WEEK#2: THE PROMISED LAND → KINGDOM LIVING
ALIGNING TO JESUS CHRIST: FROM GLORY TO GLORY

Big Idea: The Promised Land is not a trouble-free life. It is learning to live under the rule and reign of God regardless of our circumstances. As we bring our beliefs, choices, relationships, and responses under the leadership of Jesus, the Holy Spirit forms us into His likeness. We learn to live in His Kingdom regardless of our circumstances.

Foundational Scriptures: 2 Corinthians 3:18; Romans 12:1–2; John 15:4–5; Luke 9:23.

The "Promised Land" diagram *(see attached diagram at the end of these notes)* illustrates a journey of Christian formation. We bring our experiences, insecurities, and existing worldview into our relationship with Jesus. Through truth, community, obedience, and surrender, we increasingly learn to live under His rule.

The spiral reminds us that growth often involves revisiting familiar struggles. We may encounter the same fear or wound again, yet respond with greater trust, deeper understanding, and more willingness to follow Jesus.

The **"Promised Land"** serves here as a teaching metaphor ***(a state of being)*** for Kingdom living. The diagram's stages illustrate growth or "movements of formation"; they are not a rigid biblical sequence or a measure of someone's worth before God.

Movements of Christian Formation

1. **Experience:** Bring your story into the presence of Jesus.
2. **Security:** Learn to live from your identity in Christ.
3. **Worldview and Humility:** Allow Jesus to reshape what you believe.
4. **Truth and community:** Grow through Scripture and relationships.
5. **Healthy choices & Positive Outcomes:** Practice what Jesus teaches.
6. **Surrender:** Take up your cross and accept responsibility.
7. **Kingdom living:** Bear fruit and help others mature.

These movements describe our upward journey of Christian formation. As we encounter new experiences and/or ***transition***, we return to identity, humility, truth, obedience, and surrender—learning to live more fully under the rule and reign of Jesus.

Difference between these Movements of Formation and Christian Practices:
The movements describe how we are being changed as we follow Jesus. The Christian practices are the things we regularly do to participate in that change through the work of the Holy Spirit.
For example, becoming secure in your identity in Christ is a movement of formation. Prayer, reflecting on Scripture, and receiving encouragement from other believers are practices that nurture that security.

This & future teachings in this series will distinguish three connected elements:

Movements: How we are being changed.
Practices: What we do to participate in that change.
Attitudes: How we approach the process—with sacrifice, surrender, humility, and responsibility.

1. EXPERIENCE - *Bring your story into the presence of Jesus.*
At the bottom of the diagram is our "state of being," shaped in part by our experiences. We arrive with memories, expectations, disappointments, successes, and wounds. These experiences can influence how we see God, ourselves, and other people.

Someone who has experienced rejection may expect abandonment. Someone who has lived through instability may seek security through control. These responses deserve honest attention, but our experiences cannot fully tell us who God is or who we are.

Alignment begins as we bring our actual lives to Jesus. We allow Him to meet us in our pain and teach us how to understand our stories in the light of His character.

Source Scriptures:

- Matthew 11:28–30: *Jesus welcomes the weary and invites them to learn from Him.*
- Psalm 139:23–24: *The psalmist invites God to search his heart and lead him.*
- Hebrews 4:15–16: *We can approach Jesus with confidence because He understands our weakness.*

2. SECURITY - *Learn to live from your identity in Christ.*
The diagram moves from experience into "security/insecurity." This raises a significant question: *Where do I look for assurance that I am loved, accepted, and safe?*

When our security depends on approval, achievement, or control, we become vulnerable to every criticism and disappointment. We may react defensively because a difficult moment feels like a threat to our identity.

In Christ, we learn to receive our identity from God. Romans 8 describes believers as adopted children who receive the Spirit and can call God their Father. Belonging to Him becomes the foundation from which we grow.

Romans 8:15–16 (ESV): *15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,"*

This security develops as we return to God's promises and experience His faithfulness. Ongoing anxiety or emotional struggle does not mean that someone lacks genuine faith.

Source Scriptures:

- Ephesians 1:4–5: *God's love and adoption ground our belonging.*
- Romans 8:38–39: *Nothing can separate believers from God's love in Christ.*
- Colossians 3:1–3: *Our lives are rooted in our relationship with Christ.*

3. WORLDVIEW AND HUMILITY - *Allow Jesus to reshape what you believe.*
Our worldview is the lens through which we interpret life. It includes our assumptions about God, people, success, suffering, and ourselves.

We may believe that admitting fault makes us weak, that disagreement means rejection, or that following Jesus should protect us from hardship. Those assumptions shape our reactions, sometimes before we recognize them.

The diagram places humility beside this part of the journey. Humility makes us teachable. We become willing to say, "My understanding may be incomplete. Jesus, show me what is true."

Romans 12:2 connects transformation with the renewing of our minds. Alignment involves learning to recognize and trust God's perspective, then allowing it to reshape our responses.

Romans 12:2 (ESV): *2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*

Source Scriptures:

- Romans 12:2: *Transformation includes the renewal of our minds.*
- Proverbs 3:5–6: *Trust God beyond the limits of your own understanding.*
- Philippians 2:3–5: *Practice humility and adopt the mindset of Christ.*

4. TRUTH AND COMMUNITY - *Grow through Scripture and relationships.*
In the diagram, truth and community sit within the "Zone of Discipleship." They help us recognize what needs to change and support us as we practice a different way of living.

Scripture teaches us to recognize God's character, discern false beliefs, and understand faithful obedience. Christian community gives us opportunities to practice patience, honesty, forgiveness, and love.

Paul connects maturity with speaking truth in love and with the whole body contributing to its growth. We need relationships in which people can encourage us, challenge us, and walk with us through change.

Ephesians 4:15–16 (ESV): *15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.*

For example, we may understand forgiveness intellectually. In community, we encounter the difficult and necessary work of forgiving an actual person. Truth becomes part of our lived experience.

Source Scriptures:

- John 8:31–32: *Continuing in Jesus' word is connected to discipleship and freedom.*
- 2 Timothy 3:16–17: *Scripture equips God's people for faithful living.*
- Hebrews 10:24–25: *Believers encourage one another toward love and good deeds.*
- Galatians 6:2: *We help carry one another's burdens.*

5. HEALTHY CHOICES & POSITIVE OUTCOMES - *Practice what Jesus teaches.*
The spiral moves toward healthy choices and positive outcomes. As truth takes root, it begins to influence what we do.

We pause before reacting. We ask questions before assuming motives. We confess wrongdoing. We follow through on commitments. We seek help when an old pattern keeps returning.

These choices become opportunities to cooperate with the Holy Spirit. Spiritual formation involves repeated, practical obedience.

Jesus describes the person who hears His words and puts them into practice as someone building on a firm foundation. The storm still comes, but the foundation matters.

The diagram's "positive outcomes" are best understood as spiritual fruit and growing faithfulness. Obedience may produce healthier relationships, but it can also bring opposition or costly decisions. Immediate comfort is not the measure of maturity.

Source Scriptures:

- Matthew 7:24–27: *Hearing and practicing Jesus' words establishes a firm foundation.*
- James 1:22–25: *Put the word into action.*
- Galatians 5:22–25: *The Spirit produces love, joy, peace, patience, and other Christlike qualities.*
- Philippians 2:12–13: *Our active response rests on God's work within us.*

6. SURRENDER - *Take up your cross and accept responsibility.*
Near the top of the diagram, the spiral becomes an upward arrow marked "Surrender." The "Borderland" can represent a point where obedience becomes costly: we understand what Jesus is asking, and now we must decide whether to follow.

We may need to release the demand to control an outcome, defend our image, or avoid a difficult act of obedience.

Luke 9:23 places self-denial, taking up the cross daily, and following Jesus at the heart of discipleship. Although surrender is emphasized near the top of the diagram, it belongs throughout the entire journey.

Luke 9:23: *23 And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.*

Four discipleship attitudes help us respond:

- Humility: I am willing to be taught and corrected. — *James 4:6–10*
- Surrender: I entrust my will and desired outcome to God. — *Luke 22:42*
- Responsibility: I acknowledge my actions and take the next faithful step. — *Galatians 6:4–5*
- Sacrifice: I offer my life and resources in obedience to Him. — *Romans 12:1*

Taking responsibility means responding faithfully to what is ours to address. It does not mean accepting blame for another person's wrongdoing. Likewise, taking up the cross does not require remaining in abuse or enabling harm.

7. KINGDOM LIVING - *Bear fruit and help others mature.*
At the top of the diagram are "Promised Land," "Breakthrough," and "Kingdom Living."

The Promised Land does not represent a trouble-free life. Jesus told His disciples that they would experience trouble in this world. Kingdom living means increasingly allowing His rule to shape how we live within those circumstances.

Our developing pattern becomes:

Truth | Community | Healthy Choices | Christlike Responses | Surrender | Breakthrough & Transformation

These elements overlap and recur. Breakthrough may be a significant moment of freedom, or it may emerge through months of quiet faithfulness. Healing can be gradual, and some suffering remains part of our present lives.

The diagram's movement from infant to child, adult, parent, and elder illustrates increasing maturity and responsibility. Scripture uses images of infancy, maturity, and spiritual parenthood, though it does not prescribe this exact five-stage system. Here, "elder" represents mature care and wisdom; church office involves additional biblical qualifications.

As we mature, we become more able to encourage others, carry responsibility, and help people follow Jesus. We continue to depend on Him at every stage.

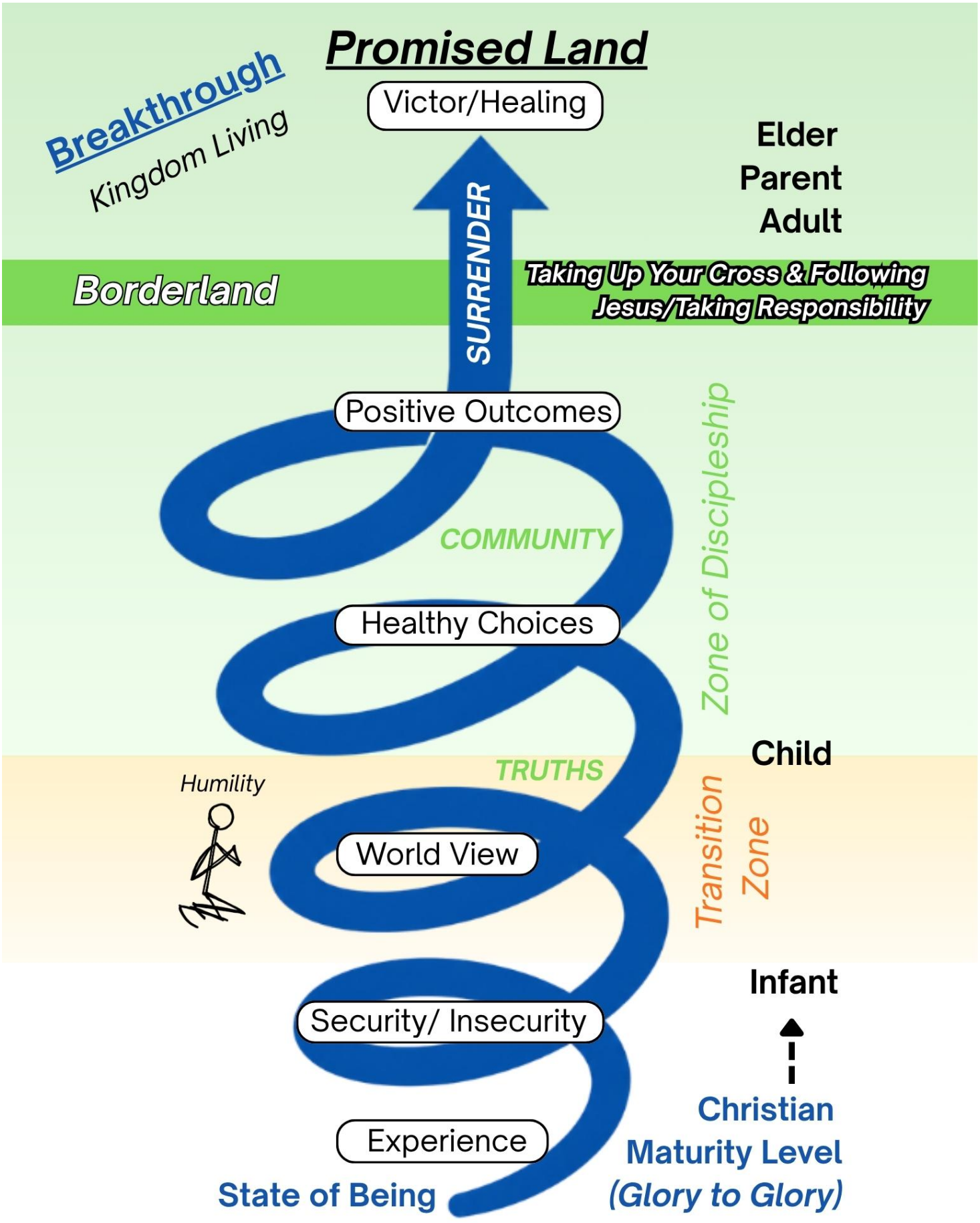
Source Scriptures:

- John 15:4–5: *Fruitfulness depends on remaining in Jesus.*
- John 16:33: *Jesus offers peace amid the world's troubles.*
- Hebrews 5:13–14: *Maturity includes discernment developed through practice.*
- 2 Timothy 2:2: *Faithful disciples help equip others to teach.*
- 2 Corinthians 3:18: *The Spirit transforms believers into the likeness of Christ.*

Kingdom living grows as we bring our everyday lives under the leadership of Jesus. Even when familiar struggles return, the Holy Spirit continues to shape us as we receive His truth, walk with others, and practice obedience and surrender. As we consider these questions, let's honestly reflect on where God is working in us and identify one faithful step we can take this week.

Application questions:

1. Which part of the diagram best describes an area where God is currently working in you?
2. What recurring reaction reveals an insecurity or belief that needs His attention?
3. Who could walk with you as you take your next step?
4. What experience most influences how I respond to God and other people?
5. Where am I seeking the acceptance that God invites me to receive from Him?
6. What belief am I holding that needs to be examined in the light of Jesus' teaching?
7. Who has permission to speak truth into my life, and how do I receive it?
8. What specific choice would bring my response into alignment with Jesus this week?
9. Where do I already understand Jesus' invitation but hesitate because obedience will cost me something?
10. How is my growth helping someone else follow Jesus?


Promised Land
Victor/Healing
Breakthrough
Kingdom Living
Elder
Parent
Adult
SURRENDER
Borderland
Taking Up Your Cross & Following Jesus/Taking Responsibility
Positive Outcomes
COMMUNITY
Zone of Discipleship
Healthy Choices
TRUTHS
Child
Humility
World View
Transition Zone
Infant
Security/ Insecurity
Christian Maturity Level
(Glory to Glory)
Experience
State of Being