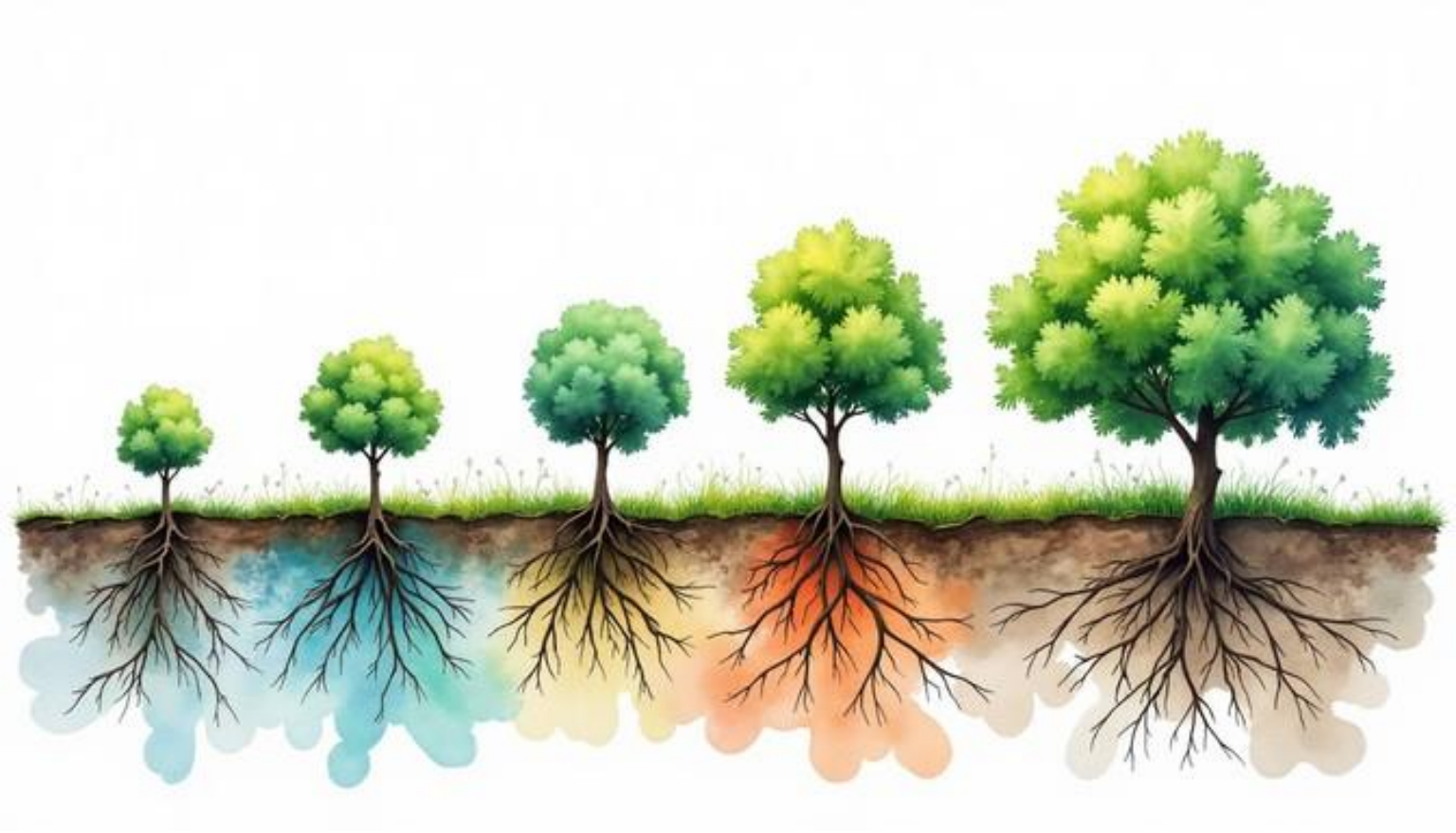
Fundamentals Of Spiritual Growth



Week 14: What Maturity Looks Like · Romans 3–8

Agenda

- Recap
- Central Question
- Romans 3: The Level Ground
- Romans 4: Abraham and David
- Romans 5–6: The Bridge
- Romans 7 → 8: Struggle to Spirit
- Maturity Across the New Testament

Last Week: How God Sees Us

1

New Creation

2 Corinthians 5:17

KAINOS: new in kind, not patched up

2

In Adam → In Christ

Romans 6:3-4; Ephesians 2:4-6

Co-crucified, co-buried, co-raised, co-seated

3

Know · Reckon · Yield

Romans 6:6, 11, 13

How we work out what God has worked in

Who are you in the middle of it all? A new creation in Christ.



When you see a spiritually mature believer, what do you see?

Was it that they never sinned?

Mature

TELEIOS

from telos: end, goal. Full-grown; reached its purpose.

- Phil 3:15: "as many as are perfect (mature)"
- Col 1:28: "present every man complete in Christ"
- James 1:4: "that you may be perfect and complete"

Philippians 3:12, 15

12 Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect (teleioō), but **I press on** so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus…

15 Let us therefore, as many as are perfect (teleios, mature), have this attitude…

Mature people know they haven't arrived, and press on anyway

Maturity

Is Not…	Is…
Never sinning	Growing like Christ; quicker to return
Earning God's approval	Living from approval already given
Trying harder	Walking by the Spirit
Knowing more facts	Know → Be → Do
Arriving	Pressing on (Phil 3:12-14)

The Road from Romans 3 to 8



From guilty to glorified: maturity grows in the space between.

Romans 3:10, 12, 20

10 …There is none righteous, not even one…

12 …There is none who does good, there is not even one.

20 …by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for **through the Law comes the knowledge of sin**.

The Law is a mirror, not a washcloth

Romans 3:21-28

21 **But now** apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested… 22 even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being **justified** as a gift by His grace through the **redemption** which is in Christ Jesus.

25 God presented Christ as a sacrifice of atonement ***(propitiation)***, through the shedding of his blood—to be received by faith. He did this to demonstrate his righteousness, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— 26 he did it to demonstrate his righteousness at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

27 Where, then, is **boasting**? It **is excluded**. Because of what law? The law that requires works? No, because of the law that requires faith. 28 For we maintain that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the law.

Romans 3:23: Watch the Tenses

"have sinned"

Past, completed

Our record before God

"fall short"

Present, ongoing

Our condition, even after we believe

Romans 3:23

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

Romans 8:30

"…these whom He justified, He also glorified."

Credited

LOGIZOMAI

to reckon, count, credit to an account

- Used about 11 times in Romans 4
- 4:3: righteousness "credited" to Abraham
- 6:11: "reckon yourselves to be dead to sin"

Romans 4:3, 5

3 For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

5 But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who **justifies the ungodly**, his faith is credited as righteousness.

Paul quotes Genesis 15:6

Abraham's Journey

Gen 12:10-20	Lies that Sarah is his sister, out of fear
Gen 15:6	**"He believed… and God reckoned it to him as righteousness"**
Gen 16:1-4	Takes Hagar to produce the heir his own way
Gen 17:17	Falls on his face and laughs at the promise
Gen 20:1-13	Tells the same lie about Sarah, again
Gen 22; Heb 11:17-19	Offers Isaac, trusting God can raise the dead

Romans 4:20-21

20 yet, **with respect to the promise of God**, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, **21** and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform.

Genesis shows him wavering. How do both fit?

Romans 4:6-8

6 just as David also speaks of the blessing on
the man to whom God **credits** righteousness
apart from works: 7 "Blessed are those whose
lawless deeds have been forgiven, and whose
sins have been covered. 8 Blessed is the man
whose sin the Lord will not take into
account."

Credited… and not counted. Same word, both ways.

David's Journey

1 Sam 13:14; 16:13	Anointed: "a man after [God's] heart"
1 Sam 21–22	Lies to the priest Ahimelech; the priests of Nob are killed
2 Sam 11	Adultery with Bathsheba; arranges Uriah's death
2 Sam 12:13	"I have sinned against the LORD." "The LORD has taken away your sin."
2 Sam 24	Orders a census out of pride; the nation suffers

What Made David Mature

He confessed

2 Samuel 12:13

"I have sinned against the LORD."

He ran to God

Psalm 51:10

"Create in me a clean heart, O God."

He received forgiveness

Psalm 32:5

"I acknowledged my sin to You… and You forgave."

Maturity shows in how we respond to sin, not in never sinning.



Why did God keep Abraham's and David's failures in Scripture?

Instead of cleaning up their stories

Rom 4:8 "Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them"

What Abraham and David Teach Us

1. The credit comes first; growth follows
2. Sin after the credit doesn't cancel the credit
3. Failure isn't the end of the journey
4. Maturity shows in how we respond to sin
5. It was written for us too (Romans 4:23-24)

Romans 5–6: The Bridge

Romans 5: Standing in Grace

5:1-2

Peace with God; standing in grace

5:3-4

Tribulation → perseverance → proven character → hope

5:8

While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us

Romans 6: Dead to Sin

6:1-2

Continue in sin? May it never be!

6:6, 11, 13

Know · Reckon · Yield

6:14

Sin shall not be master over you

Romans 7:15, 18-19

15 For what **I** am doing, **I** do not understand; for **I** am
not practicing what **I** would like to do, but **I** am doing
the very thing **I** hate.

18 For **I** know that nothing good dwells in **me**, that is,
in **my** flesh; for the willing is present in **me**, but the
doing of the good is not. 19 For the good that **I** want, **I**
do not do, but **I** practice the very evil that **I** do not
want.

Romans 7:24-25

24 Wretched man that I am! **Who** will set me free from the body of this death? 25 **Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!**

Not "What will set me free?" but "Who?"

From 7 to 8

Romans 7	Romans 8
"I, me, my" dozens of times	"Spirit" about 20 times
Spirit: not mentioned (7:7-25)	"No condemnation" (8:1)
"Wretched man that I am!” (7:24)	"Abba! Father!" (8:15)
"Who will set me free?"	"Who will separate us?"

Romans 8:1-2

[1] Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are **in Christ Jesus**. [2] For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

The one who struggles in Romans 7 has no condemnation in 8:1

Romans 8:13-15

13 …if **by the Spirit** you **ARE** putting to death
the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all
who are being led by the Spirit of God, these
are **sons of God**. 15 For you have not received
a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you
have received a spirit of adoption as sons by
which we cry out, "**Abba! Father!**"

Romans 8:29-30

29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son… **30** and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, **He also glorified**.

Romans 3:23 "fall short of the glory" → Romans 8:30 "glorified"



Romans 7: "Who will set me free?"
Romans 8: "Who will separate us?"

What changed between those two questions?

One Consistent Picture

Growth from a finished position

Romans: Rom 4:5; 5:1-2

NT: Col 2:10; 2 Pet 1:3; 3:18

The goal is Christlikeness

Romans: Rom 8:29

NT: Eph 4:13; Gal 4:19; 2 Cor 3:18

Grown through trials and time

Romans: Rom 5:3-4; 8:28

NT: James 1:2-4; 1 Pet 5:10

Marked by stability and discernment

Romans: Rom 8:5-6

NT: Heb 5:14; Eph 4:14

Still stumble, and press on

Romans: Rom 4:6-8; 7:24–8:1

NT: Phil 3:12-15; 1 John 1:8–2:1

By the Spirit, not self-effort

Romans: Rom 8:4, 13

NT: Gal 5:16, 22-23; Phil 2:13

What Maturity Looks Like

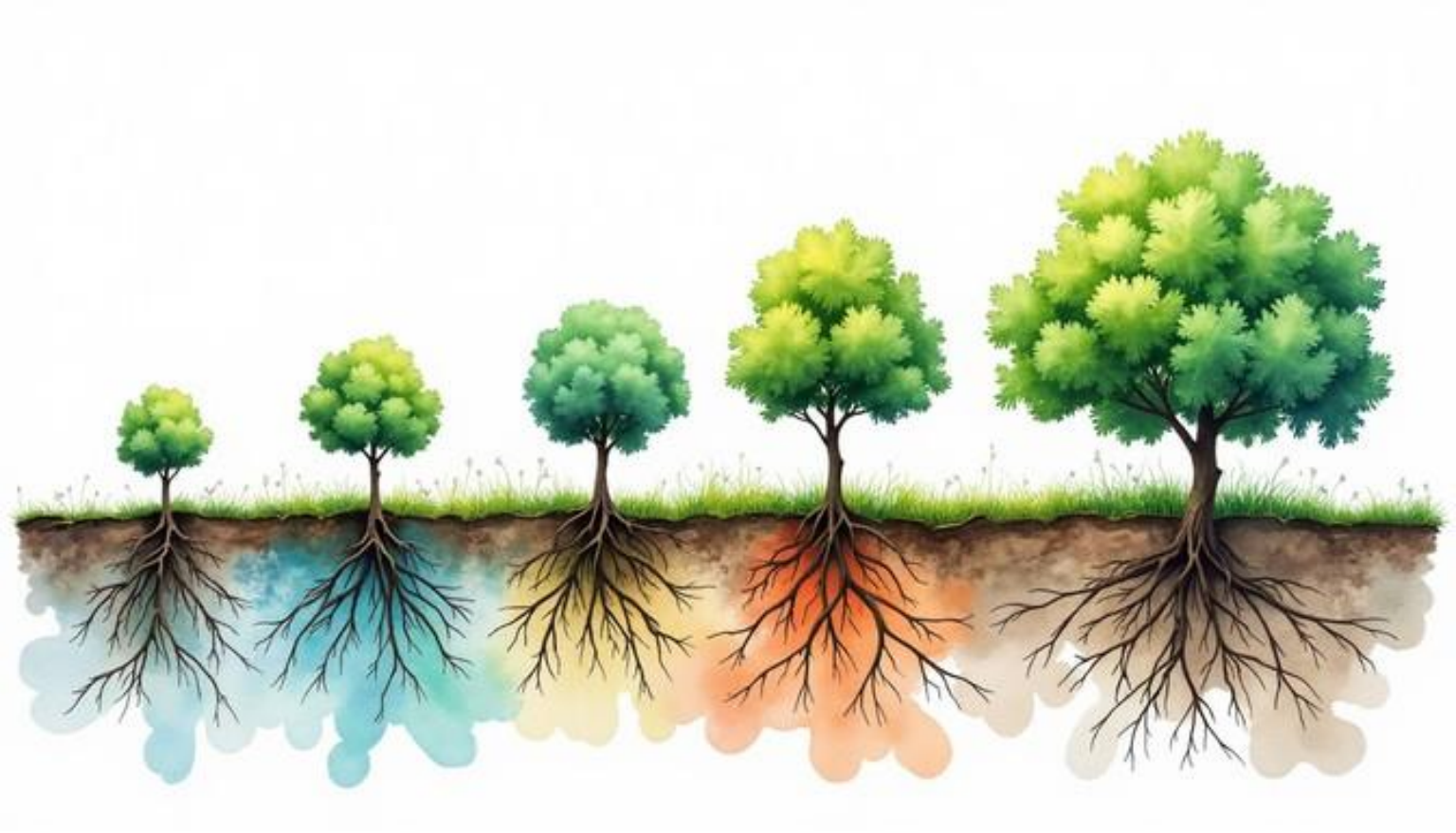
1. I trust what God has credited, not what I've accomplished
2. I reckon it true, especially after I fail
3. I run to God when I sin, like David
4. I keep believing the promise over the years, like Abraham
5. I fight sin by the Spirit, not by trying harder

Philippians 1:6

6 For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will complete it until the day of Christ Jesus.

Which chapter are you living in right now: 3, 4, 6, 7 or 8?

Fundamentals Of Spiritual Growth



Next Week: Living Out Maturity