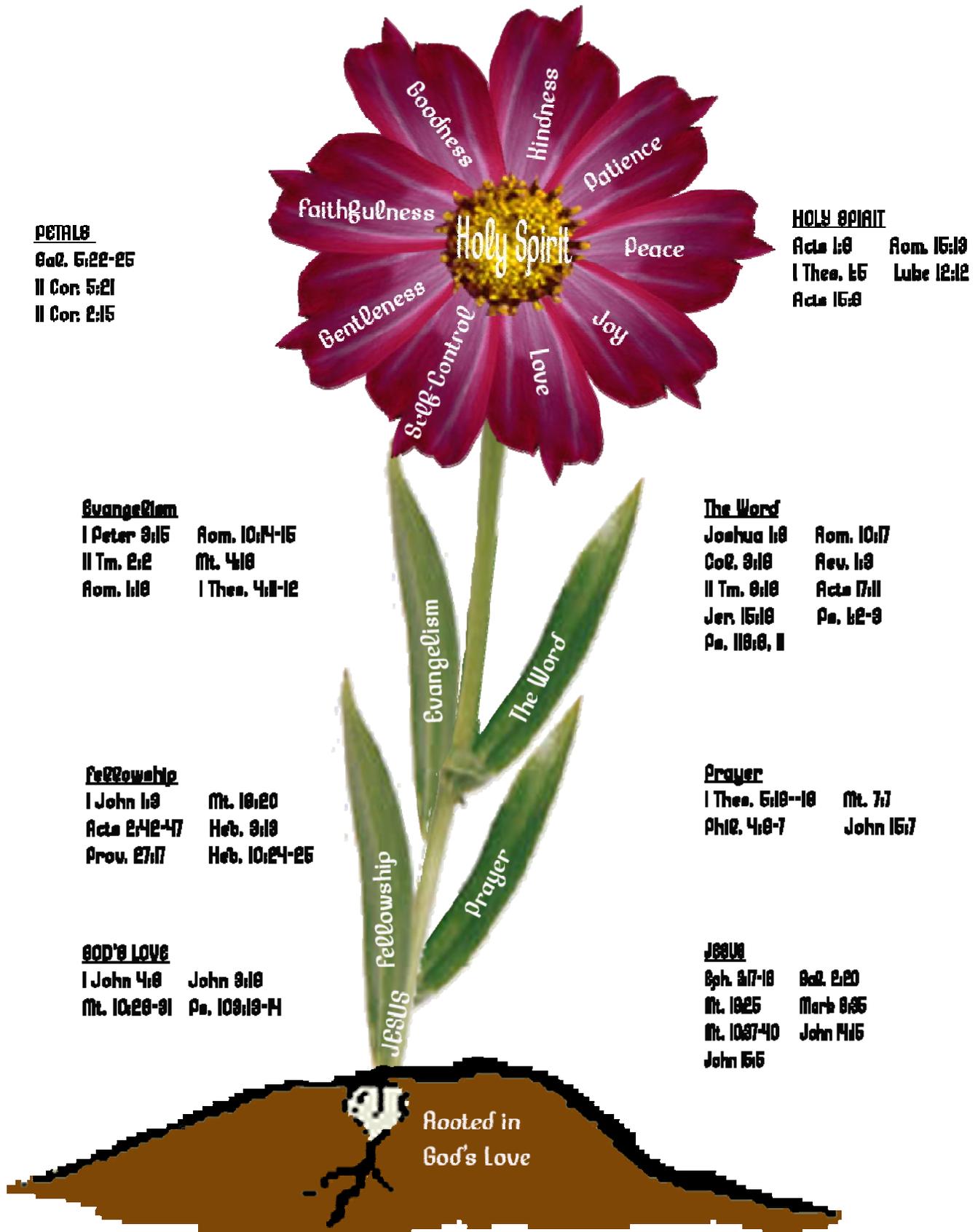


# The Flower Illustration



# Verses and Explanation for the Flower Illustration

Roots= God's Love

The Stem= Jesus

The Petals =Through Holy Spirit

All are parts of the flower—the roots, stem, and petals.

Likewise, the Trinity (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) are all one yet with distinctive characteristics.

## ▪ The Root: God's Love

- Our Christian life and rebirth is a direct result of God's love for us. We must be **ROOTED** in God's love. It is through His love and a correct concept of Him that we can grow in our maturity.

- I John 4:8: "Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love."
- Matthew 10:28-30: "<sup>28</sup>Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. <sup>29</sup>Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. <sup>30</sup>And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. <sup>31</sup>So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows."
- John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."
- Psalm 103:13-14: "<sup>13</sup>As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him; <sup>14</sup>for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust."

## ▪ The Stem: Jesus

- The only way we can tap into the Love of the Father is through Jesus. Jesus' life, death, and resurrection made it possible for us to have access to the Father by accepting the free gift of eternal life. And it is only through Him can we continue to live out the abundant life of a Christian on saved. He must be **LORD** over our life. (Lordship)
  - Ephesians 3:17-18: "<sup>17</sup>so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, <sup>18</sup>may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,"
  - Galatians 2:20: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."
  - Matthew 16:25: "For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it."
  - Mark 8:35: "For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it."
  - Matthew 10:37-40: "<sup>37</sup>Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; <sup>38</sup>and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. <sup>39</sup>Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. <sup>40</sup>"He who receives you receives me, and he who receives me receives the one who sent me."
  - John 15:5: "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."
  - John 14:15: "If you love me, you will obey what I command."

## ▪ The Leaves: Evangelism, Fellowship, Word, and Prayer

- Once we are believers, we have two types of relationships—Vertical (with God) and Horizontal (with People). And once Christ is our center, we need each of these elements to grow and flourish as a Christian.
- (Vertical) The Word. The Word is God speaking to us directly.
  - We need to hear the Word. Romans 10:17: "Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ."

- **We need to read the Word. Revelation 1:3** “Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.”
- **We need to study the Word. Acts 17:11:** “Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.”
- **We need to read the word. Psalm 119:9, 11:** “<sup>9</sup>How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. <sup>11</sup>I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.”
- **We must meditate on the Word. Psalm 1:2, 3:** “<sup>2</sup> But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. <sup>3</sup> He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.”
- **Joshua 1:8:** “Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.”
- **Colossians 3:16:** “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.”
- **II Timothy 3:16:** “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness”
- **Jeremiah 15:16:** “When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, O LORD God Almighty.”
- **(Vertical) Prayer. Us speaking to God directly.**
- **I Thessalonians 5:16—18:** “<sup>16</sup>Be joyful always; <sup>17</sup>pray continually; <sup>18</sup>give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.”
- **Mathew 7:7:** “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you”
- **Philippians 4:6-7:** “<sup>6</sup>Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”
- **John 15:7:** “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.”
- **(Horizontal) There are two types of people in the world—the lost and the regenerated. We have to forms of communication—communication with the lost and with the saved.**
- **(Horizontal) Evangelism. Our communication with the lost.**
- **I Peter 3:15:** “But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,”
- **Rom. 10:14-15:** “How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? <sup>15</sup>And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"
- **II Timothy 2:2:** “And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.”
- **Matthew 4:19:** “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will make you fishers of men.”
- **Romans 1:16:** “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.”

- **I Thessalonians 4:11-12:** “<sup>11</sup>Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands, just as we told you, <sup>12</sup>so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.”
- **(Horizontal) Fellowship. Our communication with the saved.**
- **I John 1:3:** “We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.”
- **Matthew 18:20:** “For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.”
- **Acts 2:42-47:** “<sup>42</sup>They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. <sup>43</sup>Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. <sup>44</sup>All the believers were together and had everything in common. <sup>45</sup>Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. <sup>46</sup>Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, <sup>47</sup>praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.”
- **Hebrews 3:13:** “But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.”
- **Proverbs 27:17:** “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”
- **Hebrews 10:24-25:** “<sup>24</sup>And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. <sup>25</sup>Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”
- **The Pistil: The Holy Spirit**
  - **The pistil of the flower is where the reproductive organs of the flower are found. It is only through the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives and the lives of others that we are able to reproduce spiritually.**
  - **Acts 1:8:** “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”
  - **Romans 15:13:** “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”
  - **I Thessalonians 1:5:** “because our gospel came to you not simply with words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake.”
  - **Luke 12:12:** “for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.”
  - **Acts 15:8:** “God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us.”
- **The Petals**
  - **Fruit of the Holy Spirit—What the world and others sees as a result of us abiding in God’s love, and through Christ and the Holy Spirit evangelizing, fellowshiping, and committing ourselves to the Word, and Prayer. The petals are the most beautiful part and sweet-smelling part of the flower, and is honoring and glorifying to God as we physically show the world Him in us.**
  - **Galatians 5:22-25:** “<sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup>Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. <sup>25</sup>Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.”
  - **II Corinthians 2:15:** “For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.”
  - **II Corinthians 5:21:** “God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

## How to use the Flower Illustration with Young Disciples

The Flower Illustration can be used in a early meeting with a young disciple to explain key issues like the trinity, lordship, spiritual disciplines, etc. It gives us a visual picture of a healthy Christian life. All illustrations, however, falter to a point. God is too big, and the Word too deep for us to make it into a simple illustration. But this is a good tool for them to remember as they start walking with God. It is also a good starting point to go deeper with those you're discipling. Below is a sample of how to use this illustration to start the discipleship process.

Meeting One: Simply go over the illustration and explain the parts, read the verses, and ask questions about each element.

- By the end of the time, have your disciple do the following test:
  - Based on your life now, draw your flower—what parts are there, missing, etc.
- (This will show you where to really focus your attention in weeks to come.)

Meeting Two and Following:

- Start with God's Love (the Roots) and go in-depth on that topic. Depending on where the disciple's weaknesses are, you may want to spend some more time on that area.
- Ideas: The WORD—You can also use the HAND Illustration. Evangelism—You can teach them the Bridge Illustration and other World Survey questions. See [www.discipleshiplibrary.com](http://www.discipleshiplibrary.com) for the illustrations if needed.