

Truth “Growing Up”

Context: Paul’s last letter

Paul knows he is going to die. This is his final letter of encouragement.

2 Timothy 3:12-17 (NIV)

In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, ¹³while evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, **deceiving and being deceived.** ¹⁴But as for you, **continue** in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Reality is: We are in a battle. (2 Timothy 3:12 & 13).

There will be persecution, trials & deceivers.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (NIV)

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

Ephesians 6:10-13 (NIV)

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

The options: Continuing on or drifting away (2 Timothy 3:14)

Ephesians 6:13 (NIV)

Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

Hebrews 2:1 (NIV)

We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.

God’s lifeline: Trusting what the Holy Scriptures have revealed about the Truth

- The Scriptures are God-breathed.
- The Scriptures are able to make you wise to salvation and able to bring you to relationship with Jesus.
- The Scriptures are able to make you mature, to grow you up, and to make you righteous.

Growing Up As Christians

We start as new creatures, as infants in a spiritual world with different rules.

John 3:3 (NIV)

In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.”

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

1 Peter 1:23 (NIV)

For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

We are in a process of growth with failures and successes.

1 Peter 2:2 (NIV)

Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation,

What does maturity look like?

Knows right from wrong

Hebrews 5:12-14 (NIV)

In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. **But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.**

Loves God and others

1 Corinthians 13:2 (NIV)

If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

Practices humility

Matthew 7:5 (NIV)

You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

Equipped for every good work

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV)

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Displays consistency and stability

Matthew 13:18-23 (NIV)

“Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: ¹⁹When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. ²⁰The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. ²¹But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. ²²The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. ²³But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.”

Tools for growing up

What you need to survive:

- Right expectations
- Right tools. Learn to feed yourself on the Word of God
- Right environment; involved with God's people - the church
- Right commitment level

Matthew 4:4 (NIV)

Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”