SLIGO SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

Discipleship 201

Session 1: *The Good Tree*

Matthew 7:17,18

17 Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. **18** A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.

Psalm 1

Blessed is the one
who does not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,
2 but whose delight is in the law of the Lord,
and who meditates on his law day and night.
3 That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither—
whatever they do prospers.

Matthew 5:21, 27, 31, 33, 38, 43

You have heard that it was said . . . but I tell you. —Jesus

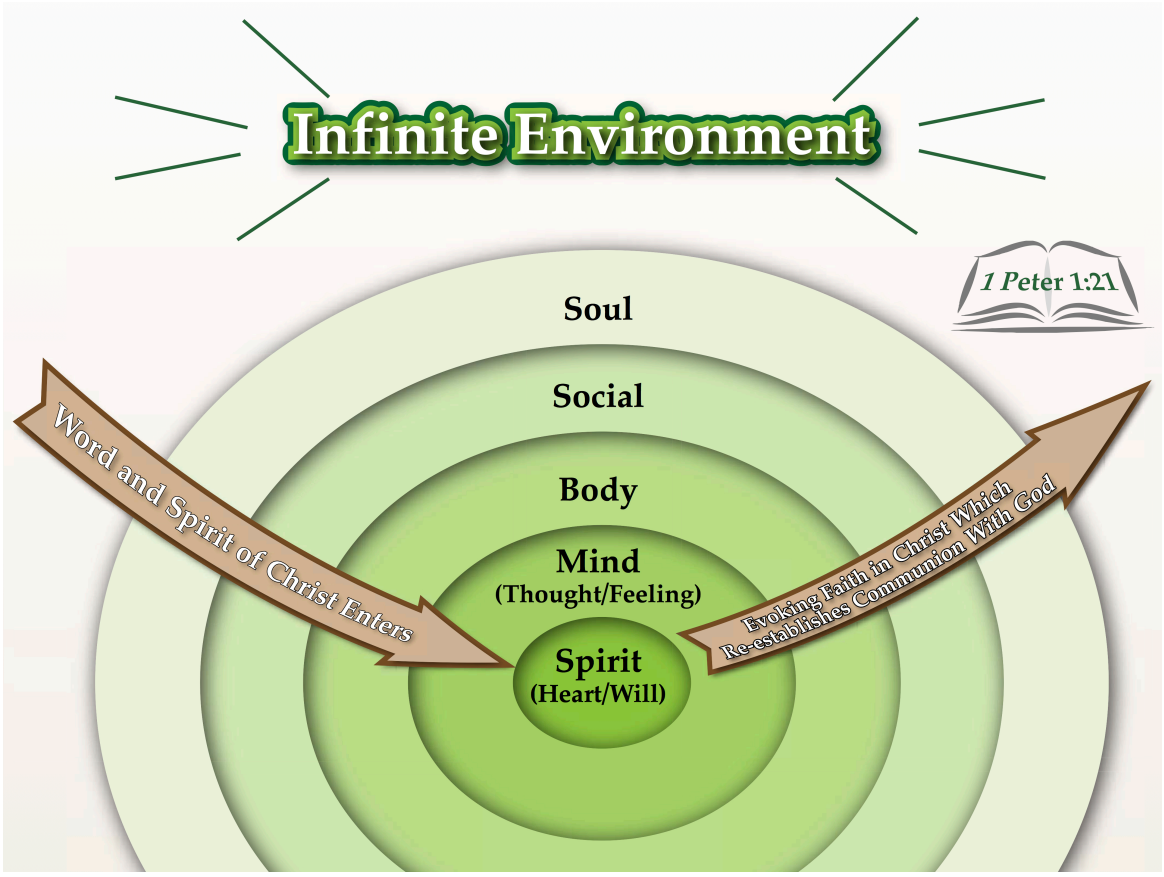
Summary:

Contrary to what we are often told, a person is changing and "becoming" until the very day they die. Yes, even an old dog can learn a new trick!

And so the question for us today is "Who are you becoming?" And the follow up question is "Who do you want to become?" And in the space between those two questions is our happiness or self-worth. Are we happy with who we are or who we are becoming?

In this first lesson, we recap from Discipleship 101 and remind ourselves that Jesus is always teaching to the person we are becoming, not necessarily the behavior we're displaying. He is always teaching to the ***heart***. Taking Jesus' teachings as legalisms is to completely misunderstand them. His teachings cast a vision of what life can be and who we can become—starting from the inside out.

The chart below is a representation of our innate human nature. The inner circles are the most important, with our hearts at the center. Notice that all the circles make up the entire soul, the complete human being that interacts with the world around it.



Discussion Questions:

Looking at the chart, which circle do you think you spend the most time on?

What do you think would happen if you spent more time nurturing your heart?

What things nurture your heart?

When you are feeling whole, down to your core, how do you treat others?

When you read Matthew 5 and see how Jesus keeps pointing to matters of the heart, is there one teaching in particular that catches your attention?

Homework:

Your **practice** for this week is to set aside a minimum of 15 minutes each day to reflect on the following Scripture.

Day 1: Reflect on Psalm Chapter 1. How do you become a good tree?

Day 2: Reflect on Matthew 7:17,18. Write what God is showing you.

Day 3: Read Matthew 5:21-48, paying attention to how Jesus is teaching to the heart. Look for how He points us to the root of the issue.

Day 4: Revisit Matthew 5, pick one of Jesus' "you have heard that it was said, but I tell you" statements to journal about so you feel you understand His deeper meaning. What would it mean for you to live it?

Day 5: Pick another of Jesus' statements *You have heard that it was said, but I tell you* to journal about today. How can you apply it in your life?