

Greater Works Christian Church

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We MUST Grow Up

Question: On a scale of 1 to 10, how mature are you spiritually (1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest)? Please think about this and answer honestly.

Write your answer here: _____

Introduction: With everything going on in the world today the church is at the center of it all. The United States is swiftly headed towards Communism because the church in America has been weak and cowardly (immature). At the same time, the church in China, Iran, Afghanistan, India, etc. has been strong and growing while being persecuted. How is it possible for the persecuted church to outgrow and Out Faith a free church? Maturity. These persecuted Christians have a Maturity that has been birthed and developed through opposition. They need the truth and live by it. The American church is too soft because we have had it so easy for so long. Now its crunch time. We MUST grow up!

1 Corinthians 13:11

When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

It is interesting to note, Paul wrote these words in the “Love Chapter” (1 Cor 13), also called, “The Way of Love”.

Paul shares (not in detail) how even he Grew Up.

Paul spoke of these three areas where he Grew from being a Child to a Man:

- His Speech (I spoke as a child)
- His Understanding (I understood as a child)
- His Thinking (I thought as a child)

Paul goes on to write, “but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”

The childish things Paul did away with would be:

- Childish Speech
- Childish Understanding
- Childish Thinking

When Paul grew in these three areas he was recognized as a man, not just because of his age, but because of his life and actions. These three areas determine our overall maturity as it did with Paul.

Question and Discussion: Paul matured in these three areas- his speech, his understanding, and his thinking. To do this he would have had to overcome immaturity in these three areas.

What have you done to mature in these three areas? Please share what you have done, and what you continue to do to grow and mature in these areas.

1 John 2:1-6

1 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

3 Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.

4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.

6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

Verse 1 tells us who John is writing to- "My little children". Those who are saved, and in the church, directly because of John and his ministry.

These Little Children have the ability to:

- Not sin (v.1)
- Come to the Father through Jesus (v.1-2)
- Know God/Him (v.3)
- Keep the Commandments of God (v.3)
- Have the Love of God perfected within them (v.5)
- Walk as Jesus walked (v.6)

Again, this is what the Apostle John expected of those he brought to salvation and into the church. These are Little Children (not physically but spiritually).

The spiritually young (babes in Christ) have the ability to fulfill these things.

1 John 2:12-14

12 I write to you, little children, Because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake.

13 I write to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning. I write to you, young men, Because you have overcome the wicked one. I write to you, little children, Because you have known the Father.

14 I have written to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one.

In this portion, the Apostle John deals with three levels of spiritual maturity.

The three levels of Spiritual Maturity:

- Little Children
- Young Men
- Fathers

What John says about each level of maturity-

Little Children:

- your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake (v.12)
- you have known the Father (v.13)

Young Men:

- you have overcome the wicked one (v.13)
- you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one (v.14)

Fathers:

- you have known Him *who is* from the beginning (v.13)
- you have known Him *who is* from the beginning (v.14)

Knowing the Father and having been forgiven of sins puts us on a path of spiritual growth and maturity, from Little Child stage to Young Man stage.

Once we are in the Young Man stage of spiritual growth, we will become strong (spiritually) as God's word abides in us. This will cause us to overcome the wicked one (satan; his deceit).

After the wicked one has been overcome, we can move onto the Father stage of spiritual maturity. In this stage we will know God in a deeper more intimate manner; we will know Him who is from the beginning.

In my experience, most Christians don't move beyond the Little Child stage of maturity. It is sad, but none-the-less true.

Question: Is your spiritual growth stunted? If so, what is stunting your growth?

- ✓ Little Child
- ✓ Young Man
- ✓ Father

Which level of maturity are you in and why?

Hebrews 5:9-10

9 And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,
10 called by God as High Priest "ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK,"

Hebrews chapter 5, verses 1-10 is all about Jesus being a Priest in the Order of Melchizedek. The writer is wanting to make the connection of Melchizedek to Jesus, and to show the importance of this concept. This is difficult for him to do because of the immaturity of his readers.

Hebrews 5:11-14

11 of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.

12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need *someone* to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.

13 For everyone who partakes *only* of milk *is* unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe.

14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, *that is*, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

The writer of Hebrews is frustrated with his readers because of their low level of understanding, saying, "you have become dull of hearing."

The Writer of Hebrews goes onto say:

- by this time you ought to be teachers
- you need *someone* to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God
- you have come to need milk and not solid food

The writer of this passages paints a picture of his readers as still little children (babies) that need milk because they cannot handle solid food (such as meat).

The Milk and Solid Food are metaphors for understanding and revelation. It's as if he was saying, "you should be teachers by now but you're still at pre-school level. It wasn't because they weren't taught the truth, but because they had become "dull of hearing" (v.11).

Question: Although we will always need to be taught the Word of God, we all should grow to be teachers to those less mature. Are you presently teaching others the Word of God? What are you presently doing to increase you understand and ability to teach?

Dull (3576) *nothros*

G3576 (Strong's)

no-thros'

From a derivative of G3541; sluggish, that is, (literally) lazy, or (figuratively) stupid: - dull, slothful.

Total KJV occurrences: 2

G3576 (Thayer)

nōthros

Thayer Definition:

1) slow, sluggish, indolent, dull, languid

Part of Speech: adjective

A Related Word by Thayer's/Strong's Number: from a derivative of G3541

G3576 (Word Study)

nōthros; fem. nōthrá, neut. nōthron, adj. Slothful, sluggish, dull (Heb 5:11; Heb 6:12; Sept.: Pro 22:29).

Syn.: bradús (G1021), slow; argós (G692), idle; oknēros (G3636), lazy.

Ant.: tachús (G5036), quick, swift; tachinos (G5031), swift.

*****root word of nothros (3576)*** *Nothos (3541)***

G3541 (Strong)

noth'-os

Of uncertain affinity; a spurious or illegitimate son: - bastard.

Total KJV occurrences: 1

G3541 (Thayer)

nothos

Thayer Definition:

1) illegitimate, bastard

2) one born, not in lawful wedlock, but of a concubine or female slave

Part of Speech: adjective

A Related Word by Thayer's/Strong's Number: of uncertain affinity

G3541 (Word Study)

nóthos; gen. nóthou, masc.- fem., neut. nóthon, adj. An illegitimate or misbegotten child, one who is spurious (Heb 12:8).

Syn.: pseudés (G5571), false, untrue; hupokrités (G5273), hypocrite.

Ant.: alēthés (G227), telling the truth, unconcealed, true; alēthinós (G228), real, true, genuine; gnēsios (G1103), lawfully begotten, genuine.

According to the use of the word, Nothros (3576), when a believer receives good teaching (information and revelation) but does not use what is taught to grow and mature, they are Sluggish, Lazy, Stupid, Slothful and Dull (of hearing).

Understand, the root word of Nothros is Nothos. This conveys the idea of being Illegitimate (a bastard).

When a believer in Jesus fails to grow and mature as they should it makes them an Illegitimate Christian. In the same manner as one being an Illegitimate son, the believer that does not grow and mature spiritually as they should, is an illegitimate Christian (an illegitimate follower of Jesus).

Some Low-Level things we need to overcome (immaturity):

- Offences
- Putting Family over God
- Putting Carnal Culture over God's Culture
- Having a Carnal Worldview over a Biblical Worldview
- Pornography (sexual sins)
- The constant need of deliverance
- Hyper-spirituality
- Issues of Pride
 - ✓ Self-centeredness
 - ✓ Selfishness
 - ✓ Self-absorption
 - ✓ Haughtiness
 - ✓ Arrogance
 - ✓ Lack of Humility
- An unwillingness to process and act upon the Word of God (this is the biggest)

Until we overcome these issues (and issues like them) we will forever be Illegitimate believers.

Question: Above is a list of things we all need to overcome so we can grow and mature. What are some other things we need to overcome for greater maturity? What are you presently working on?

The First Question: On a scale of 1 to 10, how mature are you spiritually (1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest)? Please think about this and answer honestly.

Write your answer here: _____

After reading through this outline, is your answer still the same?