



COVENANT CHURCH

Adulting: Learning How to Grow Up

Part 1 - Thinking

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Main Idea – As a Christian, you should be growing spiritually for as long as you live. An important part of spiritual maturity takes place in your mind. Your ideas will be better as you learn to think more like Jesus.

Growing to Christian maturity

- Christian adulthood involves thinking, believing, speaking, and acting in a mature, Biblically-inspired way.
- **1 Corinthians 13:11** is one of the better-known Bible verses about mature Christian thinking. Here are two versions of that verse:
 - **When I was a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. (ESV)**
 - **When I was a child, I spoke about childish matters, for I saw things like a child and reasoned like a child. But the day came when I matured, and I set aside my childish ways. (TPT)**
- We know that children often act immaturely. We also know adults often act immaturely.
- To avoid being stuck in adult spiritual immaturity, you should pattern your thoughts after Jesus' thoughts. If you can discover how Jesus thought, you will have discovered a pattern to shape your own thinking.
- In addition to WWJD (What would Jesus do?) you can also focus on WWJT (What would Jesus think?)

Here are five spiritually immature thought patterns you should identify and avoid:

1. It's mine

- Children, and immature adults, seem to think as if the world revolves around them. They think, "I gotta get mine" or "What's in it for me?"
- The adult Christian thinks, "It's ours." Because they think that way, Christian adults are able to put the needs of others above their own desires.
- **Romans 12:13 – Take a constant interest in the needs of God's beloved people and respond by helping them. And eagerly welcome people as guests into your home.**

(TPT)

- **Philippians 2:3 – Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. (NLT)**
- Christian adults often ask themselves, "What can I do for someone else?"

2. I can do whatever I want

- Even though you have free will doesn't mean you should use it.
- If you make decisions without God, don't expect Godly results.
- Rather, seek to have the mind of Jesus – to know His will – and then choose to do whatever that is.
- The adult Christian thinks, "I can do whatever God's will is for my life."
- Even Jesus sought to know, and be obedient to, the Father's will. The mind of Jesus is in constant submission to what the Father wants. **Luke 22:42 – "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." (NIV)**
- As you grow into Christian adulthood, don't expect non-believers to have the same maturity as you. You will become disappointed and frustrated if you expect non-believers to think like a believer.

3. What can I get away with?

- Simply because you can get away with something does not mean the thing is not hurting you. **1 Corinthians 10:23 – You say, "I am allowed to do anything" – but not everything is good for you. You say, "I am allowed to do anything" – but not everything is beneficial. (NLT)**
- Rather than considering if s/he can avoid getting caught, the adult Christian thinks, "What is good and beneficial for my future?"
- Many things are not, of themselves, sinful. However, involvement with them may become destructive and damaging. Things such as social media, entertainment, drinking, money, an obsession with finding tax loopholes, and sex and relationships can hurt your destiny.
- Each of us should regularly examine our lives to determine if an unhealthy practice has slowly started to eat away at our spiritual growth.

4. I'll be happy if I get whatever I want

- If you make a habit of comparing yourself to others you will certainly become disappointed, because others' appearances are often false. Many people work hard at making a positive impression while – in reality – they are struggling with inner

conflict and turmoil. Don't let your own self impression be influenced by another's false image.

- The adult Christian thinks, "I already have everything I need in Jesus."
- Having contentment in every circumstance is important. This contentment is a conscious decision you will learn as you grow into Christian adulthood. **Philippians 4:11-12 – I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. (NIV)**
- Contentment is where you have predetermined a satisfied state of mind for future events. You won't be able to control events, but you will be able to control how you think about things. Give Jesus control of your thoughts; let His ideas populate your mind.
- **2 Peter 1:3 – His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. (NIV)**
- Ask God to show you what He has already given you. As you become aware of those things, Jesus will guide you in becoming the person He desires to use to accomplish His will.

5. There's monsters in my room

- Like a child, it is easy for you to overreact and imagine things that aren't real.
- There is nothing in existence that Jesus has not overcome. Everything is under His control. **John 16:33 – "And everything I've taught you is so that the peace which is in me will be in you and will give you great confidence as you rest in me. For in this unbelieving world you will experience trouble and sorrows, but you must be courageous, for I have conquered the world!" (TPT)**
- The adult Christian thinks, "If God is on my side, what do I really have to fear?"
- If you find yourself vulnerable to irrational fears, continue to submit your thoughts and emotions to Jesus. Trust Him, and that He has already conquered evil in the world.

Be the adult in the room

- Jesus always had a calm resolve about Himself. He never panicked. His thoughts were always under control. He knew who he was in the Father's plan for his life on earth, and was able to have peace in the events and environment of his time.
- When Jesus is controlling your thoughts you also will have an ability to remain calm in your mind even when you are in a tumultuous environment.

- Consciously make the decision to let Jesus control your thoughts, your perceptions, your actions, and your words.

Reflective Questions for Adulthood – Part 1

1. Have you ever been able to stay calm in a difficult situation? Briefly, what was that situation? Did you have a feeling of comfort, power, satisfaction, confidence, or something else?
2. What are the advantages for a person when s/he is able to remain calm during conflict?
3. From Ryan Leak's message, do you think it is possible to have contentment in any circumstance? What Bible verses from his teaching give you that assurance?
4. In **Philippians 4:11-12** (above) the apostle Paul wrote that spiritual contentment is something that is a secret and must be learned. What are some of the steps a Christian should take to discover and learn that secret?
5. What are some specific things you should pray right now in order to continue on your path of contented Christian thinking?