

Growing Up Into Christ

Eph. 4:11-16

Introduction:

- A. Christians must grow up spiritually, if the church is to grow. (vs. 14-16; 2 Pet. 3:18).
 - 1. Knowledge acquired through searching the Scriptures. (Acts 17:11)
 - 2. Knowledge alone tends toward arrogance. (1 Cor. 8:1).
 - 3. Knowledge tempered by love and grace is needed.
- B. As Christians grow in knowledge, they should grow up in four related *areas*:

Discussion:

II. We Should Grow In Our *Perception*. (cf. Eph. 5:17).

- A. Of the information. (cf. Acts 18:25,26; 1 Tim. 4:13,15).
- B. Of the application.
 - 1. Perception of right and wrong, good and evil. (Heb. 5:14)
 - 2. Eunuch had the information, needed application. (cf. Acts 8:31-35).

III. We Should Grow In Our *Perspective*.

- A. Of the relative importance of temporal things and eternal things. (2 Cor. 4:16-18; Matt. 6:19-20, 24, 33).
- B. Of the relative importance of outward adorning and inward adorning. (1 Pet. 3:1-4).
- C. Of the relative importance of bodily strength and spiritual strength. (1 Tim. 4:8; Col. 2:23).
- D. Of the relative importance of what people think of us and what God thinks of us. (1 Cor. 4:1-5).
- E. Of the relative importance of what we think of ourselves and what God thinks of us. (Rom. 12:3).
- F. Of the relative importance of style and spirit of religious teachers and the substance of the teaching (Phil. 1:15-18).
- G. Of the relative importance of statistical growth. (of numbers and dollars) and solid spiritual growth.

IV. We Should Grow In Our *Personalities*.

- A. We excuse too many church problems as "personality conflicts."
- B. We need to grow up in Scriptural personality traits. (Eph. 4:2,31,32; Col. 4:6; Jas 3:13-18; Tit. 3:3)
 - 1. Can both speak plainly and be kind.
 - 2. Can gracefully give and receive correction.
 - 3. Neither wimpish or bullish.

V. We Should Grow In Our *Performance*. (Jas. 1:22-25).

- A. Performance depends on three factors:
 - 1. Desire (2 Cor. 8:12).
 - 2. Ability (2 Cor. 8:3; Acts 11).
 - 3. Opportunity. (Gal. 6:10; Phil. 4:10).
- B. Can grow in all three areas:
 - 1. Can increase our desire or willingness to do.
 - 2. Can try to increase our ability.
 - 3. Can look for more opportunities.

Conclusion:

- A. We need four things to really grow:
 - 1. Time to grow.
 - 2. Teaching to grow.
 - 3. Opportunity to grow. (Rom. 14:1)
 - 4. Desire to grow.
- B. Time, teaching and opportunity will not do it - unless one wants to grow.
- C. One unwilling to grow ceases to be a real babe in Christ - Just a big baby that must be petted and pampered to keep him going.