

IT'S TIME TO GROW UP!

A TOUGH PASSAGE

Hebrews 5:11-6:12 (Hebrews 2:1, 3:8, 3:12, 4:11, 4:14)

THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

Hebrews 6:1-8/ Mark 3:22-30

THE TRUTH ABOUT SPIRITUAL MATURITY

- (1) It's not about how much we **KNOW**.
It's about how much we **OBEY**.
Hebrews 5:13-14/ John 13:17/ John 14:15/ Matthew 21:28-32

- (2) It starts with **OBEYING WHAT WE ALREADY KNOW**.
Proverbs 4:18

- (3) It's a **NEVER-ENDING PROCESS**.
Philippians 3:12-16

- (4) A good start is no guarantee of a **HAPPY ENDING**.
Hebrews 6:1-8/ Luke 8:4-14

- (5) It's never too late to **GET STARTED**.
Matthew 20:1-16/ 2 Peter 3:9-10

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Growth Group Homework

For the week of February 25, 2018

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. This weekend we heard that spiritual maturity is loving God and loving others. We all tend to show love to others differently. The book, *The 5 Love Languages*, by Gary Chapman, breaks this down very simply into five categories: words of affirmation, acts of service, receiving gifts, quality time and physical touch. Which of the five categories is the most natural way for you to show love to others? Which is the least natural?

- *Words of affirmation*: paying compliments, encouraging someone
- *Acts of service*: helping someone move, bringing someone dinner
- *Receiving gifts*: buying or making something thoughtful for someone
- *Quality time*: giving undivided attention, planning a thoughtful date
- *Physical touch*: hugging, holding hands, sitting close to a hurting person

2. Spiritual maturity has more to do with our actions than what we say. Who is someone in your life whose actions lead you to believe that they are spiritually mature?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. In the Hebrews passage covered this weekend, the writer talked about what spiritual maturity and spiritual immaturity look like. The following verses use symbolism (using an object or word to express an idea) to help explain the same concepts. What are some ways the symbolism in the following passages helps us understand both spiritual maturity and immaturity?

1 Corinthians 3:1-3 *New International Version (NIV)*

Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. ² I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. ³ You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans?

2 Timothy 4:3-4 *New International Version (NIV)*

For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. ⁴ They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.

Ephesians 4:11-16 *New International Version (NIV)*

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

How do these verses explain how spiritual immaturity can hinder our faith?

2. We heard this weekend there can be a point of no return when we walk away from Jesus. For those who have a family member or friend who has walked away, the thought of a point of no return can touch on some of our greatest fears. But we also see in Scripture that we have a God who pursues us to our very last breath. How might the following verses bring hope and comfort to those who know someone who has walked away from God?

Luke 15:1-10 *New International Version (NIV)*

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

¹⁵ Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. ² But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

³ Then Jesus told them this parable: ⁴ “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? ⁵ And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders ⁶ and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have

found my lost sheep.’⁷ I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

The Parable of the Lost Coin

⁸“Or suppose a woman has ten silver coins and loses one. Doesn’t she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? ⁹And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost coin.’ ¹⁰In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”

Romans 10:1-4, 11-13 New International Version (NIV)

¹Brothers and sisters, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for the Israelites is that they may be saved. ²For I can testify about them that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge. ³Since they did not know the righteousness of God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. ⁴Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

¹¹ As Scripture says, “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame” ¹² For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, ¹³ for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

2 Peter 3:8-9 New International Version (NIV)

⁸ But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. ⁹ The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

How does God’s pursuit of his children speak to how he feels about us?

What’s your response to the above point that you have a God who is pursuing you as we speak?

3. We would all agree the apostle Paul is someone who understood what it takes to be spiritually mature. He was also very committed to seeing other people grow spiritually, which is something we see in his prayer life. What do we learn about spiritual maturity from what Paul prays in Ephesians 3:14-19?

Ephesians 3:14-19 New International Version (NIV)

For this reason I kneel before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family[a] in heaven and on earth derives its name. ¹⁶ I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Is there anything from Paul’s prayer that you’d like other people to pray for you?

TAKING IT HOME

Are there any steps you’d like to take in the coming weeks to become more spiritually mature?

Praise/Prayer Requests:

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Love working in the garden?

We have several community partners that need help beautifying their space this spring. There are projects in March and April that need many helping hands. Grab your Growth Group, family or friends and get moving!

Go to NorthCoastCommunityService.org website and search “Gardening.”

Specific Project Dates:

1. Schoolyard Garden Project at North County Community Services - Oceanside - March 4
2. Rehabilitation/Therapy Garden at Scripps Hospital - Encinitas - March 10 & 11
3. Barn Clean-Up at Ivey Ranch Park - Oceanside - March 17
4. D’Vine Path Gardening with Special Needs Adults at Batali Ranch – Fallbrook - Flexible Dates