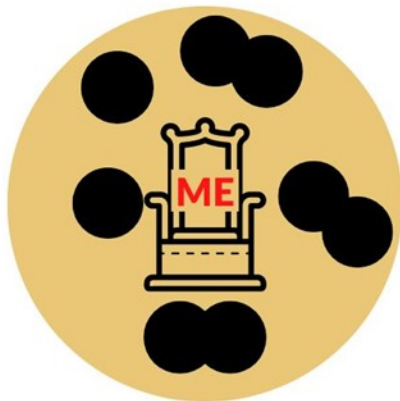


# The Holy Spirit and Stages of Christian Growth

Becoming a Christian is often referred to as a "new birth" and that is an accurate way to describe it. When a person is born again, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in that person's life. Like any new baby, the young Christian has a lot of growing to do and that means getting to know God's Word, so our minds are transformed into how God wants us to think and act.

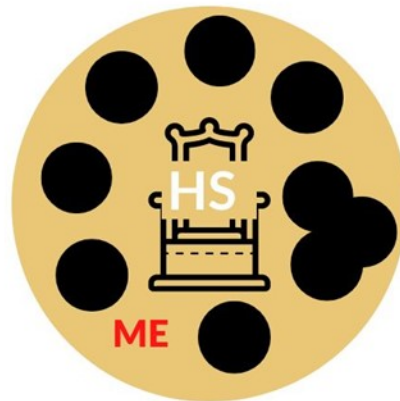
However, knowing isn't enough, we must continuously be obedient to it. This process of growing in our faith is often referred to as "sanctification." This process is often not a straightforward one, but one where at times we allow God to be in control, and other times we take control (and usually make a mess of things).

The Holy Spirit doesn't leave us when we sin, which is why we now feel so guilty when we do bad things and we didn't in the past. As we grow in our faith, hopefully, more and more we will be filled with the spirit, instead of being filled up with "me, me, me" and what I want to do. To be "filled with the Spirit" doesn't mean anything extra or more or a second blessing but that the Holy Spirit is in control and/or especially empowering the Christian for service.



## Unsaved

ME (my ego, will, etc.) is in control and all the other parts of my life scattered and without purpose



## New and Growing Christian

The Holy Spirit is now in control and my life is gradually growing to be like Jesus.



## Immature or Carnal Christian

ME (my ego, will, etc.) is once again in control and all the other parts of my life are not as God wants them to be.



## Growing, filled with or controlled by the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is in control and all the other parts of my life are in line with God's Will.