

Growing Up Into Christ



Who doesn't love that sweet little baby face? It's hard to resist chubby cheeks, sparkling eyes and toothless grins! But what if we stayed as babies for our whole lives? Would it be quite so attractive?

We are smack dab in the middle of a series at church called Colossians: Living a Life Worthy of the Lord. It's been a challenging series, not a feel good one necessarily. But one that is sorely needed. **It's all about moving beyond baby steps with Christ and growing and maturing in our faith.**

A few Sundays ago, the scripture we were in was Colossians 1:24-29 and Colossians 2:1-5. Pastor David Bell was talking about how our maturity matters greatly to God, and how it is an expected privilege of all who follow Jesus. It got me thinking about the whys of it all. Why is maturity important in our faith? **What would the world look like if we just happily accepted our salvation and never moved on from there?**

Well, one way to look at this is to use the analogy of a baby. Babies are immature of course. They need to be fed, changed, cared for, loved and protected. They can't stand on their own. They can't do much for others yet. They are pretty much in the "taking" mode. Imagine how we would feel if our babies never grew up. We would forever be immersed in diapers, baby food, car seats, play pens and strollers. Now I know we all are nostalgic about the days when our kids were little, but there is something very satisfying about watching children grow up, reaching new milestones and independence, making mistakes along the way, yes, but ultimately becoming productive members of society—and God's kingdom.

Now let's imagine that this is similar to how God sees us. When we take our very first step of faith by accepting Jesus as our Savior, we are born into God's kingdom. And for too many of us, that's where we wallow. It's a comforting, easy place to be. We're loved, we're fed—all our needs are taken care of. But, I can imagine God looking down and saying "Come on, it's time to take those next steps. We need to get rid of the baby food and get some meat into us. I've got work waiting for you to do!"

It takes time and work to grow in Christ. Sometimes we have to give up other things to attend that Bible study or take that class. We need to devote time to prayer. We need to spend time with mature Christians who can encourage us. Often times, it's far easier NOT to do those things. **But where would our world be if we all took that attitude?**

What if Martin Luther, George Müller, Amy Carmichael, Billy Graham, your pastor, the person who introduced you to Christ, what if they all had made different decisions, different choices in their lives? What if they had never grown up in Christ?

God doesn't see each of us any differently. He's got things that He prepared in advance, waiting for us to do (see Ephesians 2:10). **What if we never get there?**

This isn't meant to be a guilt trip. If you are already growing in God, then don't pile on anything else that He hasn't given you to do or hasn't called you to. But, if your Christian life hasn't changed much since you started following Jesus, and you feel God is nudging you to grow up, here's a few questions David left us with at the end of service that Sunday morning that may help you too.

- 1. Am I content where I am in my maturity in Christ?**
- 2. Is God content with where I am?**
- 3. Is there room to grow?**

4. What areas do I need to grow in?

5. Am I willing to pursue what it takes?

What do you think about maturity? I'd like to hear your thoughts.

Pray on!

Joe