

It's Time To Grow Up

Not everyone who grows old, grows up.

There is a vast difference between old age and maturity.

Ideally the older we are, the more mature we should be, but all too often this is **not** the case.

What is the result of this?

Problems in our personal lives, in our jobs, in our homes and with God's people.

The book of James in the Christian Bible was written to help us understand and attain spiritual maturity.

James 1:2-5 [Phillips Translation] *“When all kinds of trials and temptations crowd into your lives, my brothers, don't resent them as intruders, but welcome them as friends! Realise that they come to test your faith and to produce in you the quality of endurance. But let the process go on until the endurance is fully developed, and you will find you have become a man of mature character with the right sort of independence. If in the process, any of you does not know how to meet any particular problem he has only to ask God. God gives generously to all men without making them feel foolish or guilty and he may be quite sure that the necessary wisdom will be given him.”*

James mentions trials and temptations for it is only at such times that our maturity or lack of maturity will be exposed.

We all as Christians live in a world where the natural desire is to get more and give less.

We live in a world of people who find it difficult to control their tongues.

We live in a world where people talk one way but walk another way in life.

All of these problems, and many others, have a common cause, a lack of spiritual maturity.

We need to ask ourselves the question, *“how spiritually immature are we?”*

We should **not** measure our growth in maturity by looking at others but daily by God's Word, the Christian Bible, and Jesus Christ's personal example.

Ephesians 4:11-13 [NIV] *“It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 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 fulness of Christ.”*

We need to use everything that God has provided for His Church to assist us to mature.

2 Corinthians 13:5 [NIV] *“Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realise that Christ Jesus is in you, unless, of course, you fail the test?”*

Following are a few questions to assist us in this examination into our maturity.

Am I becoming more patient in life's little tests and larger trials?

Do I find real joy in obeying God's Word, or do I merely hear and read it without living it daily?

Are there any prejudices that will hinder my spiritual growth?

Am I able to control my tongue and my thoughts? [That is a really tough question to answer]

Am I a peacemaker rather than a troublemaker?

Am I close to God and His ways or a friend of the society in which I live?

Am I selfish when it comes to money?

Am I a giver or a taker?

Do people look to me as a spiritual example?

Do I criticise and gossip, or do I pray and put everything in God's hands?

Do I pray for my enemies?

This list could go on and on, we all can and should add to it.

Regular examinations like this are good for our spiritual growth and maturity.

Remember the mandate that Jesus Christ gave to us.

Matthew 5:48 [NIV] *“Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”*

Don't just grow older, grow up and reach for the goal of maturity.