



Sunday December 06, 2020
GO ON TO MATURITY

We thank God for leading us through 2020, amidst a very uncertain season.

As we look ahead at 2021, there are so many things to consider and work towards. We aim to make progress.

Among everything that qualifies as priority in the life of a believer, spiritual growth and development towards maturity must have precedence. In other words, progress in our spiritual life is paramount (1 Tim 4:8, 3 John 1:2)

Today, I would like to encourage us to journey on towards spiritual maturity.

Hebrews 6:1 (ESV)

6 Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,

Forward to maturity – NIV

Press on to maturity – NASB

Go on to perfection – NKJV

Full-grown - NLV

Grow up in Christ – The Message

*(In The Message version, the verse says - **So come on, let's leave the preschool fingerpainting exercises on Christ and get on with the grand work of art.**)*

To understand what the Bible means by maturity, let's look at three Greek words that talk about maturity or perfection.

'teleios' = Complete – of full age, mature, a perfect man. - in various applications refers to mental growth and moral character.

'pleero' = to fill up, full off, diffuse, influence.

'katartizo' = to complete thoroughly, thorough equipping.

We are talking about growing up in God, becoming complete, being fully equipped, maturity into a perfect man.

THE GOAL

Whenever we think of making progress in any area, we would need to begin with the end result in mind. The aim, target or goal must be our focus. (Ex: a student aiming at doing medicine has the end result of becoming a doctor in mind, a businessman who is working hard has a certain financial turn-out or an impact in mind etc.)



Similarly, when we think of our spiritual journey towards maturity, let us have our goal clear before us.

The goal is to become like Jesus - in love, in character, in power, in life and in ministry.
Romans 8:29

29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Jesus is coming back for a church that is built up. He is coming back for believers who will be built up to full measure.

Eph 4:13

13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

So, there is a work to be done in raising people up into maturity in Christ. All Christian ministry must therefore be done in order to present people as mature or full-grown adults in Christ (Col 1:28).

MATURITY MATTERS TO GOD

God wants us to grow up and not remain childish.
Let us revisit the same scripture of Hebrews 6:1

Hebrews 6:1 (ESV)

6 Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,

The writer to the Hebrews is encouraging believers to move forward:

✓ ***Grow up beyond the ABCs.***

The writer points out that some things are basics or foundational truths of our Christian faith, such as repentance or salvation in Christ, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead and eternal judgement.

✓ ***Chronological age in Christ does not necessarily mean spiritual maturity***

The writer rebukes the Hebrew believers in the previous chapter of Hebrews 5:12-14 where he suggests that the passage of time has not resulted in definite spiritual growth. This means that spiritual growth is not concurrent with natural physical growth. If we are not intentional, we could be stunted spiritually or worse still receding away. And God does not want this for any of us.

We must make a choice to go on to maturity

So, keep moving on towards ‘teleios’ or completeness. Jesus encouraged us to be perfect as the heavenly Father is perfect (Mat 5:48).



JOURNEY TO MATURITY

Growth is essentially a steadily transformed life. It is a process. What matters is that we are intentionally moving forward & upward. Aim for progress at every point.

It takes time and occurs in stages.

Some stages

- ✓ listed in (1 John 2:3-18) are similar to the growth of a human being, i.e. little children, young men and fathers.
- ✓ The path of progress is in the direction of a believer becoming a disciple, a minister and then a leader. We must make sure that we keep hitting milestones in time and without any delay. This is a sign of healthy growth.

Even as we make this journey, at every stage we will be able to reflect Christ more fully through our lives.

1 John 4:17

17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.

TRAITS OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY

Now that we have understood that our goal of spiritual maturity is to become more like Jesus, let us look at some qualities of spiritual maturity to aim for in our lives.

1. God-Centered Life

- ✓ *Journeying towards life-transformation (2 Cor 3:18)*
- ✓ *Aligning to the will of God (Col 4:12)*
- ✓ *Strong roots & good fruit (Mark 4:27, John 15:8)*
- ✓ *A life of purpose (Phil 3:12-16)*

2. Deeper in the Word (Hebrews 5:12-14, 1 Cor 2:6)

- ✓ *Graduating to deeper things of God*
- ✓ *Training in the Word*
- ✓ *Discern right from wrong*

3. Godly Character

- ✓ *Demonstrate Christ-likeness (Ephesians 4:13, Galatians 5:22-23, Eph 4:22)*



- ✓ *Selfless and God focused* (1 Corinthians 13:11; 1 Corinthians 3:1-4)
- ✓ *Walk in love* (Col 3:14)
- ✓ *Practice self-control- tongue & the whole body* (James 3:2)
- ✓ *Produces unity* (Phil 3:16, Eph 4)
- ✓ *Overcome life's challenges* to be promoted by God

4. Nurture Others

- ✓ *Well-equipped to serve God* (2 Corinthians 13:9,11; Hebrews 13:20-21)
- ✓ *Able to build up others in God - discipleship* (Hebrews 5:12-14, 1 Tim 4:12-16)
- ✓ *Able to disciple* – helping people grow, increase in commitment, work of the Holy Spirit in and through their lives. Help them develop disciplines of prayer, time in the Word, spending time with Christ. Help people find life's purpose or find meaning in what God has called them to do.

Cost of immaturity – lack of spiritual stability & strength

- ✓ *Dull of hearing – we don't understand new things or deeper things of God* (Hebrews 5)
- ✓ *Stunting – not able to enjoy the fullness of life in Christ.*
- ✓ *Miss-out on the inheritance* (Galatians 4:1-3)
- ✓ *Living a carnal life that does not represent Christ- Envy, strife, divisions, fleshly/carnal* (1 Cor 3:1-3, 1 Cor 14:20)
- ✓ *Tossed around by winds of doctrine and not firm in the faith* (Eph 4:13-15)
- ✓ *Ruled by emotions and popular opinion*
- ✓ *Not useful and productive for the Kingdom*

HOW TO MAKE THE JOURNEY TO MATURITY?

A commitment to these 5 areas will strengthen us towards maturity

1. Grow in the Word

What we consume is very important. The word of God will build us up.

Acts 20:32

32 “So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

Keep desiring the pure and sincere Word of God which is the healthy diet for a maturing spirit.

1 Peter 2:2

2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,



This means making time for more than a weekly sermon. Instead we make time for regular personal study of the Word.

Keep graduating to higher things in God or solid food. (Hebrews 5:13-14)

2. Grow in faith (2 Thes 1:3)
3. Grow in the grace and knowledge of God (2 Peter 3:18)
4. Grow in Godly character (2 Peter 1:5-9)
5. Grow in service (Romans 12:6-8)

Ministry Time



LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Sunday Dec 06, 2020
Go on to Maturity

This is a simple guide for use in Life Group discussions. Our objective is to focus on the application of the Sunday sermon - how each one is becoming a doer of the Word and building their life on God's Holy Word. The Life Group meeting would normally last for 2 hours. Each Life Group would have up to 12-15 people.

Preparation

To prepare for the Life Group meeting, you can listen to the Sermon Key Points (sermon summary in five minutes) or the full length Sunday sermon. You can also review the Sunday Sermon notes. All these are available in the "All Peoples Church Bangalore" mobile App or online at apcwo.org/sermons. Pray for the Life Group meeting and invite the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Welcome

The Life Group meeting may commence with a time of prayer, worship and a fun activity.

LISTEN to God's Word

Read the following Scripture passages: *Hebrews 5:12-14, Hebrews 6:1, Romans 8:29, Eph 4:13, Acts 20:32, 1 Peter 2:2*

INVESTIGATE God's Word Together

Please discuss a few of these together, giving time for people to share their insights. We encourage each one individually to make notes of their personal learning during the Group discussion.

- 1) *Discuss the meaning of 'spiritual maturity' based on the teaching.*
- 2) *Discuss the four traits of spiritual maturity.*
 - 1, *God-centered life*
 - 2, *Deeper in the Word*
 - 3, *Godly character*
 - 4, *Nurture others*

- 3) *What are some things a believer can do to mature in God?*

FELLOWSHIP by sharing your life and spiritual journey

Each one takes a few (3 minutes max) to share anything from their walk with God, something God has been teaching them, a testimony of answered prayer or a specific challenge that they would like prayer for. Encourage each one to participate and share.



ENCOURAGE each other by praying and ministering to one another

Get into small groups of two or three and take turns to thank God and pray for each other in the light of what was learnt today. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Expect the gifts of the Holy Spirit to flow bringing healing, releasing miracles, prophecy, etc.

Regroup and pray together for:

- 1, families to be protected and strengthened*
- 2, a mighty outpouring of God's Holy Spirit on us as a church and through us to bless many others in our city and nation. Nothing but a mighty work of God's Spirit can change our city and nation.*
- 3, for the BUILD TO IMPACT project - for God's hand to guide us through the land search and acquisition process, and for finances to be more than enough to get this project done.*

Close by thanking God together.



USEFUL RESOURCES



Watch our online Sunday Church service live stream every Sunday at 10:30am (Indian Time, GMT+5:30). Spirit filled, anointed worship, Word and ministry for healing, miracles, and deliverance.

YOUTUBE: <https://youtube.com/allpeopleschurchbangalore>

WEBSITE: <https://apcwo.org/live>

Our other websites and free resources:

CHURCH: <https://apcwo.org>

FREE SERMONS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/sermons>

FREE BOOKS: <https://apcwo.org/books/english>

DAILY DEVOTIONALS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/daily-devotional>

JESUS CHRIST: <https://examiningjesus.com>

BIBLE COLLEGE: <https://apcbiblecollege.org>

E-LEARNING: <https://apcbiblecollege.org/elearn>

WEEKEND SCHOOLS: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/weekend-schools>

COUNSELING: <https://chrysalislife.org>

MUSIC: <https://apcmusic.org>

MINISTERS FELLOWSHIP: <https://pamfi.org>

CHURCH APP: <https://apcwo.org/app>

CHURCHES: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/churches>

WORLD MISSIONS: <https://apcworldmissions.org>