

Rolling Hills Covenant Church Bible Institute

Planning for Spiritual Formation
in the Local Congregation

The Great Commission Mandate

“I have been given say over everything in heaven and on earth. So, as you go, make disciples of all kinds of people, gather them in trinitarian reality, and teach them in such a way that they do all things I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you every moment, until the job is done.” Matt. 28:18-20

Three Parts of The Great Commission

1. Make disciples, apprentices to Jesus in kingdom living.
2. Submerge them in the Trinitarian life that flows in the community of disciples of Jesus. Baptism symbolizes this.
3. Teach those disciples to do — training them in such a way that they actually do — everything Jesus said.

The Congregational Objective

- Imagine word getting out that people attending Rolling Hills Covenant Church easily, naturally do what Jesus said!
- Imagine the sign out front saying: “We Teach People In Such A Way They Do Everything Jesus Said To Do.” (Or even ‘almost’!)

What Is Spiritual Formation?

- Really, we are talking about transformation.
- It is the process through which the inner sources of life of a disciple become increasingly like those of Jesus himself.
- “Disciple” is the status, “Spiritual Formation” the process.

It Has To Be Biblical Or Not At All!

- See Taking On The Character of Christ in the following:

Romans 5:1-5

Colossians 3:8-13

2 Peter 1:5-10

- Note that none of this is in terms of actions, and they all culminate in love.

The Outcome Is Love - An Overall Quality Of Life

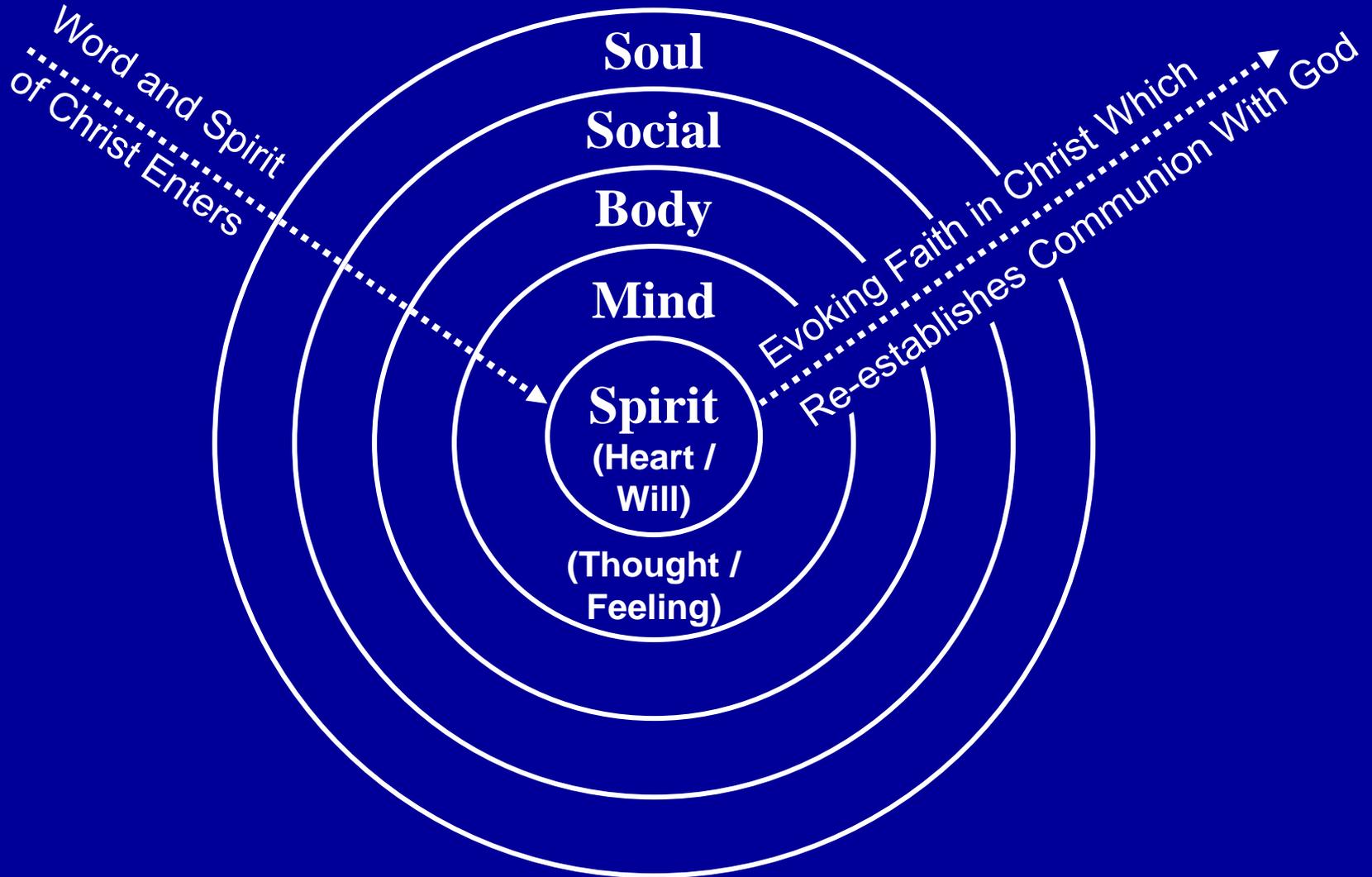
- So the Great Commandment of Mark 12:29-31 (Deut. 6:4-5)
- “The Fruit of The Spirit.” Gla. 5:22-23 (Eph. 5:9)
- The Law Fulfilled. Rom. 13:8-10 (8:5, Matt. 5:17)
- Routine, easy obedience for those disciples taught.

Not By Trying, But By Training

- “The Great Omission from the Great Commission.” No plan to teach disciples for obedience.
- “Will power” is futile and makes Pharisees, or else people who are hopeless.
“Miserable sinner Christianity.” We never change?
- But we can! From sources of life.

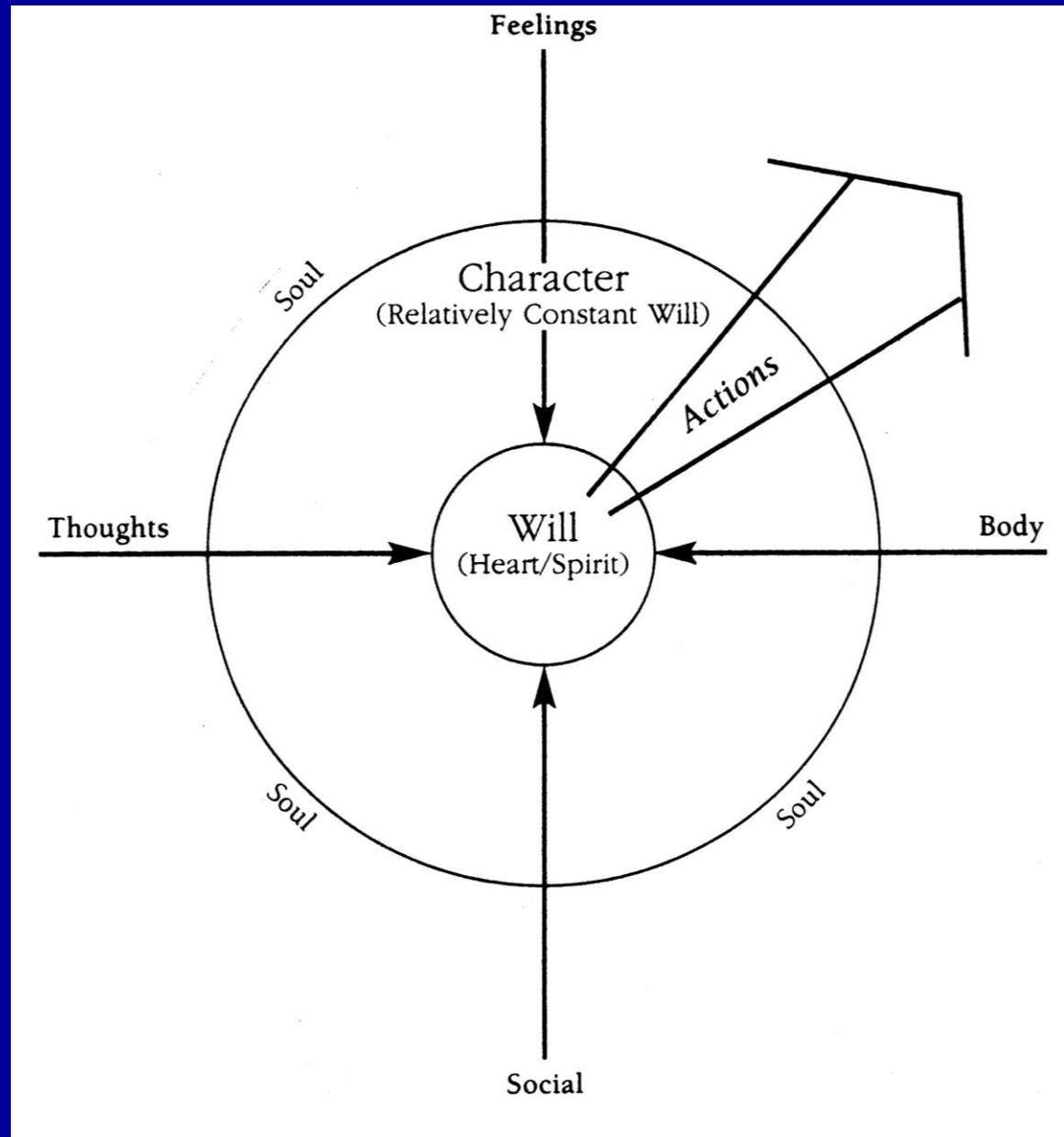
Infinite Environment

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Where Action Comes From

Renovation of
the Heart, pg 40



The Focus Of Training In Spiritual Formation

- We change the contents of each dimension of the surrendered self of the disciple.
- Illustration by the will (heart, human spirit).
Training not to “have one’s own way.”
Huge!!!!
- Illustration of the mind. “Be transformed by renewing the mind.” Rom. 12:1-2

The Effects Of This On:

- Anger and Contempt. Matt. 5:21f
- Sexual Lust. Matt. 5:27-32
- Addictions and Various Dependencies. Col. 3:5, Eph. 4:17f
- Covetousness and Envy. Col. 3:5, Heb. 13:5-6

Congregational Plans

- Offer appropriate training to those ready for it. *No pressure!*
- For example, offer training groups for specific needs: Anger and Contempt, Lust...
- Blessing Those Who Curse You is a good one to start out with.
- A six to eight weeks group on....

We Need Not Upset Our Congregation!

- Please don't announce a revolution.
- Just make appropriate training available to willing disciples.
- Emphasize grace and the administration of Word and Holy Spirit in the process.
- We're not trying to make people righteous, but whole.

Not Opposed To Outreach

- We can and should continue all effective programs of outreach.
- But perhaps to make Disciples now, and not just “Customers.”
- And recognizing that the greatest form of “outreach” has always been transformed lives.

We Can Do This!!!

- Christ intends it for us.
- But we must **decide** to do it, steadily intend to do it. (Have we decided to do it?)
- We must have a **wave** of churches like this, to establish a public alternative.
- And streams of transformed people going forth in the world