



Welcome to Spiritual Formation in Community

“We can only come to know the voice of God by EXPERIENCE.”



Check-In

Share your emotional weather today and one skin of a reason stuffed with a big fat lie you used 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 a different life than most people waking up around me experience.

Changing My Nature

1. **Ask the Spirit** where you're doing life **apart from God** - **listen carefully!**
 2. **Seek clarity** from **scripture**, other **believers**, and **circumstances** around you
 3. **Narrow your thoughts** to one specific area
 4. **Ask the Spirit** **what you should know or think** about that area – **listen carefully!**
 5. **Search scripture** in a **focused** way on your **area**, including **available resources**
 6. **Establish spiritual disciplines** that **open your heart to change**
 7. **Ask the Spirit** to reveal **habits** and **tendencies** in your **thoughts, emotions, body responses**, and **relationships** that expose life **apart from God** – **listen carefully!**
 8. **Choose 1-2 habits** or **tendencies** the Spirit **reveals** to you
 9. **Use the VIM method** on **each one**
- **What was the easiest and most difficult of the exercise for you?**

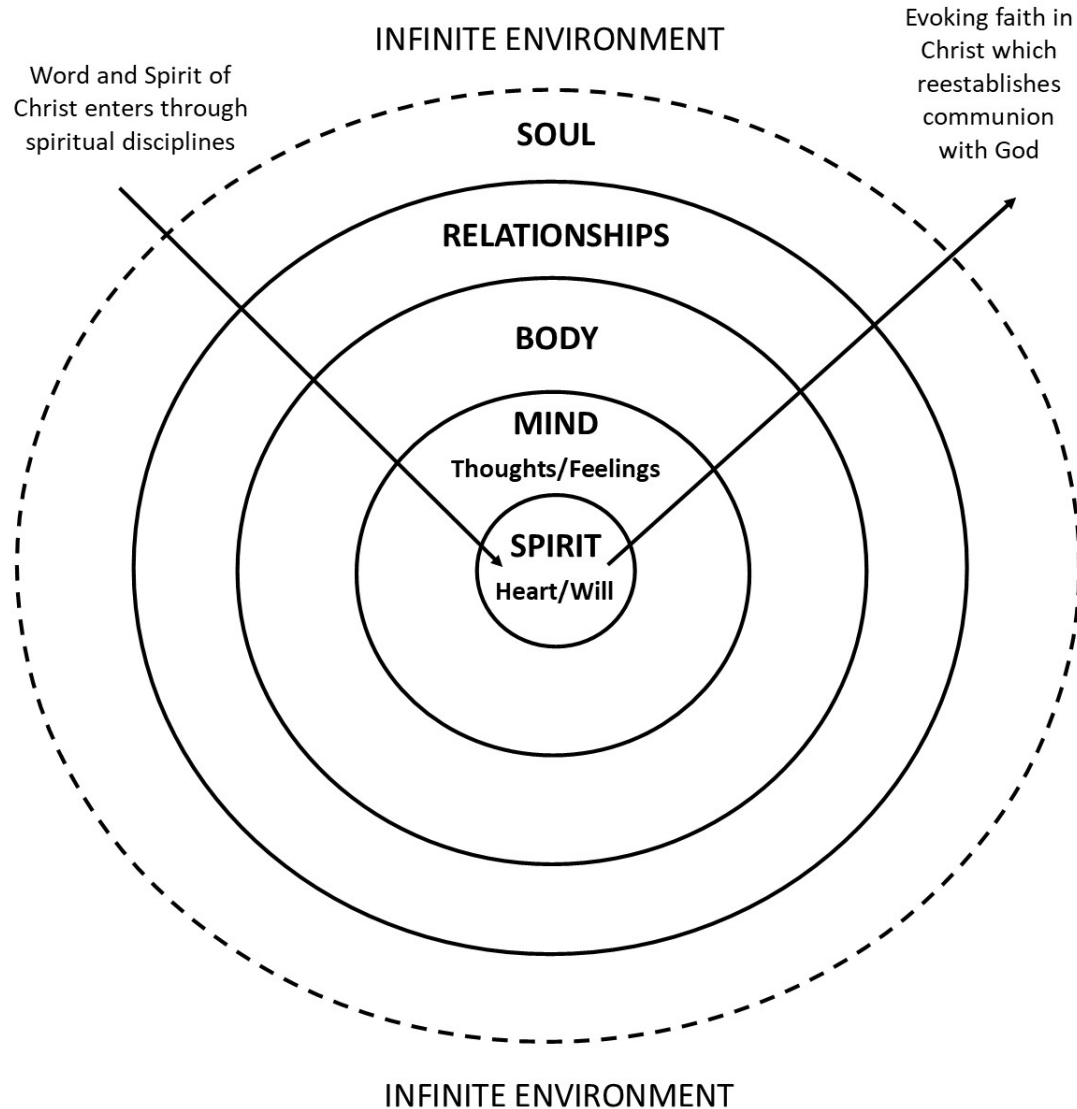
REVIEW...REVIEW...REVIEW...REVIEW...REVIEW

Explain in your own words
the purpose for the
“Changing My Nature”
exercise...

The Entire Human Self

The Whole Picture

Spiritual
Formation
*in the
Kingdom
of God*



Recognizing the Voice of God



The voice of **others**, the still small **inner voice**,
some **special event**, the **Bible** or **circumstances**

How do we recognize the voice of God?

We might think if **God spoke to us** we would recognize it instantly

However we might not for a variety of reasons

- Our **habits** and **tendencies** to live **apart from God** might make recognizing his voice difficult; **ingrained practices** over years of either **not listening**, or **assigning the voice to something else** altogether
- If **listening** for God to speak is **new to us**, it may take **time** and **practice** to begin recognizing it consistently
- We may **need help detecting his voice**, and not be **willing to ask** for this help
- The **enemy** may be **working overtime** to **keep us from listening** or **hearing**, or **believing** that God **can** and **does speak** to us

What is your EXPERIENCE?

We can only come to know
the Voice of God by
EXPERIENCE.

The Three Lights



Recognizing the Voice of God

1. Alignment with or contradiction to the plain statements of the Bible, the **WORD OF GOD**
 - And not by **proof-texting**
 - Not by one verse picked **out of context** designed to prove a thought or argument
 - Satan does this frequently

Only the **Bible as a whole** can be **considered** to be the **written word of God**. Any **verse** must be **read** with the **whole teaching** of the Bible **in mind**

The Three Lights



Satan takes verses **out of context**, **mixes truth** with **falsehood**, **misapplies promises** and **encourages selfishness**

- **Luke 4:10-11** - temptation of Jesus, mis-quoting Psalm 91:11-12; Satan turning a promise of trust into a test of God
- **Genesis 3:1** - Satan twisting God's original generous command allowing Adam & Eve to eat fruit from all trees except one, to a restrictive lie, saying they could not eat from any tree; led Eve to directly question God's goodness
- **Matthew 7:1** - encouraging believers to tolerate sinful behavior; twisting a warning against hypocritical judgment into a prohibition against all discernment of right and wrong
- **Romans 12:19** - abusing "vengeance is mine" trying to convince believers not to seek justice or set boundaries
- **Matthew 7:7** - twisting faith to mean entitlement; turning a scripture on prayer into obligating God to meet all our selfish desires

Tasks – Tests – Temptations

The Three Lights



Recognizing the Voice of God

2. Applied to us as individuals, and to our individualized **CIRCUMSTANCES**, to become a part of our lives

Just because we believe **something** in the **Bible** is **true**, it has not become the **voice of God speaking** to us until it is **applied** to our **lives** in some **specific** way

1 John 1:1-3

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched - this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. 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.

The Three Lights



Recognizing the Voice of God

3. Inward impressions of the SPIRIT

1 John 2:27

As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit, just as it has taught you, remain in him.

The ANOINTING refers to the indwelling Holy Spirit received by believers at salvation and providing...

- **Internal teaching** - promptings, impressions; speaking in us through our thoughts, and through the addition of thoughts that do not originate with us
- **Spiritual discernment** - the distinguishing of spirits
- **Empowerment** to remain in the Kingdom Way as taught by Jesus
- A Permanent presence experienced as a seal, marking us for eternity

The Three Lights



3. Inward impressions of the SPIRIT

1 Corinthians 2:9-16

*However, as it is written: “What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived”—the things God has prepared for those who love him—**these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit.***

*The **Spirit searches all things**, even the deep things of God. For who knows a person’s thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, **so that we may understand what God has freely given us.** This is what we speak, not in words taught us **by human wisdom** but in **words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words.***

*The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them **because they are discerned only through the Spirit.** The person **with the Spirit makes judgments about all things**, but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments, for, “Who has known the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?”*

But we have the mind of Christ.

The Three Lights



3. Inward impressions of the SPIRIT

God communicates truth to believers by His Spirit, that people who do not wake up in the Kingdom do not have access to

- The Spirit **delivers** God's thoughts to believers with ears to hear
- The Spirit also **interprets** God's thoughts to believers
- The Spirit teaches us **spiritual realities** in spiritual words

People waking up in the Kingdom make **Spirit-led judgments about the system of the world, and therefore do not care what people outside the Kingdom think**

Once you know the **mind of Christ**, you've heard **everything** worth hearing

The Three Lights



God's Perfect Will,

by G. Campbell Morgan

The doctrine of the inner light is not sufficiently taught. To the individual believer, who is by the very fact of relationship to Christ, indwelt by the Holy Spirit of God, there is granted the direct impression of the Spirit of God on the spirit of man, imparting the knowledge of His will in matters of the smallest and greatest importance. This has to be sought and waited for.

The Three Lights



Scripture: Responsible study and meditation on the Bible
Spirit: The various movements of the Spirit in our heart
Circumstances: The intelligent alertness to what is happening around us

- This is **not a formula** or **mechanism** for making decisions
- However, all three serve to **correct each other**
- The three together teach us **how to make spiritual judgments**

Listening to God is designed to **teach us judgment skills**

God's **directive word** is not **one** of the lights, or **all three combined**

But **His word** does usually come to us **THROUGH** the three lights

This is what is meant by **coming to know** the **voice of God** by **EXPERIENCE**

Quality (tone, style)

Spirit (attitudes, characteristics)

Content (information, principles, history)

Weight (the weight of authority)

The Three Lights



Infallibility

- Could I still be **mistaken** in assuming I have **heard correctly** from God? **Absolutely!**
- Just like **you could be wrong** about many things you believe to be true
- Like your **gas gauge works**, your **insurance will pay** for a claim, and your **food expiration date** will keep you from being **poisoned**
- **Infallibility is not a goal in hearing God.** You are an **independent, responsible, willing participant** in **becoming** the kind of person **on the inside** who would **trust God**

**Practice the Lectio Divina using the
Sheep/Shepherd teaching
from John 10:2-5, 14, 27**

Lectio Divina is "*divine reading*" and is less about a traditional analytical or inductive study, and more about slowing down to take time to listen to God speak to you through a passage of scripture. Use the outline below and be sure to write your responses in your journal as you go.

Read

What word or phrase strikes you?

Reflect

What is God telling you in this passage?

Respond

What do you want to say to God?

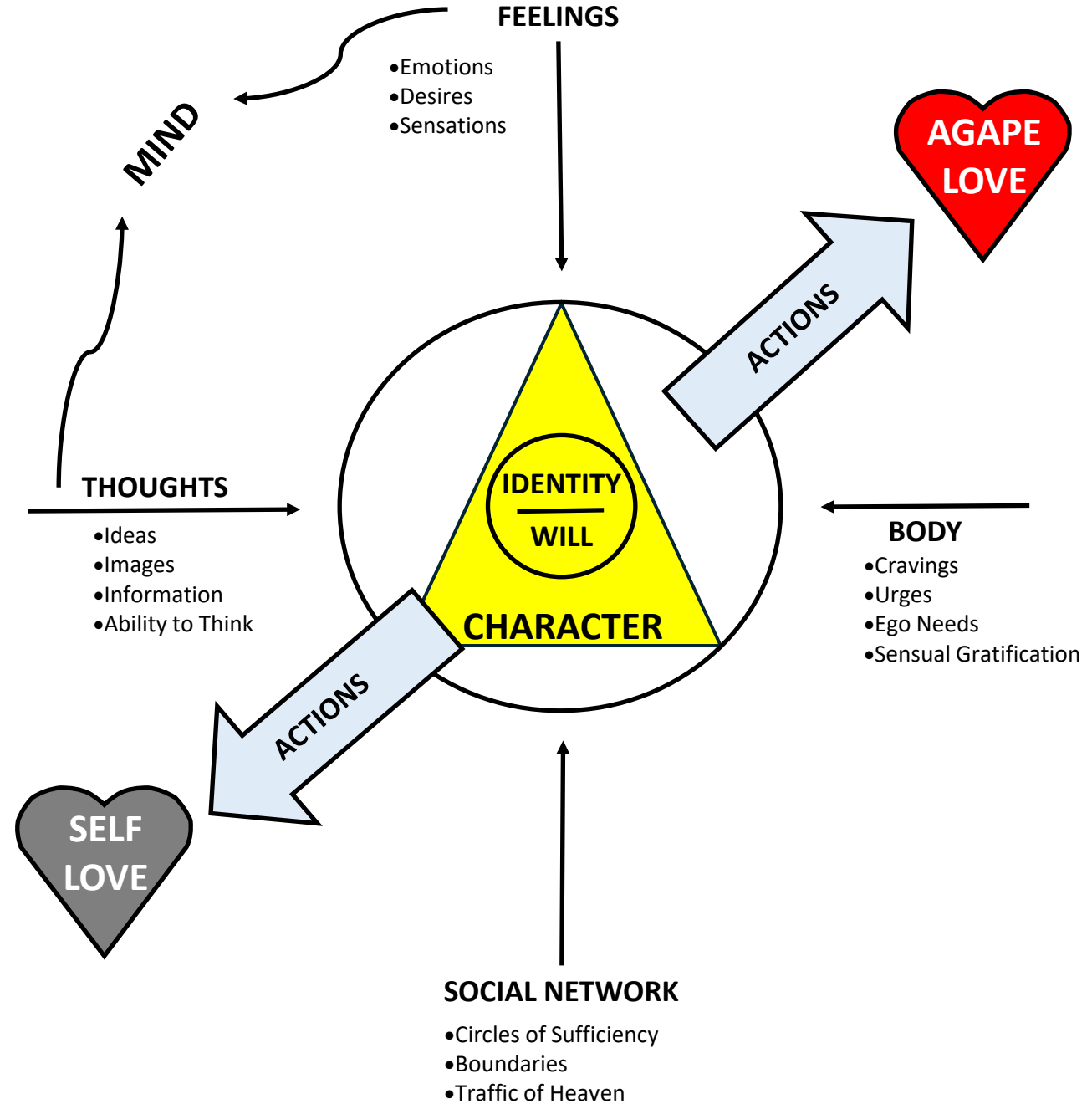
Rest

After resting, how do you apply the passage into your life?

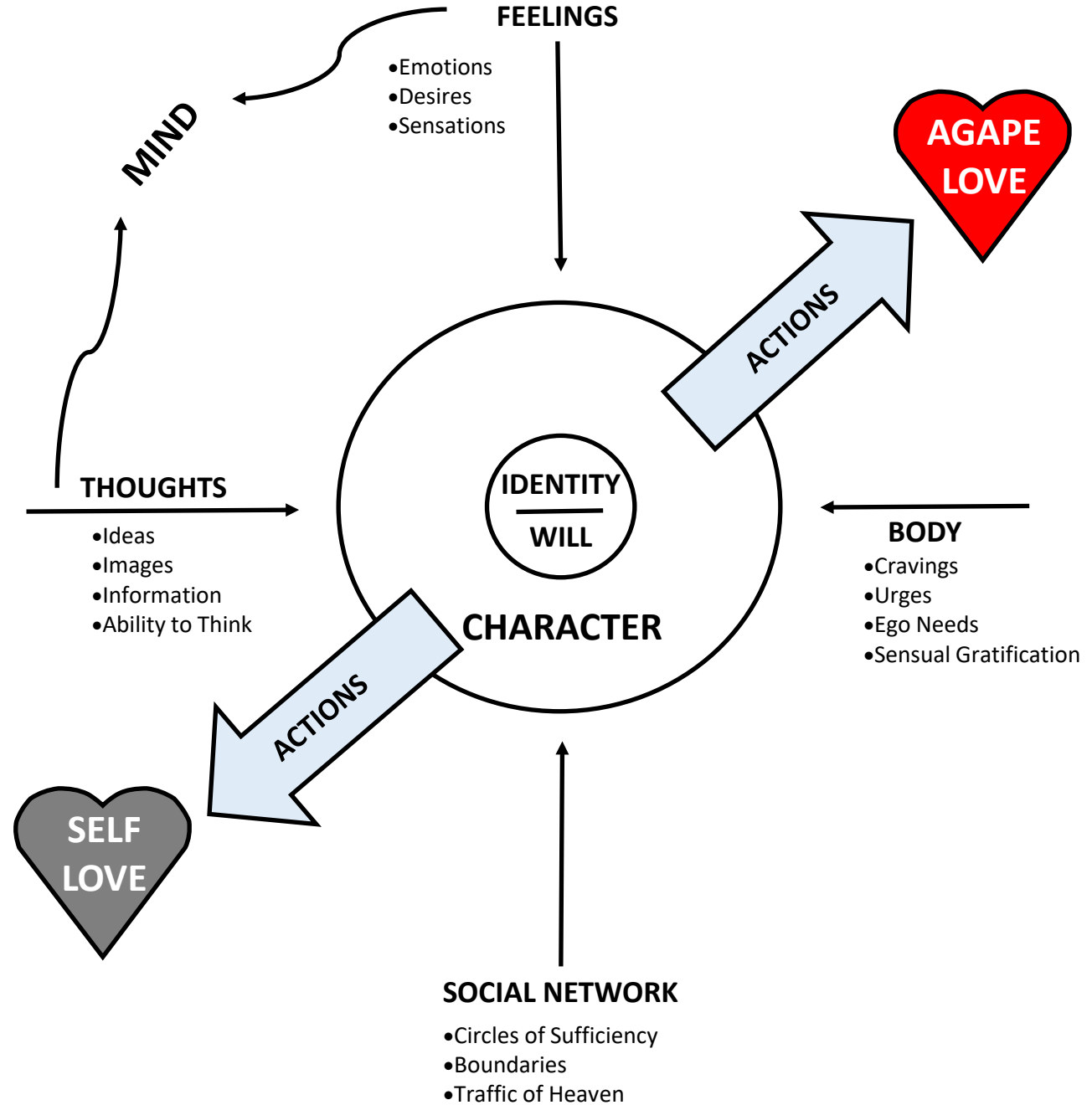
An underwater photograph showing several divers swimming in clear blue water. The divers are silhouetted against the light, and their fins are visible. A large, white, serif font word "Homework" is overlaid in the center of the image, partially obscuring the divers.

Homework

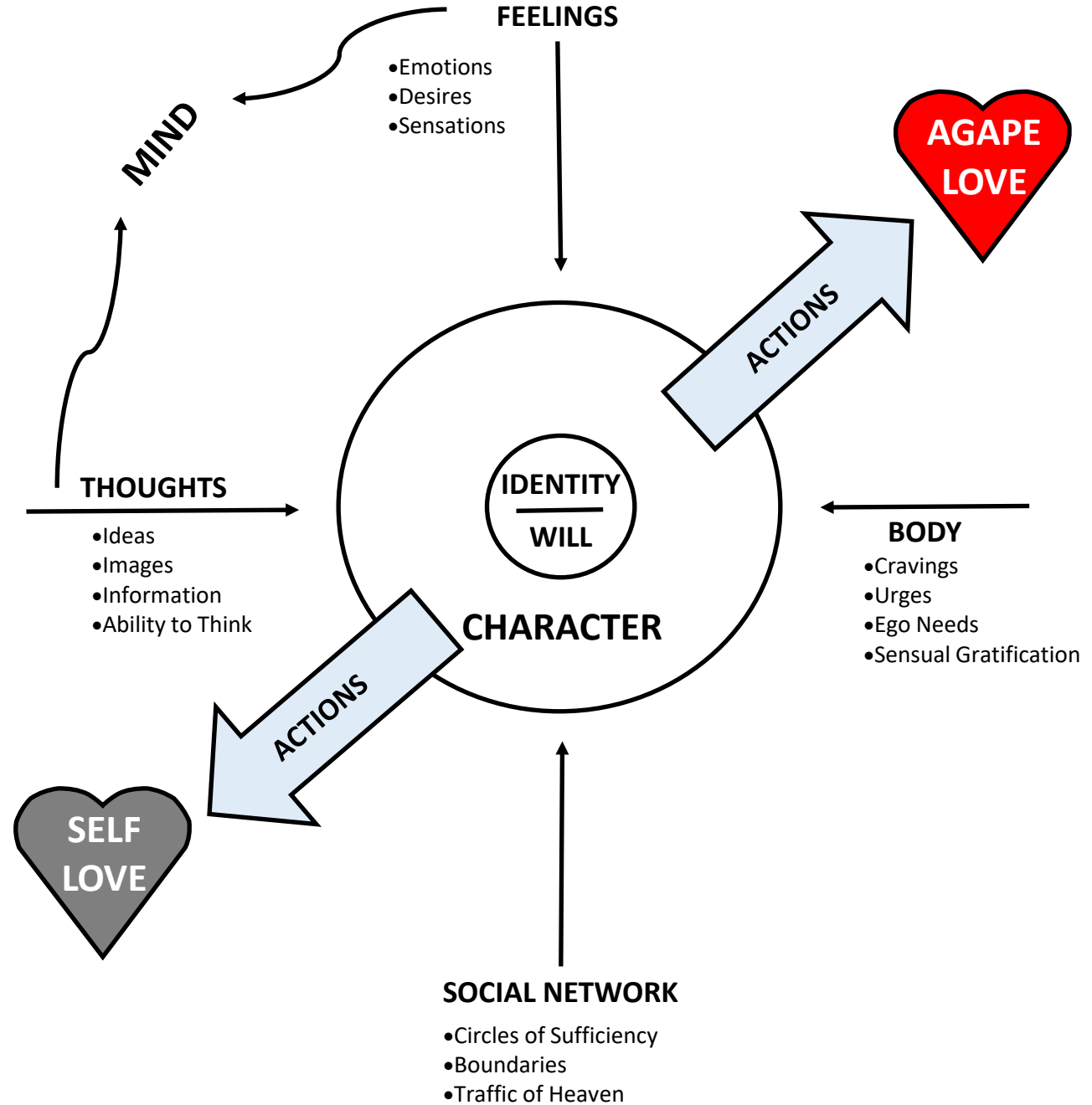
Spiritual Formation *in the Kingdom of God*



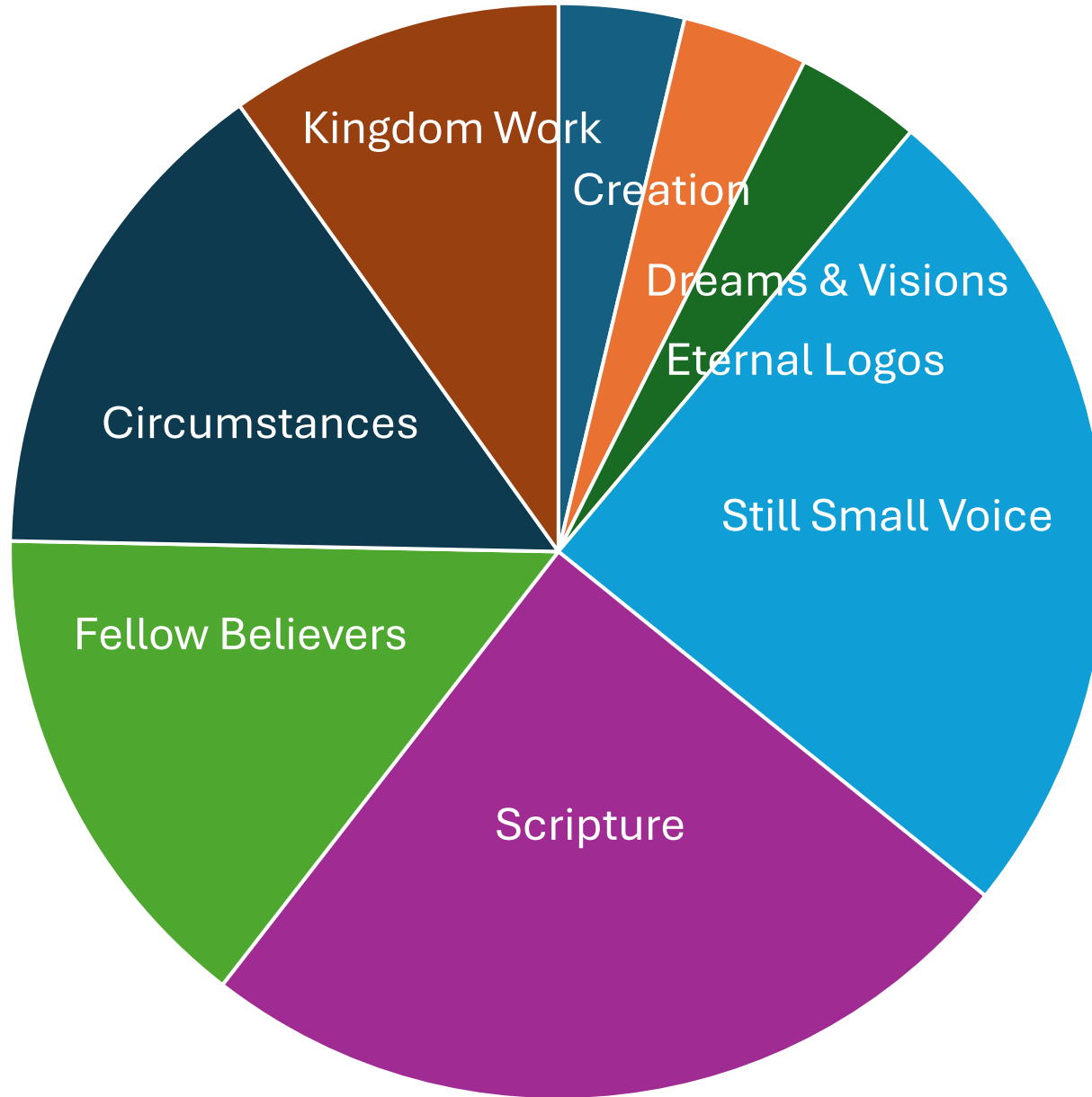
Spiritual Formation *in the Kingdom of God*



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