probably because their responses on average were shorter: it is easier to cover multiple ideas in a long response to an interview question than it is in a shorter, typed survey response. This does suggest, however, that when survey respondents mentioned a theme more frequently than interviewees (as they did for Time with God) they felt especially strongly about the issue.

## One experience

Experience	How did this practice lead to growth?	% interviewees mentioning	% survey respondents mentioning	Literature review pathway
Suffering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Realising a need for something beyond self</li></ul>	30%	28%	Submitted

## The Holy Spirit

Agent	How did this practice lead to growth?	% interviewees mentioning	% survey respondents mentioning	Literature review pathway
Holy Spirit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Revealing God</li><li>Showing power of God</li><li>Convicting of sin, leading to repentance</li></ul>	32%	25%	Repentant  Envisioned

We examine these causes of growth in greater depth below.

## Five practices

### Community

By far the most common practice mentioned by respondents in their stories of spiritual growth (and the most common cause overall) was community. Specifically, participants emphasised the importance of two types of community (1) relationship with peers and (2) investment from a more mature Christian.

### Relationship with peers

Relationship with peers was defined as any relationship between Christians at a similar level of maturity. It included both formal groups – such as life groups or reading groups – and informal relationships with Christian friends. It was mentioned as a cause of spiritual growth by 50 percent of interviewees and 45 percent of survey respondents.

## Pathways

This cause of growth fell generally within the relational, cultural, and envisioned pathways described in the literature review. In particular, participants said that they grew through:

1. **Trust and authenticity.** When Christians were living in community with peers they trusted, they were able to share the areas in which they really needed to grow. As one interviewee commented, “if people are talking about the weather and praying for Ukraine at the end, that’s nice, but not real, but if you’re confessing your secret sin from the night before [that’s a different story]”. Growth, that is, occurred through relationships that were **close** enough for people to consider sharing what was really going on in their lives and **safe** enough for people to take the risk of doing so – two essential components of the **relational** pathway
2. **Others modelling growth.** When Christians were around others who were growing, it set a new standard for them to emulate (an instance of the **envisioned** pathway from the literature review). Seeing others follow Jesus passionately “redefines normal”, one interviewee explained
3. **Challenge and accountability.** Participants said they had grown when fellow Christians had wisely discerned opportunities to:
  - a. Ask them about things they might prefer to ignore
  - b. Hold them to account for things they had felt called to do
  - c. Directly challenge them on sinful behaviour
4. **Other pathways**, including learning from and with others, a community expectation of growth (related to the cultural pathway above), mutual care, and praying together

## Investment from a more mature Christian

The “investment from a more mature Christian” category comprised any relationship in which a mature Christian promoted the spiritual growth of a younger Christian. These relationships included mentoring as well as more informal relationships with church leaders and other mature Christians. (A few respondents also mentioned spiritual direction.) Interestingly, **leaders were much more likely to mention this theme than Christians between the ages of 18 and 35: 70 percent** of interviews with leaders discussed it, as compared to just **20 percent** of interviewees between the ages of 18 and 35, and 30 percent of survey respondents (also all between the ages of 18–35).

**While multiple interpretations of this discrepancy are possible, the most likely has to do with question phrasing.** Since leaders were asked to tell a story of a time they had facilitated spiritual growth in others, it is not surprising that most of their stories would refer to a more mature Christian (i.e., themselves) investing in a younger Christian. Christians between the ages of 18 and 35, on the other hand, were merely asked to tell a story of a time they had grown spiritually. As such, they may have been less likely to refer to investment from a more mature Christian simply because the question did not set them up to do so. Many Christians between the ages of 18 and 35 also do not have access to a mentor or spiritual director, and therefore may not have thought to mention it. Nonetheless, it is also possible that leaders may have overestimated how much they helped younger Christians, and this possibility should not be borne in mind in interpreting the data below.

## Pathways

Once again, growth occurred primarily through the relational and envisioned pathways mentioned in the literature review. Interestingly, however, when mentors, church leaders, and spiritual directors provided opportunities for younger Christians to try new things, they also made use of the practical pathway, offering realistic activities to help the younger Christian grow.

Specifically, participants said investment from a more mature Christian helped them mature through:

1. **Modelling following Jesus.** Mature Christians helped younger Christians by providing a “role model... [for people] to see what they might grow towards”, thus activating the envisioned pathway
2. **Providing opportunities to try new things.** Often, mature Christians would create opportunities for younger Christians to try something new, such as taking on leadership, serving others, participating in evangelism, or exercising the gifts of the Spirit. These opportunities led to growth through helping younger Christians **build their ability and confidence** and, in some cases, helping them **discern** what they felt God might be calling them to
3. **Trust and authenticity.** As with relationship between peers, trust was crucial in allowing mature Christians to engage with what was actually going on in younger Christians’ lives, rather than with the version of themselves these Christians wanted to present to the world
4. **Regular interaction.** Participants spoke about regular interaction as both crucial to building trust and the basis of the deep change that relationship with a more mature Christian could bring about over time
5. **Other factors**, including encouragement (14 percent), care for the younger Christian (14 percent), challenge and accountability (10 percent), and providing wisdom (10 percent). **It was intriguing that challenge and accountability ranked relatively low on this list:** while there was certainly a place for it, it was hardly the most common pathway to growth



## Choosing to grow

This cause of growth was the simplest: Christians grew, they said, when they made a choice to grow. (Interestingly, this finding aligns closely with the principles of adult learning theory, which suggests that adults are self-directed learners.) One leader summed up how choice could lead to growth:

Growth comes from a hard, but intentional, decision to continue to be stretched. People who don't grow anymore [stop growing] because the next step would be a stretch: laying something down which is too close to my heart or too uncomfortable to step away from.

Choosing to grow was mentioned by 38 percent of interviewees and 29 percent of survey respondents.

## Pathways

This cause of growth drew on both the **submitted** and **practical** pathways from the literature review: participants chose to prioritise God's desires over their own and order their lives so they could be shaped by Jesus.

Specifically, they mentioned:

1. **Submitting to Jesus.** As participants explained, this involved a choice to surrender control of one's life and choose God's will instead. As one commented, "since then I think more in terms of what God wants me to do and am no longer deciding to do things in my future based on my own desires, but based on what I believe God's will to be"
2. **Making time for God.** As we shall see below, time with God was an independent cause of growth. Therefore deciding to make this time created space for God to work through the pathways we will explore in that section
3. **Taking ownership of one's own faith.** This pathway seemed particularly important for Christians on the younger end of the age range: one participant, for example, observed that "towards the end of my time at university and at the start of my career I really grew in my faith as I started to take more ownership and was less reliant on being spoonfed"

While not a pathway as much as a precursor to growth, participants also noted that a desire for God could lead them to choose to grow, through asking God for more of his presence or through seeking more understanding of God.

## Bible

The Bible was mentioned as a cause of growth by 32 percent of interviewees and 30 percent of survey respondents.

## Pathways

Participants suggested that reading the Bible created growth through the **envisioned** and **attentional** pathways from the literature review. In particular, they said the Bible:

1. **Refocused their attention** on what it meant to be a Christian and how God was calling them to live. This means of growth is described by the envisioned and attentional pathways from the literature review
2. **Acted as a vehicle for the Holy Spirit**, through which God could speak and act. Participants spoke of allowing God "to change my perspective... through reading his Word" and of how the Holy Spirit worked "through community and reading the Bible" in the lives of 18- to 35-year-olds
3. **Helped them understand God more deeply**

Participants also mentioned that they grew most when they saw the Bible as relevant to their lives. While not a pathway in itself, this seems to be a condition of the pathways above functioning effectively.

## Time with God

This cause of growth referred not so much to a particular activity, but to the concept that spending time with God was in itself a practice which caused growth, almost regardless of the particular discipline through which Christians chose to spend time with Him.

The word "almost" in the previous sentence, however, is important. Participants suggested that, in order for this time with God to be transformative, it needed to be:

1. **Purposeful:** time that was consciously set aside for God, focused, and undistracted
2. **Regular:** participants spoke of consistent patterns of prayer, Bible reading, worship, and participation in the sacraments

The theme of time with God was mentioned by 28 percent of interviewees, but 40 percent of interviewees between the ages of 18 and 35 and 48 percent of survey respondents (also between the ages of 18 and 35).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Question phrasing may help to explain this difference: since 18- to 35-year-olds were asked to reflect on their own experiences of spiritual growth, they may have been more likely to mention internal causes, such as time with God. Leaders, by contrast, were asked to reflect on a time when they had observed spiritual growth in their ministry. Since it is difficult to see how much time people spend on their own with God, they may have been more likely to comment on factors that were externally observable.

## Pathways

When reflecting on how time spent with God led to growth, participants referred primarily to the **envisioned** and **attentional** pathways. They noted that this practice:

1. **Created opportunities to experience God's presence**, and for God to speak and act. One respondent, for instance, attributed her growth not to her "direct action or will" but to making "a lot of space and time for God to move" in her life. Similarly, others spoke of "keep[ing] the channels open" for God to speak or "slow[ing] down enough to hear" God
2. **Kept their mind on God**. While the previous pathway relied on creating opportunities for God to do something, this one was more about an individual choice to frame one's life from the perspective of faith (taking advantage of the attentional pathway from the literature review). Participants noted that when they spent large amounts of time with God, it became much more difficult to live in a way which was not in alignment with his will
3. **Provided time for self-reflection**. Time with God, participants said, often also became time to recognise their own thoughts and emotions and share them with God. As one commented, "self-reflection can happen without God, but, from a religious perspective, it also contextualises things: I'm not just thinking, *Okay, I'm sad*, but rather, *Okay, I'm sad, but ultimately all things will be well, and God cares about me*"

## Calls to action

Calls to action referred to living out one's faith through activities which benefit others, such as mission, leadership, service, communal prayer, exercising the gifts of the Spirit, and facilitating others' spiritual growth.

This theme was mentioned by 24 percent of interviewees and 23 percent of survey respondents. Primarily, participants discussed:

1. Mission: primarily evangelism, although some also discussed social justice
2. Taking on leadership
3. Service

## Pathways

Participants said that calls to action led to growth through the **submitted**, **envisioned**, and **practical** pathways, by:

1. **Helping them realise they needed something beyond themselves**. As participants began to lead others and participate in mission, they realised that their own wisdom and strength were insufficient. This led them to rely more on God, activating the **submitted** pathway
2. **Instilling a sense of responsibility to God and others**. Christians who had begun to participate in mission often described a sense of the world's need for Jesus which inspired them to care for others more deeply. Similarly, when participants were asked to lead, a sense of responsibility, gratitude for the role, and recognition of the needs of others often led them to be more committed in their own faith so they could lead others more effectively. In literature review terms, the **practical** pathway (participating in mission or leadership) activated the **envisioned** pathway (seeing the world's needs and their place in meeting them) and caused them to be more **submitted** to God
3. **Helped them understand their capabilities and grow in confidence**. Paradoxically, while for some participants calls to action led them to grow through realising the limits of their own abilities (leading them to grow through the **submitted** pathway), for others it caused growth by helping them understand what their God-given abilities were and learn to use them. Which of these pathways leads to growth will likely depend on the stage of spiritual development in which an individual finds themselves

## One experience

### Suffering

While the five practices above were all things that Christians did, participants also emphasised a cause of spiritual growth which primarily happened to them: suffering. This theme was mentioned by 30 percent of interviewees and 28 percent of survey respondents, and included any difficult experience that caused Christians to grow spiritually. Interestingly, interviewees between the ages of 18 and 35 were much more likely to mention this theme: 50 percent of interviewees from this group discussed it.

## Pathways

Participants primarily said that suffering led to growth through **helping them realise they needed something beyond themselves** (mentioned by 28 percent of interviewees). Suffering often exhausted participants' own resources for coping with life, causing them to turn to God. This turning to God then activated many of the practices and pathways above, such as spending time with God ("**When you feel that you need God, you spend time with him**", one participant said simply), the **submitted** pathway, and seeking Christian community.



Much less commonly, participants also mentioned other ways in which suffering led to growth, such as purgation (God using suffering to strip away something they were unwilling to relinquish), suffering motivating a search for a new understanding of God, or the fact that suffering could sometimes create time in participants' lives, allowing them to spend time with God if they chose to do so.

## The Holy Spirit

The final cause of spiritual growth was the Holy Spirit (mentioned by 32 percent of interviewees and 25 percent of survey respondents). Interestingly, leaders were somewhat more likely to discuss this theme: perhaps because they had a stronger theological sense that the Spirit was the ultimate cause of spiritual growth.

### Pathways

While many respondents would no doubt see the Holy Spirit as undergirding all spiritual growth ("closeness to God is only by the grace of God," one interviewee said), they primarily referred to the Holy Spirit in connection with the **envisioned** and **repentant** pathways from the literature review. Specifically, participants said that the Spirit:

1. **Revealed God's presence.** By the Holy Spirit, participants had come to a stronger sense that God was real and with them – and, sometimes, that they should live differently as a result. "If God has revealed himself to me... that requires some follow-up action", one 18- to 35-year-old said. Similarly, an Anglo-Catholic respondent described feeling, in the midst of a church service, "an intense sense of the presence of God and the miracle of the Eucharist, which I was afterwards unable to 'shake off' despite another year of questioning". This means of growth also drew on the **envisioned** pathway from the literature review: the Holy Spirit presented participants with a new vision of reality, which, if they responded to it, would inspire further growth
2. **Showed God's power.** Respondents told stories of times that God had healed people, answered prayers, united families, and provided words of knowledge. As with the times that God had directly answered prayers, this demonstration of God's power tended to result in a stronger sense that God was real and sometimes to inspire participants to change their lives to match their new understanding. In cases where God had brought healing, the healing itself also enabled participants to take the next step in following God. One participant shared that:

God has been restoring me, renewing my mind. And my whole worldview has changed for the better because of it. I also experienced a lot of social anxiety in the past which kept me isolated and staying indoors in my room, and, by God's grace and with his help, I'm now in a much better place and feel much more optimistic and hopeful.

3. **Convicted them of sin, and led them to repentance.** Some interviewees (interestingly, mostly leaders) also pointed to the Spirit's role in bringing about repentance (activating the **repentant** pathway). One respondent, for example, described how:

I was dealing with a certain sin that I struggled to ask for repentance for. Then COVID hit, and I spent a lot of time just in God's presence. That's when I asked for his help and was later able to repent and was freed from the sin that was holding me back. This changed my whole life and my relationship with Jesus.

## Barriers to growth

In addition to asking about the causes of growth, we also included a question on barriers. (To prevent survey fatigue, this question was only asked in interviews.)

Interviewees discussed four primary barriers:

Barrier	% interviewees mentioning
Unhelpful community	64%
• With Christians	48%
• With non-Christians	14%
• Romantic relationships	8%
Busyness	30%
Lack of community	20%
Suffering as a barrier	20%

As with the causes of growth above, community was central. Two of the four barriers had to do with either **unhelpful community** or a **lack** of any community at all.

### Unhelpful community

#### With Christians

Unhelpful forms of community were by far the most common barrier to spiritual growth. Interestingly, however, when discussing this theme, participants most commonly referred to community with **other Christians**. Christian community, they said, could obstruct growth through:

1. **Poor Leadership.** Specifically, participants mentioned instances where leaders had failed to encourage (or even discouraged) spiritual growth, where leaders were hindered by pride, or failed to provide adequate challenge and accountability. One young person, for instance, recounted how he had been inspired to paint fences in his community as a way of pursuing justice locally and had been told that this was “probably not” something worth pursuing. Leaders shared that pride often resulted in self-reliance and a failure to listen, leading to “arrogance and a calcification of the heart towards others”. Finally, two participants emphasised leaders’ responsibility to challenge their congregations, noting that, in the absence of challenge, Christian community “can become simply a friendship group”
2. **Discrimination.** However, participants primarily mentioned this theme with regard to issues where differing perspectives within the church complicate what is seen and understood as discrimination: LGBTQI+ concerns and women in ministry. Of these issues, LGBTQI+ concerns were mentioned much more frequently
3. **Culture obstructing growth.** Two interviewees described how a lack of authenticity could impede spiritual formation: “People will bring their Sunday selves [and] pretend they didn’t kiss a boy in the club or watch stuff they shouldn’t have watched”, one observed. While only single interviewees mentioned each of the following themes, participants also commented that spiritual growth could be hindered in cultures where there was a lack of emotional intelligence, grace for new Christians, space to confess and grapple with theology, opportunity for young people to lead, and a low spiritual temperature

## With non-Christians

Importantly, spiritual growth could also be hampered by relationships with non-Christians. This theme was mentioned by 14 percent of interviewees, but 20 percent of 18- to 35-year-olds themselves.

Non-Christians could impede growth by causing Christians to reconsider their faith, either by denigrating it explicitly (“friends sometimes can say stuff which make you feel like what you believe is stupid”, one 18- to 35-year-old said), or by querying it out of concern for their loved ones: “Non-Christian family and friends [can say] ‘What are you doing? Are you sure? What is this cult you’ve joined?’”. Comments such as these can be especially powerful as many young Christians in our sample described how they were initially unwilling to be known for their faith: in the words of another 18- to 35-year-old, “I was trying to fit in, pretending that I had no interest in church because I was worried about what other people would think”.

Sometimes, participants also felt the appeal of non-Christian worldviews and ways of living; a final participant remembered how, just after she became a Christian:

## Romantic relationships

Finally, participants noted that romantic relationships could be a barrier to growth, as they tempted Christians to prioritise the relationship over God. One leader attributed a young person falling away from faith to a relationship “becoming more important for her”, and young people themselves observed how easy it can be to “put their whole trust and faith in... [a] boy”, and not in the “Father who loves” them.

## Busyness

Busyness impeded spiritual growth through reducing participants’ time for God and Christian community.<sup>6</sup> One 18- to 35-year-old, for instance, recalled how busy he had been with university:

I finished exams two weeks ago, but two months before that point... [I was] in the library from 8 am to 8 pm. I would get home, eat, try and have some Jesus time, go to bed and repeat. It was so tiring to the point... where I was kind of dragging myself to church on Sunday, [thinking] *I want to be here, I know I want to be here, but it’s still a chore.*

Interestingly, while busyness was a genuine barrier for many participants, some thought it was also sometimes due to a lack of discipline: “**The church is in competition with social media and Netflix, not mosques and gurdwaras**”, one said. Similarly, a leader felt that 18- to 35-year-olds see themselves as “really, really busy, but they’re probably not: they’re busy on their phone”.

Regardless of whether busyness was caused by distraction or genuine demands on Christians’ time, participants felt that spiritual growth required creating time for God: “It’s our responsibility to order our work environment such that we have time to prioritise our spiritual life”, a respondent observed. Many Christians in our sample had found inventive ways of doing so, even in periods where they felt overwhelmed: the young man who had spent 8 am to 8 pm in the library, for instance, also went on to describe how he had acted on a friend’s suggestion to find a brief but regular time on Fridays to “go to the park [with a friend], play football... read [the] Bible and pray for each other.... That helped to break up life a bit, and make sure I was keeping in touch with faith and people”.

<sup>6</sup> While busyness in the church could also theoretically be a barrier to spiritual growth, respondents primarily mentioned busyness with non-church activities.

Lack of community

As can be seen in the last example, community was essential to helping Christians persevere through busyness and other obstacles to spiritual growth. Correspondingly, a lack of community was a major obstacle to spiritual formation. While suffering was inevitable, one leader said, community was:

The difference between... [suffering] that throws people off track and circumstances that lead to further growth. It's the support around them that keeps [the 18- to 35-year-olds I work with] from going off course, how rooted they are in the local church, whether there are people around them, praying for them, encouraging them. **If people feel more isolated and alone, it's more likely to overwhelm them.**

Other participants similarly noted that a lack of community could make it more difficult to be persistent with spiritual disciplines and feel connected to God.

Interestingly, the most common causes of a lack of community that participants noted were separation from a pre-existing community (through moving to a different part of the country, etc.), or a sense that others in their church did not care about spiritual growth. Church leaders may therefore have a role to play in building communities where people can find others who are committed to spiritual growth – or where they can rediscover these people after moving to a new church.

Suffering as a barrier

Finally, while suffering was a major cause of spiritual growth, it could also be a barrier. Some respondents described how suffering overwhelmed them, reducing their capacity to spend time with God. “A lot was happening in her family life”, one leader said of a young person:

She lost her grandma, had to move out of her dad’s house, and her mom and dad were not together. She was having to find a new house, and staying in other people’s houses.... **Once everything solidified, when she had stability in home, that’s when her faith grew.**

Debilitating illness could also prevent people from engaging with practices that would help them grow: leaders, for instance, shared that young people had had to leave spiritual formation programs because of mental health problems or even (in one case) a stroke. Equally importantly, suffering sometimes left respondents with unresolved questions: “when you get setbacks, it can.... make you doubt God or make you angry at God” an 18- to 35-year-old admitted. Similarly, a prison minister working with 18- to 35-year-olds described how “negative things” happening to inmates’ family members could be especially devastating as:

They’re not there to be a friend to be a son or a brother.... It can get them down, and make them wonder why God allowed it.

Influence on others

As the benefits of spiritual growth are often shared with a Christian’s wider community, we also asked participants what (if any) effect their growth had had on others. Their responses are summarised in the following table.

Effect	% interviewees mentioning	% survey respondents mentioning
Inspired others to grow	42%	41%
Created opportunities for evangelism	40%	11%
Led to them investing in others’ growth	28%	13%
Encouraged others	22%	17%
Led to others becoming Christians	20%	3%
Improved how they treated others	12%	11%

As can be seen above, survey respondents were much less likely to say that spiritual growth had created opportunities for evangelism or resulted in others becoming Christians. This was because the survey asked specifically about the effects of growth on the spiritual growth of other Christians, while the interview question was framed so that participants could speak about the effect of their growth on both Christians and non-Christians.

Discussion

Some of these effects were relatively straightforward: when spiritual growth inspired further growth in others, for instance, it tended to be because these people had seen a new level of maturity that they wanted for themselves. “It creates a healthy spiritual jealousy”, one respondent said. “What you got, I want a piece of that.”

Others were more complex: when spiritual growth created opportunities for evangelism (and led to people becoming Christians), it did so through:

1. **Christians no longer being afraid** to be recognised as followers of Jesus and speaking more about him: “During my period of spiritual growth, I became much more confident in my faith, able to talk about it, and not be defensive about it”, one participant remembered. Another young participant (who was training for ministry) said that “in the past... at times when I was talking to someone at a party, I might avoid saying [I was training for the priesthood].... [now] I love those conversations”
2. **Others recognising the spiritual growth** that had occurred: “Because I was growing and trying to be more like Jesus”, one young person shared, “people would say, ‘You don’t do this, why is that? Why are you so happy all the time?’”
3. **Christians feeling more equipped** to share Jesus with others: “I found myself being able to have conversations with people”, another participant recalled. “[Through attending a] small group... I realised that I know a lot more than I think I know about faith”

For many Christians, increased spiritual maturity also motivated them to try to help others grow. “My godson was baptised recently, partly because of me”, one participant noted. “[I was] able to walk alongside him.” Another 18- to 35-year-old shared that she had “been the fire behind her sister getting into the Bible”, while leaders noted instances in which Christians had moved “from being the recipient of discipleship to passing the baton to other people”.

Lastly, participants observed that spiritual growth had caused them to simply treat others more kindly: “**Because [I know] I am loved, I started loving everyone around me**”, these respondents noted. “Spiritual growth has been all about loving other people”.

## Sustaining growth

Finally, we asked interviewees about what was required to sustain spiritual growth. In their answers, participants tended to mention the same five practices seen in the “causes of growth” section above, although they discussed suffering and the Holy Spirit less frequently. The implication seemed to be that **while suffering and the Holy Spirit often initiated growth, to continue to grow Christians had to choose to engage with the practices**. Especially important within these was continued engagement with both peers and mentors: “Making sure those spaces stay in some form present in life” can be important, participants said; “it’s an ongoing relationship, not mission accomplished”.

Intriguingly, survey respondents in particular also seemed to want more support from churches. While three-quarters (76 percent) said that their personal growth was a priority for their church, **only 40 percent strongly agreed**. In particular, there may be a need for churches to support Christians in facilitating their own spiritual growth: while 73 percent of survey respondents said they had been taught to facilitate their own spiritual growth, **only 19 percent strongly agreed**.

Interestingly, while there was self-selection bias in our survey respondents (people already interested in spiritual growth would be more likely to fill in a survey on the topic), 96 percent said their personal growth as a Christian was a top priority in their faith. More than seven in ten (72 percent) strongly agreed. Although these numbers are almost certainly higher than for the average congregation (since the survey was partly distributed through spiritual formation ministries such as the Navigators and the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity), leaders are likely to find at least some enthusiasm for a new commitment to spiritual growth within their churches.

# Comparison of empirical findings with literature review hypotheses



## Hypotheses we saw affirmed in the empirical findings

There are a few areas where the empirical evidence aligned most readily to the literature we reviewed.

### Community and the relational pathway

Community – the practice most commonly named in the empirical work – aligns most clearly with the relational pathway.

Across both the literature and the empirical evidence we see common elements of the relational pathway around authenticity and accountability. Both give a clear sense that this pathway does not work through “being friends with Christians” or “going to church”, but through specific types of relationships and community. As the empirical evidence on barriers shows, there is such a thing as unhelpful community with other Christians which does not facilitate the relational pathway to growth but can inhibit it.

It is perhaps significant that much of the literature on spiritual growth we reviewed – written for individuals to read and gain from – can be focused on ways an individual can engage in their growth journey better and do not begin with a section that says “stop reading this book and go and find someone to read it with”. Whereas the empirical evidence would suggest this would be good advice.

## Four other pathways: Submitted, envisioned, practical and attentional

The other four practices identified in the empirical evidence also align very well with some of the hypothesised pathways:

- Within the practice of “choosing to grow” the empirical evidence identified pathways of submitting to Jesus and making time for God aligned reasonably well with the hypothesised “envisioned” pathway and “practical” pathway.
- Within the practice of “Bible” the empirical evidence identified pathways of refocusing on what it means to be a Christian and a deeper understanding of God are good descriptions of key components of the envisioned pathway.
- Within the practice of “Time spent with God” the empirical evidence identified pathways that are descriptions of parts of both the attentional pathway – giving God the opportunity to speak, keeping our mind on God, and opportunities for self-reflection – and practical pathway – actually making time to spend with God.

## Empirical findings not identified in the literature

There are a few areas where the empirical evidence brought understanding that was not reflected in the literature we reviewed.

### Calls to action

The one practice that the empirical work identified that does not align especially well to the literature we reviewed is the “calls to action”. In the literature we reviewed, the practices of mission, leadership and service were not frequently referenced and therefore no clear pathways were explored or named.

Looking at the pathways identified in the empirical evidence here suggested there might be some link to the envisioned pathway around the changing view of self leading to the increased motivation grow into all God has for them, but the empirical evidence went beyond this into pathways of self-confidence, trust in God and a sense of responsibility.

### Intervention of the Holy Spirit

Finally, the empirical work identified the centrality of the agency of the Holy Spirit in some ways that aligned to the literature we reviewed. For example, the pathways described for the Holy Spirit align most with the envisioned pathway and the repentant pathway – two things we would expect theologically speaking (John 16:8, 16.13).



However the empirical evidence also went beyond the literature we reviewed. Much of the literature speaks about the Holy Spirit as the person who enables us to change but positions the practices (and thus the pathways) as how Christians respond and become aware of the Holy Spirit's initiative. On the other hand, in the empirical data interviewees spoke more often of the active intervention of the Holy Spirit to prompt growth and change rather than interviewees initiating engagement with the Holy Spirit.

It may be that the literature we reviewed naturally leans into the role of Christians in engaging with God in their growth and therefore unintentionally risks minimising the proactive role of the Holy Spirit in initiating growth.

## Hypotheses we did not see affirmed in the empirical findings

Whilst six of the eight hypothesised pathways found support in the empirical evidence, two did not and a further two pathways appeared significantly less so than the literature would argue for. Finally, the experience of suffering did not come up in the way we might have expected.

### Cultural pathway

It is perhaps not surprising that the cultural pathway did not appear frequently in the empirical evidence because by definition it is unconscious. The cultural pathway was built on the literature – particularly by James KA Smith – that people are formed just as much by the environments and unspoken norms in which they live as by rational and intentional awareness. *The Eight Shifts* – eight small things a church could do in Sunday services to set a culture of everyday discipleship – developed from Setting God's People Free is a practical outworking of the cultural pathway.

Therefore whilst the idea of the cultural pathway may be of value to church leaders who are setting the unspoken norms and habits that people in their church experience – self-reported empirical work like this research may never confirm or reject its efficacy.

### Psychological pathway

The psychological pathway was also not referenced by many in the empirical work. This is also perhaps to be expected because whilst the literature around this well-known in certain circles – for example, Peter Scazzerro's work on *Emotional Health Discipleship* – is it perhaps still not commonly used. Furthermore, the idea of a psychospiritual journey – the holistic combining of what is often separated out as emotional health and spiritual health – is language that many might veer away from or see as primarily for people experiencing psychological distress and poor mental health.

### Repentant pathway

Of all the pathways identified in the literature, the repentant pathway as a means to spiritual growth was the one affirmed and repeated across all traditions from conservative evangelical, to liberal, to charismatic, to anglo-catholic – usually in the practice of confession or self-examination of sin.

However in the empirical literature, the ideas of confession or rejection of sin came up in only two places: as an pathway of the Holy Spirit, and as a sign of spiritual growth. It is however interesting how little it came up in its practice forms as a way of growing: personal confession, corporate confession, or in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper/Eucharist.

It may be that all the literature we identified highlights it for precisely for the same reason as it did not appear very often in our empirical data: because it has fallen out of 'fashion' or become misunderstood by those aged 18–35.

### Attentional pathway

The attentional pathway from the literature did find good alignment with the empirical pathways uncovered in the practices of "Bible" and "Time spent with God"; however, these pathways were more about modes of engagement rather than modes of withdrawal. This is only worth noting because a section of the literature – Christian and, in fact, secular – identifies a person's attention as central to our formation as people for two reasons. First, our understanding of neuroscience shows the significance of where we place our attention in the ongoing formation of our brains, and second, in the UK we live in an "attention economy" where we live under constant and sophisticated attempts to take and keep hold of our attention.

In this light – whilst it is perhaps not surprising that the empirical evidence did not frequently name practices of choosing where we do and don't give our attention and thought – it may be that this pathway is of significance to the spiritual growth of those under 35 in particular.

### Suffering as a core experience

The core experience identified in the empirical work was suffering. Whilst this is a very common experience identified in the literature as central to spiritual growth, the literature and empirical evidence offered different pathways.

The main pathway in the empirical work was a sense of reliance and realisation of their need for God. Yet in the literature suffering can be a catalyst leading to all of the following pathways:

- **Envisioned** – suffering can force people to reconsider their image of God, the gospel, their sense of self in God’s eyes, and what God calls us to do and be
- **Relational** – suffering can lead people into deeper and more formational relationships with others where they begin to share deeper things about life and faith
- **Psychological** – suffering can create or bring up areas of emotional pain and lack of health that could result in the addressing of those things and release from them
- **Submitted** – suffering can bring Christians to the point of either rejecting the idea of God altogether or finding a deeper sense of submission to His will and our lack of understanding of it

It is interesting to wonder whether those in our interviews and surveys simply had not engaged their suffering in such intentional ways to facilitate growth or were perhaps unable to find the word to describe how suffering had formed them.



# Further research



## Further research

While we hope this research and the recommendations we discuss below will be a real help to the church, it has also suggested opportunities for further inquiry.

First, although we have analysed the data as deeply as time and budget permitted, **multivariate analysis** (splitting the data by variables such as respondent demographics or the causes of growth they mentioned) could answer questions such as:

- What practices/experiences were most likely to lead to specific types of growth (e.g., closeness with God, peace, etc.)?
- How did experiences of growth differ by respondents' demographics (such as churchmanship or ethnicity)?

Furthermore, we think a **further quantitative study**, building on findings from this research, could yield additional additional insights. This research has been primarily qualitative (with quantitative analysis layered on top), but it would be relatively straightforward to design a closed-ended survey to test the hypotheses developed here. This might answer questions such as:

- Does our account of the causes of spiritual growth hold up when tested with a larger sample of participants?
- How tightly is it possible to link practices with particular types of spiritual maturity?
- What forms of spiritual formation are most needed in particular regions of the UK, or in age groups beyond 18- to 35-year-olds?

Finally, **research into the “neglected pathways”** (those mentioned in the literature review, but only infrequently by respondents, such as the psychological or repentant pathways) might reveal whether these pathways were truly less important for spiritual growth in 18- to 35-year-olds, or whether they are merely less practised in the UK Church. What might we find, for instance, if we were to compare experiences of spiritual growth in churches which emphasised confession (and had a cultural expectation of confession and accessible ways for Christians to confess their sins to each other or a priest) with experiences in churches which did not have this emphasis?

# Conclusion



## How this can help the Church develop disciples

In the Great Commission, Jesus begins by declaring that all authority has been given to him, before sending the disciples out to together make disciples, baptising them in the name of the Trinitarian God. “Surely,” he says, “I am with you always, to the very end of the age”.

In this final moment before the Ascension, that is, Jesus first **gathers** the disciples (re-forming their community), **calls them to action** (in his charge to make disciples), and implies that, through the Holy Spirit, **God’s presence and authority** will undergird their ministry.

If these themes sound familiar, the primary contribution of this research has not so much been to discover novel causes of spiritual growth. Instead, we have attempted to delineate which causes are currently leading to growth in 18- to 35-year-olds in the UK, resulting in our emphasis on **five practices, one experience, and the Holy Spirit** above. We have also tried to outline the pathways through which these causes lead to growth, to enable church leaders to understand (humbly and, inevitably, partially) how God is working through them to form his church. We hope that clarity on **what** seems to be working and **how** will enable church leaders to concentrate their efforts on what is most likely to shape their congregations into the image of Jesus.

## Recommendations

**Help 18- to 35-year-olds find formational community**, marked by:

- 1 **Interaction with peers**, characterised by trust and authenticity, Christians modelling growth to each other, and mutual challenge and accountability
- 2 **Investment from a more mature Christian**, who models following Jesus, provides opportunities to try new things, meets with the younger Christian regularly, and whom the younger Christian trusts

- 2 **Think about pathways, not just practices**. Which pathways undergird your church’s practices for spiritual growth? How might you intentionally activate these pathways to help promote further growth?

- 3 **Cast a vision for spiritual growth**, which inspires congregation members to choose to grow, and helps them see the connection between mission, and spiritual formation

- 4 **Build in practices that encourage spiritual growth:**
  - a. Teach your church to find creative ways of spending purposeful, regular time with God – are there practices you could commit to corporately?
  - b. Teach your church to read the Bible in ways that are not purely informational
  - c. Provide calls to action for those who are willing to take them: mission, leadership, service, corporate prayer, etc.

- 5 **Teach on suffering:** How, specifically, can suffering lead to growth? How can you support your congregation in responding to it (addressing questions of why God allowed it and how to follow Jesus at times when they feel overwhelmed)?

- 6 **Remember the Spirit** as an active, independent cause of growth, revealing God’s power and leading to repentance



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1. Clearly articulate faith-based impact strategies or Theories of Change
2. Design programs in an evidence-based way
3. Measure their impact, including spiritual impact where relevant
4. Prioritise quality evidence over anecdote when raising funds and making decisions



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# Appendix 1: Further information – research methods and limitations



We selected qualitative methods for this research primarily because we wanted to understand participants’ own ideas about spiritual growth, rather than asking them to respond to pre-existing ideas about growth (e.g., through ranking or rating them on a survey). We also wanted to hear about how participants had actually grown (or facilitated growth), rather than about their theories on spiritual formation. We therefore interviewed participants using the Critical Incident Technique, which asks for real stories from their lives. Specifically, participants recounted stories of times in which they had grown spiritually, and answered follow-up questions on what they saw as signs of growth, what caused and inhibited progress in spiritual maturity, what, if any, effect their growth had had on others, and how they had tried to sustain the progress they had made.

The survey also used the Critical Incident Technique. While it had a few closed-ended questions, it primarily relied on asking respondents to tell a story of a time they had grown spiritually and then providing an opportunity for them to reflect on this growth.

For interviews, we also set targets to guarantee we heard from a diverse range of respondents (in terms of churchmanship, region of the country, ethnicity, etc.). A table showing the targets and the extent to which they were met may be found below.

	People of colour	Northern Province	Anglo-Catholic	Liberal	Max evangelical	Estates ministry (Anglican leaders only)
Target: 18- to 35s	5	8	2	2	14	N/A
Achieved: 18- to 35s	5	6	3	2	11	N/A
Target: Leaders of 18-35s	3	3	1	2	10	N/A
Achieved: Leaders of 18-35s	3	2	2	2	8	N/A
Target: Anglican leaders	2	5	2	2	10	2
Achieved: Anglican leaders	2	3	2	2	7	3

In summary, targets for nearly all areas were met or exceeded, although we fell slightly below our desired number of interviewees from the Northern Province of the Church of England. Even in this case, however, targets were nearly met, and we did not see much variation between how these respondents and the rest of the sample spoke about spiritual growth.

To protect respondents’ wellbeing, interviews began with a rigorous consent process, which outlined the purpose of the research, asked them to only share stories they were comfortable discussing in this context, and shared how they might receive the research results if they were interested in doing so. Participants were told that they could withdraw consent and end the interview at any point if they wished to do so. Likewise, the survey shared the purpose of the research, cautioned respondents against telling stories that felt unresolved or might cause them distress, and provided an opportunity for them to sign up to be sent a report on the research results.

We analysed qualitative data from both the surveys and interviews without imposing pre-existing categories, instead allowing categories to emerge from the data itself. We then analysed the categories quantitatively to determine what percentage of participants mentioned them.

Importantly, this analysis was **independent** of our literature review on the causes of spiritual growth. Different researchers carried out each task, and categories from the literature review were not used to analyse the empirical data. This approach ensured that our analysis was not unduly shaped by existing thinking on spiritual formation.

## Limitations

While we think these methods have yielded valuable data on spiritual formation in the UK Church, they also have limits. Perhaps most significantly, by asking participants to share their stories and reporting the most common causes of growth, we risk missing approaches to spiritual formation that are rarely tried in the contemporary Church. It may be, for instance, that disciplines such as confession and fasting are far more central to spiritual growth than this research suggests, and are not emphasised here simply because many 18- to 35-year-olds and their leaders do not practise them frequently.

Even with practices and experiences that are part of participants' spirituality, we were limited by their self-awareness. It is possible, for instance, that for Anglican participants the regular practice of saying the creeds, receiving Communion or the Eucharist, and engaging bodily in worship (through kneeling or raising one's hands) may be crucial to spiritual formation, but are not discussed here because the ways in which they contribute to growth are subtle enough to pass unnoticed.<sup>9</sup> The same may be true for causes of spiritual formation that have to do with church culture, the things to which we give our attention, psychospiritual growth, and deeper reflection on suffering, as we discuss later in this report.

Finally, there is **much** more scope for quantitative analysis than we have had capacity for. This includes further quantitative analysis of the data we have already categorised for this report (Were particular practices or experiences associated with a specific type of growth? Did the types and causes of growth differ by participant demographics, such as churchmanship or ethnicity?) and further study to examine spiritual growth from a quantitative perspective. Now that we have some understanding of spiritual growth in 18- to 35-year-olds in the UK, it would be relatively easy to design a closed-ended survey to test the hypotheses we have developed here. Does our account of the causes of spiritual growth hold up when tested with a larger sample of participants? How tightly is it possible to link practices with particular types of spiritual maturity? What forms of spiritual formation are most needed in particular regions of the UK, or in age groups beyond 18- to 35-year-olds? A rigorous quantitative study would allow us to answer these and other questions.

<sup>9</sup> At least by many. Several participants, all from an Anglo-Catholic tradition, did mention the importance of receiving the sacraments to their spiritual formation.

# Appendix 2: Literature review mapping

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## Mapping the literature to the pathways

Below is a mapping of the material review in the literature review, which pathways they mapped against, and the nature of the source material.

The nature of each source is broadly classified as:

- 1. Theological – drawing from an exegetical approach to scripture
- 2. Philosophical – drawing from the field of philosophy
- 3. Research – drawing from research evidence
- 4. Historical – drawing from Christian tradition
- 5. Practitioner – drawing from the experience of an experienced practitioner or ministry
- 6. Spiritual – drawing from writings on the Christian spiritual life

## Envisioned pathway

Hypothesis	Source(s) mapping to this pathway	Nature of the source
Christians grow when we have a clear vision of God, ourselves, and the Christian life that we desire.	<b>The Critical Journey: Stages of Faith</b> by Janet O. Hagberg & Robert A. Guelich	Research
	<b>Setting God’s People Free</b> by Nick Shepherd (Church of England)	Research
	<b>The Wisdom of Christian of Spiritual Formation</b> by Wilhoit & Howard	Research
	<b>Changing Shape: The Faith Lives of Millenials</b> by Ruth Perrin	Research
	<b>Renovation of the Heart</b> by Dallas Willard	Philosophical
	<b>The Disciple: On Becoming Truly Human</b> by Lucy Peppiatt	Theological
	<b>Desiring the Kingdom</b> by James KA Smith	Theological/Philosophical
	<b>Streams of Living Water</b> by Richard Foster	Theological/Historical
	<b>Conformed to His Image</b> by Kenneth Boa	Theological
	<b>Centering Discipleship</b> by E.K Strawser	Practitioner
	<b>Sacred Fire: A Vision for a Deeper Human and Christian Maturity</b> by Ronald Rolheiser	Spiritual
	<b>Inside Out</b> by Renovaré	Practitioner
	<b>The Good and Beautiful God and Good and Beautiful Life</b> by James Bryan Smith	Theological/Spiritual
	<b>Invitation to a Journey</b> by Robert Mulholland	Spiritual
	<b>Golden Booklet of the Christian Life</b> by John Calvin	Spiritual

Repentant pathway

Hypothesis	Source(s) mapping to this pathway	Nature of the source
Christians grow when we have a clear-minded, personalised awareness of our sin-affected nature and God's will and power for us to be transformed.	<b>Deeper: Real Change for Real Sinners</b> by Dane Ortlund	Theological
	<b>Practising the Way</b> by John Mark Comer	Theological/Spiritual
	<b>Transforming Worship: Planning and Leading Sunday services as if spiritual formation mattered</b> by Rory Noland	Practitioner
	<b>Spiritual Formation as if the Church Mattered</b> by James Wilhout	Practitioner
	<b>Addiction and Grace</b> by Gerald May	Psychological/Practitioner
	<b>Deeply Formed Life</b> and <b>Good, Beautiful and Kind</b> by Rich Villodas	Practitioner
	<b>God in all Things</b> by William Barry	Practitioner

Relational pathway

Hypothesis	Source(s) mapping to this pathway	Nature of the source
Christians grow through committed relationships of safety, encouragement and challenge.	<b>Shaping Disciples: Part Two</b> by LICC	Research
	<b>Sustaining Change</b> by LICC	Research
	<b>Follow-up impact evaluation of Bethel Ministry School</b> by Eido Research	Research
	<b>Sharing Jesus: What grows women who share their faith</b> by Eido Research	Research
	<b>The Making Disciples Research Project</b> by LICC	Research
	<b>Deeply Formed Life</b> and <b>Good, Beautiful and Kind</b> by Rich Villodas	Research
	<b>Impact Evaluation of the Community of St. Anselm</b> by Eido Research	Research
	<b>Changing Shape: The Faith Lives of Millenials</b> by Ruth Perrin	Research
	<b>Pilot impact evaluation for the Being With Course</b> by Eido Research	Research
	<b>Impact Evaluation of CPAS' Leading Evangelism Learning Hub</b> by Eido Research	Research
	<b>Sustaining Change</b> by LICC	Research
	<b>5 Ways to get Disciplemaking into your Church's DNA</b> by LICC	Research
	<b>Assessing Research Trends in Spiritual Growth: The Case for Self-Determined Learning</b> by Hukinnen, Lütz & Dowden	Research
	<b>Changing Shape: The Faith Lives of Millenials</b> by Ruth Perrin	Research
	<b>Renovation of the Heart</b> by Dallas Willard	Philosophical
	<b>The Deepest Place: Suffering and the Formation of Hope</b> by Curt Thompson	Psychological /Practitioner
	<b>Group Spiritual Direction: Community for Discernment</b> by Rose Mary Dougherty	Practitioner
	<b>Seeking God Together: An introduction to group spiritual direction</b> by Alice Fryling	Practitioner
	<b>The Good and Beautiful Community</b> by James Bryan Smith	Theological /Spiritual
	<b>Hidden Wholeness</b> by Parker Palmer	Practitioner
	<b>Eight Shifts for Everyday Churches</b> by the Church of England	Practitioner
	<b>Centering Discipleship</b> by E.K Strawser	Practitioner



Attentional pathway

Hypothesis	Source(s) mapping to this pathway	Nature of the source
Christians grow through stewarding our thoughts and experiences towards those that turn us towards God’s character and away from those that do not.	<b>Stolen Focus: Why You Can’t Pay Attention</b> by Johann Hari	Research
	<b>Anatomy of the Soul: Connections between Neuroscience and Spiritual Practices</b> by Curt Thompson	Psychological/Practitioner
	<b>Cannonball Moments</b> by Eric Clayton	Spiritual
	<b>Will and Spirit</b> by Gerald May	Psychological/Practitioner
	<b>Good, Beautiful and Kind</b> by Rich Villodas	Practitioner
	<b>Practising the Way</b> by John Mark Comer	Theological/Spiritual
	<b>Desiring the Kingdom</b> by James KA Smith	Theological/Philosophical
	<b>Hunting Magic Eels</b> by Richard Beck	Psychological/Research
	<b>God of Surprises</b> by Gerald Hughes	Spiritual

Practical pathway

Hypothesis	Source(s) mapping to this pathway	Nature of the source
Christians grow when we have practical and realistic plans and practices to prioritise our spiritual growth.	<b>Shaping Disciples: Part Two</b> by LICC	Research
	<b>The Wisdom of Christian of Spiritual Formation</b> by Wilhoit & Howard	Research
	<b>Impact Evaluation of the Community of St. Anselm</b> by Eido Research	Research
	<b>Sustaining Change</b> by LICC	Research
	<b>St Alban’s Way Research</b> by Youthscape	Research
	<b>Vital Signs</b> by Ken Benjamin	Practitioner
	<b>Spirit of the Disciplines</b> by Dallas Willard	Theological/Philosophical
	<b>Renovation of the Heart</b> by Dallas Willard	Theological/Philosophical
	<b>God in My Everything</b> by Ken Shigematsu	Practical
	<b>Practising the Way</b> by John Mark Comer	Theological/Spiritual
	<b>Liturgy of the Ordinary</b> by Tish Harrison Warren	Practitioner

Cultural pathway

Hypothesis	Source(s) mapping to this pathway	Nature of the source
Christians grow when we spend time in church cultures that are designed for spiritual growth.	<b>Desiring the Kingdom</b> by James KA Smith	Theological/Philosophical
	<b>Impact Evaluation of CPAS' Leading Evangelism Learning Hub</b> by Eido Research	Research
	<b>Sustaining Change</b> by LICC	Research
	<b>5 Ways to get Disciplemaking into your Church's DNA</b> by LICC	Research
	<b>Vital Signs</b> by Ken Benjamin	Practitioner
	<b>Eight Shifts for Everyday Churches</b> by Church of England	Practitioner
	<b>Centering Discipleship</b> by E.K Strawser	Practitioner
	<b>The Making Disciples Research Project</b> by LICC	Research
	<b>Transforming Worship: Planning and Leading Sunday services as if spiritual formation mattered</b> by Rory Noland	Practitioner
	<b>Renovation of the Heart</b> by Dallas Willard	Philosophical

Psychological pathway

Hypothesis	Source(s) mapping to this pathway	Nature of the source
Christians grow when we address emotional health and difficulties that hold back spiritual growth.	<b>Empirical Evidence of Christian Maturity and Immaturity: A Review of Longitudinal Research on Christian Leaders</b> by Dave Wang	Research
	<b>The Deepest Place: Suffering and the Formation of Hope</b> by Curt Thompson	Psychological/Practitioner
	<b>Practising the Way</b> by John Mark Comer	Practical
	<b>Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: Unleash a Revolution in Your Life In Christ</b> by Peter Scazzero	Psychological
	<b>Invitation to Love</b> by Thomas Keating	Spiritual
	<b>Practising the Way</b> by John Mark Comer	Theological/Spiritual
	<b>Addiction and Grace</b> by Gerald May	Psychological/Practitioner
	<b>The Deeply Formed Life</b> by Rich Villodas	<b>Practitioner</b>

Submitted pathway

Hypothesis	Source(s) mapping to this pathway	Nature of the source
Christians grow as we continue to choose to lay down our will for the sake of God's.	<b>Empirical Evidence of Christian Maturity and Immaturity: A Review of Longitudinal Research on Christian Leaders</b> by Dave Wang	Research
	<b>Will and Spirit</b> by Gerald May	Psychological/Practitioner
	<b>Breathing Underwater</b> by Richard Rohr	Spiritual
	<b>The Critical Journey: Stages of Faith</b> by Janet O. Hagberg & Robert A. Guelich	Research
	<b>A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life</b> by William Law	Spiritual
	<b>The Seeking Heart</b> by Fenelon	Spiritual



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