

## GROWING INTO MATURITY

(Eph 4:11 KJV) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; (Eph 4:12 KJV) For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: (Eph 4:13 KJV) Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: (Eph 4:14 KJV) That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; (Eph 4:15 KJV) But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

### 1. THE WORK OF THE FIVE-FOLD MINISTRY.

1. ***For the perfecting of the saints.*** 2677. katartismos, kat-ar-tis-mos'; from G2675; complete furnishing (obj.):--perfecting.
2. ***For the work of the ministry.***
3. ***For the edifying of the Body of Christ.***
4. ***Until.***
  1. Until we come into the unity of faith.
  2. Until we come into the knowledge of Christ.
  3. In short, until we come into maturity.
    1. Until we come unto a perfect man. 5046. teleios, tel'-i-os; from G5056; complete (in various applications of labor, growth, mental and moral character, etc.); neut. (as noun, with G3588) completeness:--of full age, man, perfect.
    2. Until we come unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:
    3. That we be no more children.

### 2. MY JOB AS PASTOR.

1. ***Overseer and feeder.***
  1. (Acts 20:28 KJV) Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.
  2. (1 Pet 5:1 KJV) The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: (1 Pet 5:2 KJV) Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; (1 Pet 5:3 KJV) Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. (1 Pet 5:4 KJV) And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.
2. ***Elder as the man.*** 4245. presbuteros, pres-boo'-ter-os; compar. of presbus (elderly); older; as noun, a senior; spec. an Isr. Sanhedrist (also fig. member of the celestial council) or Chr. "presbyter":--elder (-est), old.
3. ***Overseer (bishop) as an office.*** 1983. episkopeo, ep-ee-skop-eh'-o; from G1909 and G4648; to oversee; by impl. to beware:--look diligently, take the oversight.
4. ***Pastor (feeding; shepherding) as the work.*** 4166. poimen, poy-mane'; a shepherd (lit. or fig.):--shepherd, pastor.

### 3. GOD WANTS US TO GROW UP.

1. ***That we be no longer children--tossed to and fro.***
  2. ***When I was a child.*** (1 Cor 13:11 KJV) When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.
  3. ***Indictment for being babes.***
    1. (1 Cor 3:1 KJV) And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. (1 Cor 3:2 KJV) I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.
    2. (Heb 5:12 KJV) For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. (Heb 5:13 KJV) For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.
  4. ***God⇒s will is that we grow up into maturity.***
4. WHAT IS A MATURE CHRISTIAN?
1. ***First must be mature person.*** God doesn't have mature Christians who are dumb, stupid, or immature in the natural.
  2. ***Further, must be spiritually developed.***
    1. Strong prayer life.
    2. Knowledge of the Word.
      1. Knowledge of Jesus.
      2. Spiritual insight into His word.
    3. Spiritual relationship with Jesus.
  3. ***In either realm, development of character is process of maturity.***
    1. How do you respond to various situations, circumstances, dilemmas.
    2. How do you react in adversity?
    3. How do you behave yourself in a crisis?
    4. How do you perform under pressure?
5. MARKS OF MATURITY.
1. ***A person of responsibility.***
    1. A person of dependability; trust.
    2. Responsible for own behavior; willing to accept consequences.
    3. Not shifting blame.
      1. Don't blame others; criticize others to make self look better..
      2. Not looking for excuses or rationalizing actions.
    4. Not waiting on someone to tell you everything to do--seeing the need and seeking to fill it.
    5. A self-starter; self-motivator.
  2. ***A person who is not selfish or self-centered.***
    1. All attention does not have to be on them.
    2. Secure in their position.
    3. Not being critical of others; critical spirit and attitude seeks to put you in a one-upmanship position.

4. Move from receiving mode to giving mode.
  1. Not so much what I can get, but what I can give.
  2. I'm here for your benefit; not mine.
  3. The son of God came not to be served, but to serve.
  4. Not so much getting a blessing as being a blessing.
  5. Become teachers; a dispenser of the gospel; not just a consumer.
3. ***A person of wisdom and understanding.***
4. ***A person who is able to make good judgments.***
  1. Don't be quick to jump to conclusions.
    1. Weighing out all the facts before drawing conclusions.
    2. Seeing both sides of a situation.
  2. Being fair and equitable.
  3. Judging each case on its own merits.
  4. This is a person of integrity; not blinded by prejudices.
  5. This is a person who is open-minded.
  6. This is a person who is willing to take calculated risks--there are never any sure things. After weighing all the facts, have to make the best decision.
  7. A person of common sense (how a normal, sound person would respond in a given situation).
5. ***A person of discipline; leading a disciplined life.***
  1. Able to delay gratification.
    1. Able to see beyond the moment.
    2. Can control impulses and drives.
    3. Learn to bring feelings, emotions into check.
  2. Able to restrain oneself.
6. ***A person of emotional stability.***
  1. Not easily offended; not wearing feelings on shoulder.
  2. No whining, crying, pouting, complaining, murmuring.
  3. Stays calm in adversity; doesn't overreact to a crisis.
7. ***A person who is not vengeful.***
  1. Don't hold grudges.
  2. Don't seek to get even.
  3. Easy to forgive; turn the other cheek.
8. ***A person who is resilient.***
  1. Able to bounce back when down.
  2. Will not falter if life throws you a curve.
  3. Standing strong in the face of adversity.
    1. When the going gets tough, the tough get going.
    2. Tough times don't last, but tough people do.
9. ***A person who is decisive.*** Willingness to make tough decisions and standing by them.
10. ***A person of balance.***
  1. Level headed.

2. Even tempered.
    1. Temperate in all things. (1 Cor 9:25 KJV) And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.
    2. Good temperament; He that is in control.
    3. Not quick to lose cool.
    4. (Prov 14:17 KJV) He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly: and a man of wicked devices is hated.
    5. (Prov 14:29 KJV) He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding; but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.
    6. (Prov 15:18 KJV) A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.
    7. (Prov 16:32 KJV) He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.
    8. Holding your peace; biting your tongue; not speaking your piece.
  3. Able to balance discipline with love.
  4. Able to balance conviction with compassion.
  5. Able to balance toughness with tenderness--Man of velvet and of steel.
  6. Balance between independence and dependence.
    1. Standing on own two feet, yet not being an island unto ourselves.
    2. Can make decisions on own, yet not afraid to seek other counsel.
    3. Not needing others approval constantly.
    4. Know when to turn loose and let go.
    5. Emmeshed families.
      - (1) When parents don=t allow children to grow up.
      - (2) Over protective parents. At some point in time, we have to let them go for our sakes as well as theirs.
      - (3) Always bailing kids out; not allowing them to suffer the consequences of their behavior or actions.
  11. ***A person of strength.***
    1. Don=t look for easy way out; no compromise.
    2. Being bold, courageous; no coward.
  12. ***A person who understands how something is obtained and appreciates it.***
    1. Respect for their own property.
    2. Respect for others.
  13. ***A person who has learned to be a problem solver.***
  14. ***A person of diligence and persistence.***
    1. One who does not give up easily.
    2. One who never says never.
    3. One who never says quit.
    4. One who never says can=t.
6. WHEN YOU OUGHT TO BE TEACHERS.
1. ***As babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word.*** (1 Pet 2:2 KJV) As newborn babes,

desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

2. ***Meat belongs to those of a full age.*** (Heb 5:14 KJV) But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.
3. ***Who can understand doctrine?*** (Isa 28:9 KJV) Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. (Isa 28:10 KJV) For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little:
4. ***Grow in grace and knowledge.*** (2 Pet 3:18 KJV) But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.