



Welcome to Spiritual Formation in Community

“Learning to experience my whole life the Kingdom Way.”



Check-In

Share your emotional weather today and one example of how you experienced the Kingdom this past week.

My Daily Mantra...

I woke up in the Kingdom this morning

an unceasing spiritual being with an eternal destiny in God's great universe



I breathe Kingdom air (LOVE)
I burn Kingdom fuel (GRACE)
I build Kingdom character
I do Kingdom work



A Kingdom life is different from the life most people waking up in the world around me experience.

Update on Hearing God

- God is speaking
- God desires a personal, dynamic, interactive, and conversational relationship with us
- God's communication with us is influenced by our engagement in Kingdom life
- Our engagement in Kingdom life is our moment-by-moment choice to live a life with God and not apart from him

Last Week Info Review

- How do we define sin?
- What is the sinful nature of a person?
- How are the terms “Spiritual Reality” and the “Kingdom of God” related to each other?

A Life of Faith & Surrender



Alive to Christ - a completely new way of being alive

- "kainotes zoes" is a **different life** in both **kind and degree**; a life with a **fresh, new quality**
- Jesus' **resurrection** was not just a **resuscitation**, it was a **completely new** form of life
- **Dead to one reality** and **alive in a whole new way**, walking in **newness of life**

Romans 6:4

We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life

Our sinful nature and the body



Spiritual Reality & Physical Body Not Opposed

They are complimentary

- The Spiritual life **makes possible** a fulfilling life **in the body**
- It does this by **initiating** an **interaction** between **our body** and the **Kingdom of God**
- The body was **not designed** to function **on its own** outside an **interactive relationship** with the **Spiritual life**
- The **body** is **not evil**

Our sinful nature and the body



Sin: Missing the Mark

- **hamartia** - to miss the mark; failure to attain God's standard for thoughts, feelings and behaviors
- The **visual image** is an archer placing an **arrow** in his **bow**, drawing it back and **aiming** at the **target**, and **missing the bull's eye**
- A **result** of living life **apart from God** is **continually missing the mark** **by not living life the Kingdom Way**

Romans 3:23

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

1 John 3:4

Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness

Our sinful nature and the body



Sinful Nature - a system of habits

- The **fall of man** was God removing himself from man because of **man's disobedience**
- The **result** of man **living apart** from God was Adam & Eve and their families basically saying, "**Well, I guess we are going to have to figure this out for ourselves.**"
- The **consequence** over time was development of a "**system of habits**" and **disordered, obsessive desires** that have become **ingrained** in our **bodies** and **minds**, pulling us **away** from God
- The "**sinful nature**" or "**flesh**" is not an **innate, deterministic force**; it is not a **virus** or **chemical** in the **brain** or **blood stream**; it is not something **forced** upon us we **cannot avoid**
- It is the **habitual, automatic tendency** to live **independently apart** from God

Our sinful nature and the body



The System of the “world” is Society’s Sinful Nature

1 John 2:15-17

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world - the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes, and the boasting of what he has and does - comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.

John 15:5

"I am the vine and you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

Ephesians 2:12

Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world

Our Sinful Nature & the Body

Review...

- Spiritual & Physical not Opposed
- Missing the mark, life apart from God
- Habitual, individualistic way of life



Table Talk

Share an example from your life of a habitual choice you make that could be done better the Kingdom Way.

Key Aspects of the sinful nature



Habits, Not just Nature

Habits developed from life apart from God are results of repeated actions, and not an innate, uncontrollable disorder

1 John 3:7-10

Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are; Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.

Key Aspects of the sinful nature



Disordered Desire

Unmanaged desires or lusts from **thoughts, emotions, behaviors** in the **body**, and **unhealthy relationships** pull us away from God

Romans 7:21-24

So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?

Paul describes the **result** of sin **living in him** as a **battle**, and not a **comfortable way of life**

Key Aspects of the sinful nature



Body as Agent

The body plays an integral role as **ungodly tendencies lodge themselves** in the **parts** of our **bodies**, making **evil** an almost **automatic, habitual response** of our **body**; this **derails** the **Kingdom purpose** and **use** of the **body**

Romans 6:11-13

In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore, do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.

Key Aspects of the sinful nature



Rooted in Self-Idolatry

The **core** of a **sinful nature** is a **focus** on **self-realization**,
the **natural result** of living **apart from God**

Romans 1:21-22

For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God or gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

2 Timothy 3:1-4

But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.

Key Aspects of the sinful nature



Spiritual vs Unspiritual

"To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted." (Titus 1:15)

- To the **person** whose **entire soul** is permeated with the **Spirit of God** and **Kingdom ways**, **everything is pure**
- To the **person** who has **removed God** and **Kingdom ways** from their soul's **operating system**, **nothing is pure**
- The **body** and its **sensations, desires, and preoccupations** are not **evil** for anyone whose **inner person** is **guided by the Spirit**
- However, they are **subordinate** to the **life** of the **Spirit**, and will at times be **opposed** or left **unsatisfied**; but **never** with the **attitude** that **what is vital** to our **life** and **happiness** is **lost**, or that we have been **damaged** in any way

Key Aspects of the Sinful Nature

Review...

- Habits, not just nature
- Disordered desire
- Body as agent
- Rooted in self-idolatry
- Spiritual vs Unspiritual

Changing Natures

Romans 6 (Look up in your own Bible)

- How do we experience the “kainotes zoes”, the newness of Kingdom Life God promises?
- We use the VIM method
 - Vision
 - Intention
 - Means

Changing Natures

Vision

I see myself waking up in the **Kingdom** and **living the entire day** the **Kingdom Way**, experiencing all the **amazing benefits** of **Life on the Rock**

From **Romans 6:1-10**

My Vision

- I refuse to choose sin because I am dead to it (6:1-3)
- As Jesus was raised from the dead, I am raised to a whole new kind of life (6:4)
- I am no longer a slave to sin (6:6-7)
- I am living my life to God (6:8-10)

Changing Natures

Intention

**I fully intend to arrange my life around the Kingdom of God,
no matter what is required**

From Romans 6:11

My Intention

- I will consciously and purposefully regard myself as a Kingdom citizen, refusing to live a moment apart from God, but alive to Christ moment by moment, and choosing the Kingdom Way
- The me who used to live apart from God in sin is now dead to me
- I am separating myself from that person's old ways

Changing Natures

Means

I will establish **spiritual disciplines** in my life that will **over time**, change my **nature** from one of **life apart from God**, to one of **life with God**

From **Romans 6:12-15**

My Means

- Life apart from God no longer reigns; no longer has power or control
- I will systematically remove, one by one, any vestige of life apart from God
- By the Spirit of God in me, by His grace and loving-kindness, I will be transformed one decision at a time
- I will be able to do indirectly what I cannot do by sheer will power

Spiritual Discipline

- **Discipline** - the ability through practice to prepare myself to do **what** needs to be done, in the **way** it needs to be done, **when** it needs to be done.
- We do not practice for the sake of **acknowledgment, ego, or earning**. The goal is not to become really good at practicing!
- We don't practice **what we are good at**, but what we're **not good at** in order to get **better** and to experience Kingdom life
- What I am **unable** to do on my own, I **can do** in **partnership** with **Christ** and **His power at work** in me
- *The purpose of spiritual discipline is to align us in the easy yoke with Christ so that indirectly, through the powerful work of the Spirit in us, we may be able to live a Kingdom life, building Kingdom character and doing Kingdom work.*

The Goodness of Rightness



Kingdom Living - Joy & Adventure

- Failure to experience this deeply satisfying Kingdom life always results in making a sinful life look good
- This is where temptation can feel so powerful against us
- When we just cut off the pleasure of sin with nothing better to replace it, we end up going back to sin
- True spirituality is not about escaping the material world or ignoring the body, but rather about living a Spirit-inspired life in the body

The Goodness of Rightness



The Body is a Power Pack

- The **body** is our "independent power source for action" a "little 'power pack'" given by God
- **Spirituality** is not just about having **good thoughts**; it is about **training** our physical bodies—our **habits, tongue, eyes, and actions**—to **act in alignment** with **God's will**

The Goodness of Rightness



The Body is a Battleground

- **Sinful patterns and tendencies** are often ingrained in our **physical habits** and **brain chemistry**
- Therefore, the "**deepest ground**" of **spiritual transformation** is not just a **mental change**, but the **physical re-training** of the **body** to **support the Spirit**

The Goodness of Rightness



Spirituality in a Physical World

- The "fullness of human life" is achieved when we **stop treating the physical and spiritual as separate**
- Through **spiritual disciplines** like **fasting, solitude, or serving others**, we bring our **bodily members** into **submission** to God, allowing our **physical lives** to become a "**living sacrifice**"

The Goodness of Rightness



Bringing it all Together

- In essence, you **cannot** have a **truly mature, deep spirituality** that **neglects** your **physical reality**
- The **goal** is to bring your **body** into **harmony** with the **life of God**, making it a "**temple**" that expresses **goodness** in **daily life**
- **Imagine your life becoming increasingly, a Kingdom Life, Life on the Rock!**

Peter, The Rock

- From **FOLLOWER** to **FAILURE** to **FAITHFUL WARRIOR** for Christ and the Kingdom - the **ROCK**

1 Peter 2:11-12

*Dear friends, I urge you as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. **Live such good lives among the pagans** that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.*

Table Talk



Regarding bringing your body into harmony with God, where have you seen the greatest change recently? What do you like most about waking up in the Kingdom?

Spend the week
meditating on
Romans 6:1-15

Ask your **Circle of 4** to
help you **identify** 1-2
areas of your life that
need transformation.

Use the **VIM** method of
change to begin
experiencing a new
Kingdom Life on the
Rock!

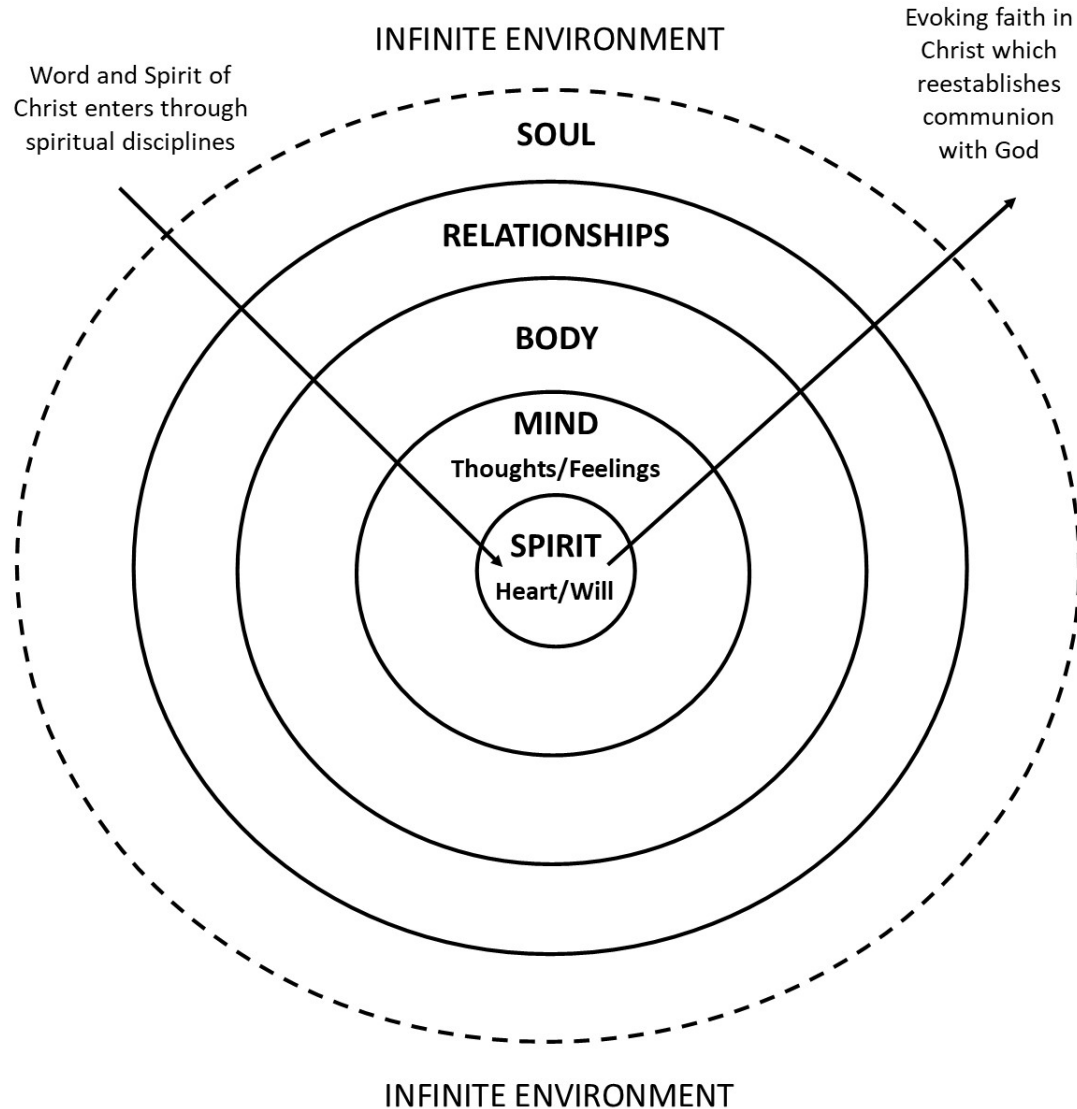
An underwater photograph showing several divers swimming in clear blue water. The divers are silhouetted against the light, and their fins are visible. In the background, there are large, branching coral structures. The overall scene is serene and captures the beauty of marine life.

Homework

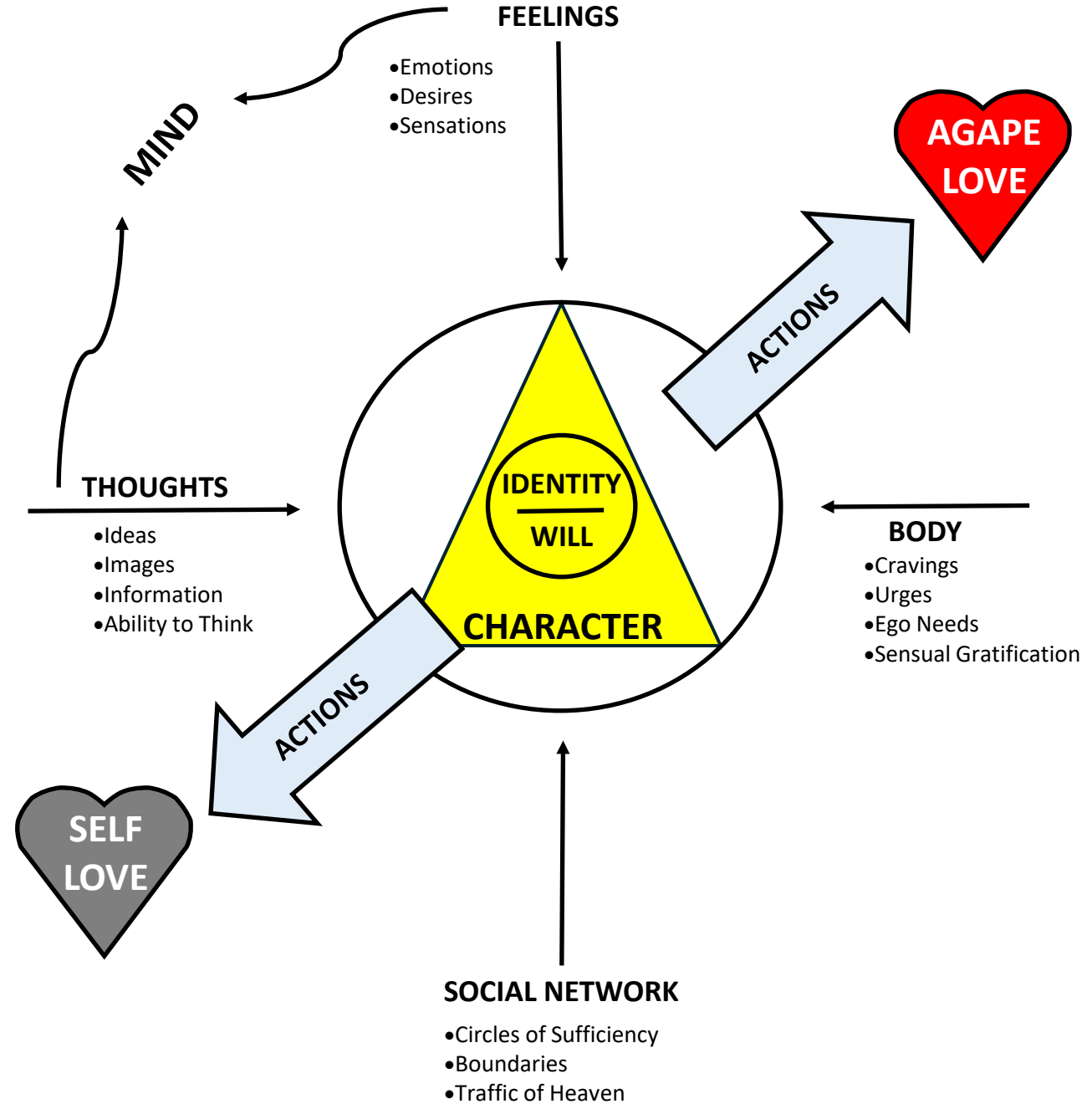
The Entire Human Self

The Whole Picture

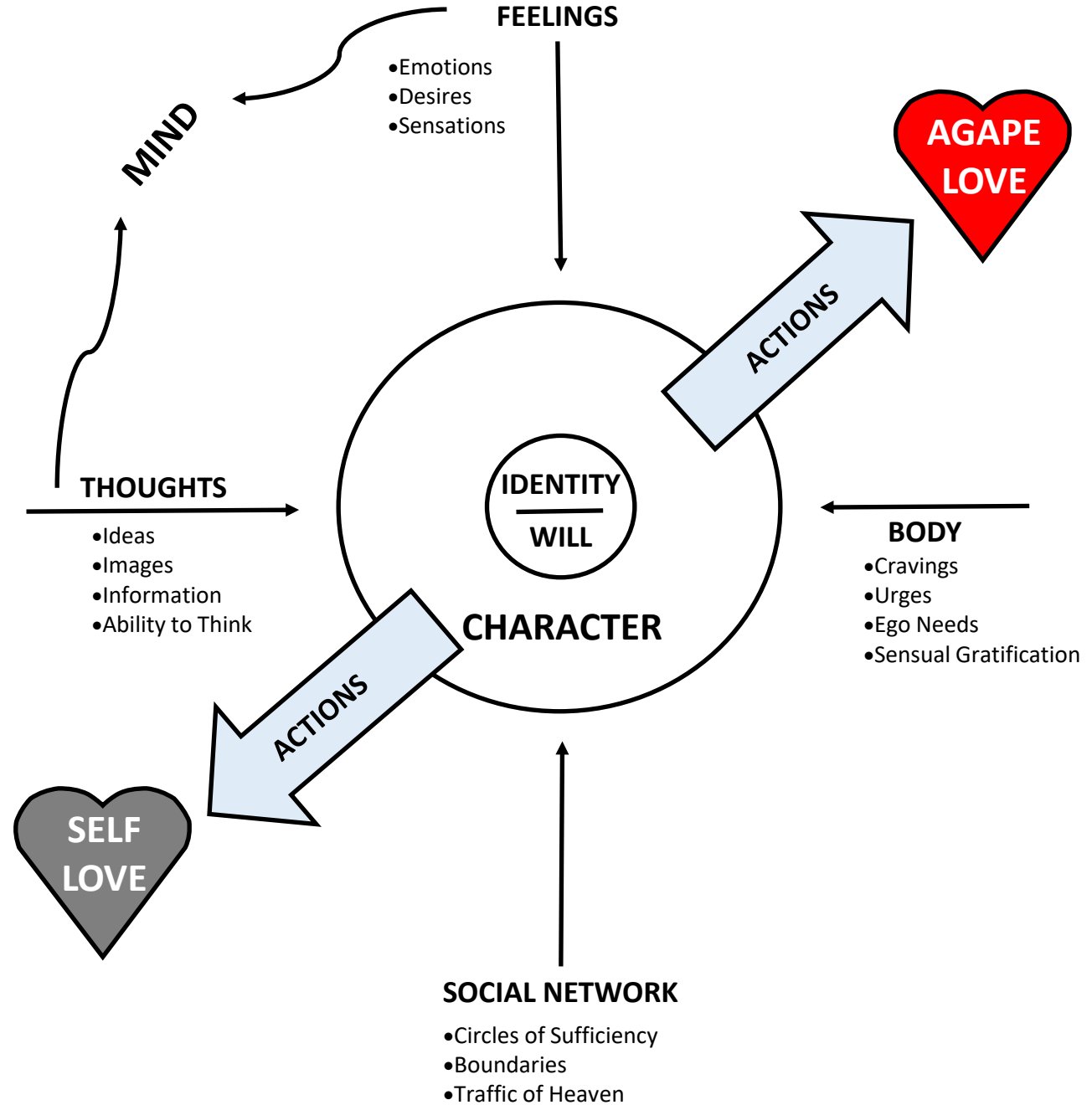
Spiritual
Formation
*in the
Kingdom
of God*



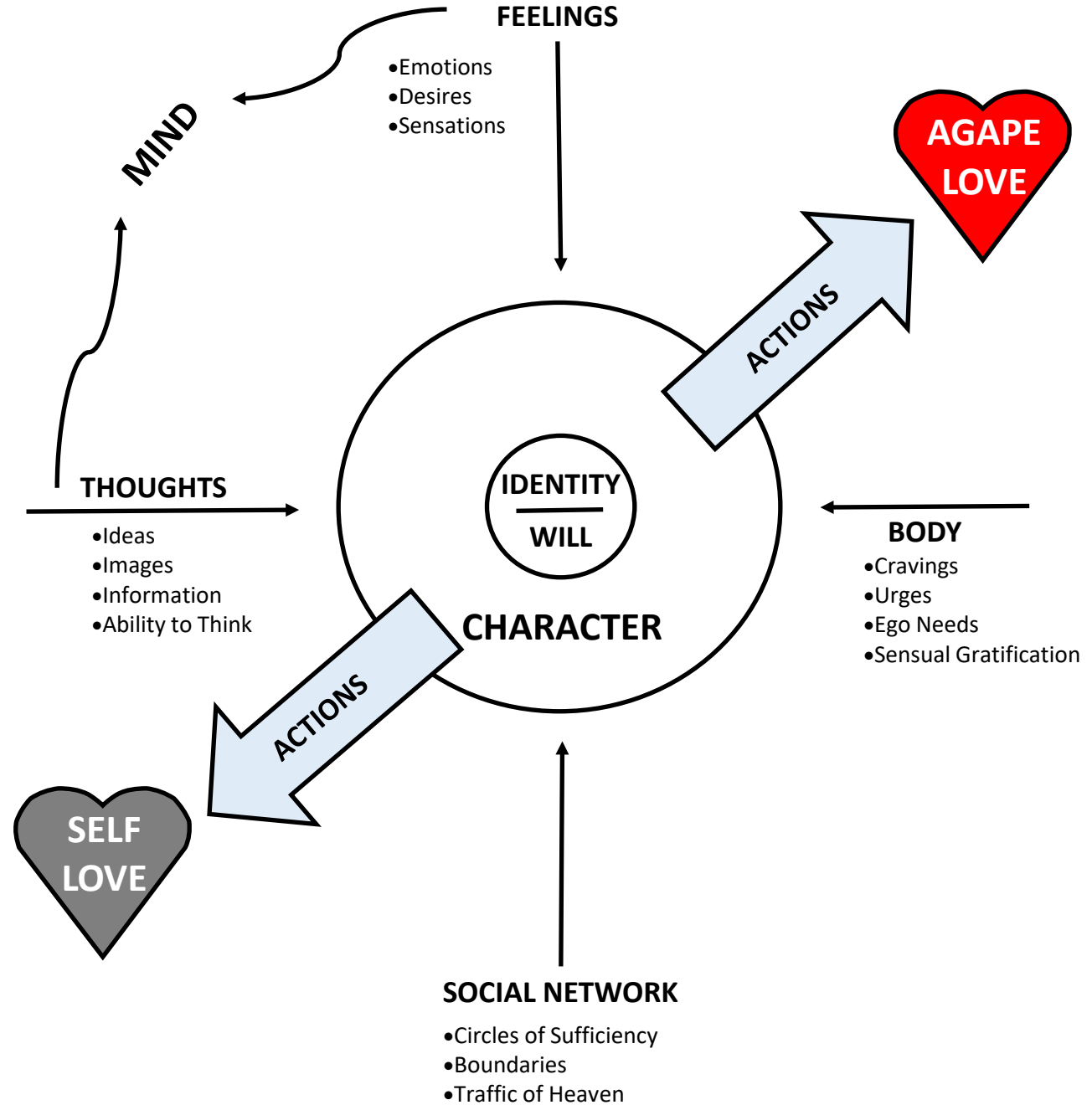
Spiritual Formation *in the Kingdom of God*



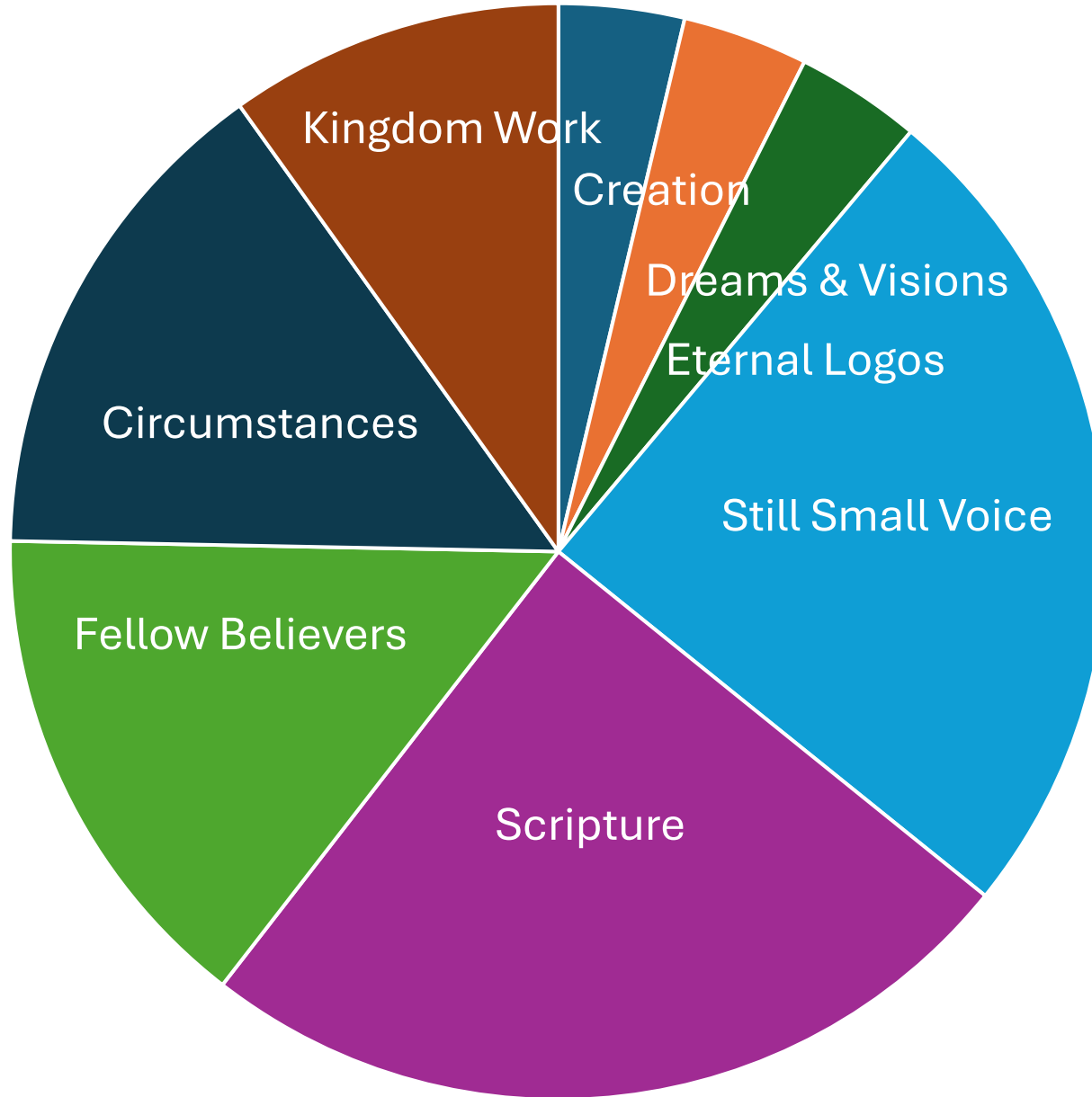
Spiritual Formation *in the Kingdom of God*



Spiritual Formation *in the Kingdom of God*



The Many Ways the Word of God Comes to Us



■ Creation ■ Dreams & Visions ■ Eternal Logos ■ Still Small Voice ■ Scripture ■ Fellow Believers ■ Circumstances ■ Kingdom Work