

**Stage 6: Universalizing Faith – The God-Grounded Self (just a few adults)**

- Faith is inclusive of all being; a decentralization of the self -Strong sense of connectedness with all things
- Self-emptying, a revaluing based on trust (no fear) -Speak the language of justice and peace – recognizable in all faiths
- Image of God*: a move beyond a belief about God to a deep abiding in God

**Stage 5: Conjunctive Faith – The Inter-Individual Self (some adults)**

- New level of awareness for the world
- Embrace of the differences of others – dwelling within the tensions of paradoxes
- Open-mindedness to differing ideologies because comfortable with what they believe
- Profound and deepened level of humility and acceptance for the simultaneous powerful and powerlessness of ourselves and the divine
- Image of God*: ever-changing

**Stage 4: Individuative-Reflective Faith (most adults)**

- Individuation takes place here – persons break away from groups and rely more heavily on the self and the personal style
- A time of autonomy – a distinct identity emerges
- Realization that changes are necessary if one must improve the situation in life
- Image of God*: past images are debunked and images are uncertain, nebulous, changing

**Stage 3: Synthetic-Conventional Faith – The Interpersonal Self – 13-20 years**

- Self is defined by relationship to peers, the social connection
- Faith follows – God becomes a person who understands; follows the experience of social attachments
- A de-mythologizing period: stories understood as not literal but mean some truth
- Self can put together fragments of meaning into a worldview with values: synthesis
- Image of God*: Best Friend, companion - out of desire for intimacy – need to feel loved and known

**Stage 2: Mythic-Literal Faith – The Imperial Self – 7-12 years**

- Capacity for rational thought – distinguishing between reality and fantasy
- Sees through cause and effect
- God can be bargained with – is in relationship with us busy doing
- Image of God*: parent deity who rewards and punishes

**Stage 1: Intuitive-Projective Faith – the Impulsive Self – 2-6 years**

- Perception and meaning ordered through emotion and imagination
- Meaning and value made through dreams, stories, symbols, experience
- Image of God*: literal, real, does what we do; static: baby in manger, man on a cross; often called “he” and wearing clothes seen in pictures

**Primal Faith – the Incorporative Self – 0-2 years**

- Begins in utero; exists prior to language; kinesthetic;
- Image of God*: mirrored in parents, shaping what is to come later

**Our Search for God is Developmental: Stages of Faith Development (James Fowler)**