

The Maturing Process

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: I John 2:12-14.

B. In Christ we have the method for becoming a man as God intended.

C. God is necessary to the process of fulfilling humanity—He is not an option.

II. Three stages of growth. (Romans 12, I Corinthians 13)

A. Little children.

1. These are those whose sins are forgiven because they know the Father.
2. They have come to God through Jesus Christ.
3. The believer is not in a cold mechanical universe—God is a loving Father to him.
4. The immature believer cannot tell the difference between good and evil, he does not know how to apply the word unto his behavior, and he cannot teach others. (Hebrews 5)

B. Fathers.

1. The way to maturity and the mark of maturity is the same.
2. The Christian is to be perfect in the sense of having learned the fundamentals of the Christian life.
3. The believer at this point does not need to learn to equip himself further—he needs to apply it further.

C. Young men.

1. The secret of growth from one stage to another is the Word of God abiding.
2. The devil uses many things to divert one's attention from the Word.
 - a. Bible Study is not enough.
 - b. A knowledge of the Bible must be accompanied by obedience to the Spirit.
 - c. Bible Study requires time and diligence.
3. The moral decline of society is the result of a departure from the Word of God in personal lives.

III. What needs to be done.

- A. Christians need to examine themselves.
- B. Scripture must be the last word for all truth and doctrine.
- C. Scripture must be more than a good place to find solutions to moral problems—it tells us the source of these problems and more.
- D. The authority of the Bible must be regarded as the authority of Jesus Christ.
- E. The authority of the Word must be manifest in the power of the word.

Application questions:

1. What ways does the devil hinder the believer's growth according to the speaker? Can you think of more ways?

2. What stage do you find describes your own state the best? What steps can you take to advance in your faith?

3. Which of the speaker's propositions about what needs to be done strike you the most? Explain.
