

Mature & Secure - Part One

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My dad told me, many times, “Al, it’s time for you to grow up, start making responsible decisions, take responsibility for your mistakes, and stop being selfish and acting like a child”.

Proverbs 20:11 (NLT)

Even children are known by the way they act, whether their conduct is pure, and whether it is right.

1 Corinthians 13:11 (NKJV)

When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish (immature) things.

Maturity has nothing to do with age, age is only a number. Spiritual maturity is not achieved by just attending or watching church or becoming a member of a church and being socially involved with humanitarian events.

I’ve seen Christian adults, that should be mature, acting like very immature (carnal, fleshly, worldly) in their conduct, behavior, posts on social media, work ethic, and responsibilities.

(Picture #1)

(Psychologically, we tend to describe maturity as being able to make sound decisions, making good decisions, and taking responsibility for our actions. Our growth factors have been divided up in 4 stages: infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood. We should all go from maternity to maturity, it’s a process and it does not happen over night. Childhood and adolescence are the more impressionable and informative years that develops the foundation for early and future maturity of planning, decision-making, judgment, responsibility, and reasoning. There are many factors and influences in our lives, as we grow, that have a great influence on how fast we mature or stay immature. We must mature in our Christianity so that we may be able to discern what is God and that which is not God.)

1. As parents, we have a great desire to see our children grow, get born again, become responsible contributors to the family and society, representing our family outside of the home, with behavior that brings honor to the family, and to become mature disciples of Jesus Christ. This only happens when parents or parent takes their responsibility, as a parent, seriously to train, instruct, correct, and discipline our children. This is hard, sacrificial, and committed work but worth it in the long run.

It is not God’s responsibility to train your children for you, the Holy Spirit will help you but His help and wisdom will only come when you ask and you’re in alignment with the Word of God.

Proverbs 22:6 Amplified Bible

Train up a child in the way he should go [teaching him to seek God's wisdom and will for his abilities and talents], Even when he is old he will not depart from it.

2 Timothy 3:14-15 (NLT)

14 But you must remain faithful to the things you have been taught. You know they are true, for you know you can trust those who taught you. 15 You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus.

(God has put a local church in your life to help you and your family to grow and mature. It's your responsibility to use all those tools and be committed to establishing good priorities for yourself and family.)

2. As pastors, our greatest desire and ultimate goal is to see our congregation (children, youth, young and old adults, singles and families) to grow and mature spiritually, to become effective and solid disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ and representing Jesus and the church in the home, marketplace, and socially.

a. Ultimate Goal of every church:

Colossians 1:28 (AMP)

28 Him we preach and proclaim, warning and admonishing everyone and instructing everyone in all wisdom (comprehensive insight into the ways and purposes of God), that we may present every person mature (full-grown, fully initiated, complete, and perfect) in Christ (the Anointed One).

b. If we have a church of only baby and immature members, (Picture #2) we will never make a difference in our community, marriages will be falling apart, our spiritual growth will be stagnant, we won't be involved or serving but always wanting to be served, there will be fighting, jealousy, envy, gossip, backbiting, blaming others for my mistakes, selfish, never giving only taking, and wanting everyone to meet all my needs.

The Apostle Paul faced this with the Corinthian Church:

1 Corinthians 3:1-8 (TPT)

1 Brothers and sisters, when I was with you I found it impossible to speak to you as those who are spiritually mature people, for you are still dominated by the mind-set of the flesh. And because you are immature infants in Christ, 2 I had to nurse you and feed you with "milk," not with the solid food of more advanced teachings, because you weren't ready for it. In fact, you are still not ready to be fed solid food, 3 for you are living your lives dominated by the mind-set of the flesh. Ask yourselves: Is there jealousy among you? Do you compare yourselves with others? Do you quarrel like children and end up taking sides? If so, this proves that you are living your lives centered on yourselves, dominated by the mind-set of the flesh, and behaving like unbelievers. 4 For when you divide yourselves up in groups—a "Paul group" and an "Apollos group" —you're acting like people without the Spirit's influence. 5 Who is Apollos, really? Or who is Paul? Aren't we both just servants through whom you believed our message? Aren't each of us doing the ministry the Lord has assigned to us? 6 I was the one who planted the church and Apollos came and cared for it, but it was God who caused it to grow. 7 This means the one who plants is not anybody special, nor the one who waters, for God is the one who brings the supernatural growth. 8 Now, the one who plants and the one who waters are equally important and on the same team, but each will be rewarded for his own work.

3. Our Heavenly Father desires, that we, as His children, grow spiritually and mature.

2 Peter 3:15-18 Amplified Bible

15 And consider the patience of our Lord [His delay in judging and avenging wrongs] as salvation [that is, allowing time for more to be saved]; just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given to him [by God], 16 speaking about these things as he does in all of his letters. In which there are some things that are difficult to understand, which

the untaught and unstable [who have fallen into error] twist and misinterpret, just as they do the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. 17 Therefore, [let me warn you] beloved, knowing these things beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men [who distort doctrine] and fall from your own steadfastness [of mind, knowledge, truth, and faith], 18 but grow [spiritually mature] in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory (honor, majesty, splendor), both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.