

## What Does It Take to Become a Spiritual Grown-Up? (Part 2)

### Colossians 1:28-29

- BGT** <sup>28</sup> ὃν ἡμεῖς καταγγέλλομεν νουθετοῦντες πάντα ἄνθρωπον καὶ διδάσκοντες πάντα ἄνθρωπον ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ, ἵνα παραστήσωμεν πάντα ἄνθρωπον τέλειον ἐν Χριστῷ· <sup>29</sup> εἰς ὃ καὶ κοπιῶ ἀγωνιζόμενος κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν αὐτοῦ τὴν ἐνεργουμένην ἐν ἐμοὶ ἐν δυνάμει.
- NKJ** <sup>28</sup> Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup> To this *end* I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

#### I. THE PROCESS OF BECOMING A SPIRITUAL GROWN-UP

##### A. Becoming mature involves continuous proclaiming

1. The truth is **Christocentric** – it is centered on Christ, not on man
2. The truth is **preached** – it is authoritatively proclaimed, as opposed to suggested, or decided democratically; the truth has been determined, and is ours to learn, not to choose if we like it.
3. Proclaiming is **ongoing** – we are to be continually proclaiming, and we are to be continually hearing what is proclaimed.

*Are you focused on Christ and His teachings, or are you pursuing what you want to hear?*

##### B. Becoming mature involves continuous admonishing

1. “to admonish” – *noutheteō* (νουθετέω), from *nous* (νοῦς “mind”) + *tithēmi* (τίθημι “to place”)
2. Thus, to bring to mind; to place in one’s mind; warn; instruct; remind
3. This action is to be practiced by **leaders** (Col 1:28; Acts 20:31; 1 Cor 4:14; 1 Thes 5:12)

Col 1:28 Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

Acts 20:31 Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

1 Cor 4:14 I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you.

1 Thes 5:12 And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you,

4. This action is to be practiced by **learners** (Col 3:16; Rom 15:14; 1 Thes 5:14; 2 Thes 3:15)

Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Rom 15:14 Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

1 Thes 5:14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.

2 Thes 3:15 Yet do not count *him* as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother.

5. Every person is to be a **ongoing giver** and **receiver** of admonition (our One Another Discipleship training assumes this).

**Three Emphases of Admonition** (descriptions from FBC-Lafayette, with our summary words):

- Coming alongside someone lovingly who is caught in sin* (**compassion**)
- Speaking to them verbally about that sin from the Word of God* (**confrontation**)
- With the goal of seeing them change for God’s glory and for their benefit* (**correction**)

6. Admonishing is ongoing – It is part of the ongoing process of discipleship.

##### C. Becoming mature involves continuous teaching

1. Instruction
2. This action is practiced by leaders (1:28) and by learners (3:16)
3. Teaching is essential for being stable and grounded (2:7)
4. Every person is to be a giver and receiver of instruction
5. It is to be continuous – We are to be under the continuous instruction of the Word.
6. Includes wisdom
  - a. (1:9) – that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom
  - b. (2:22-23) – *read both verses* – originates from Christ
  - c. (3:16) – Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom
  - d. (4:5) – Walk in wisdom toward those [who are] outside, redeeming the time

##### D. Notice what is **not** listed (what are not Biblically grounded criteria)

1. Programs
2. Extra-curricular activities

## II. THE PURPOSING TO DEVELOP SPIRITUAL GROWN-UPS

### A. Purpose – in order that we might be presented – placed before God (1:22; 1:28)

1. Christ's purpose in His sacrifice (1:22)

"And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight"

2. Paul's purpose in his service (1:28)

"Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."

### B. People – each person

1. God's goal is that each person will be presented mature in Christ

2. God's process is that each person is to be admonished

3. God's process is that each person is to be taught

### C. Perfection – complete (mature) in Christ (1:28; 4:12)

1. The end result of God's plan in this life is for each believer to become mature in Christ

**4:12** – Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

*[Agonizing prayer is another ingredient in bring believers to maturity.]*

2. Other passages that help give the meaning of "perfect" (τέλειος):

**1 Cor 2:6** However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.

**1 Cor 14:20** Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature.

**Eph 4:13** till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

**Phil 3:15** Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you.

**Heb 5:14** But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, *that is*, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

**James 1:4** But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

3. Complete – Mature – Grown-up

In our conduct: Holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight (1:22)

In our content: Perfect and complete (πεπληροφορημένοι) in all the will of God (4:12 cp. 1:9)

## III. THE POWER FOR BECOMING SPIRITUALLY MATURE

### A. Spiritual Maturity Requires You to Be Working Long (Expending Exhausting Effort)

Unto which also I am laboring (κοπιᾶω – kopiaō) – how long you work – keep going

Real ministry and spiritual growth is *tiresome* (when you pray for potatoes, grab a hoe)

### B. Spiritual Maturity Requires You to Be Working Hard (Exerting Agonizing Strain) [no pain, no gain]

while agonizing (ἀγωνίζομαι – agōnidzomai – 1:29; 4:12) – how hard you work – keep trying

Real ministry and spiritual growth takes hard work – "strain every nerve to enter" (Arndt & Gingrich)

### C. Spiritual Maturity Requires You to Be Drawing from Divine Energy

according to – we can labor and agonize because of God's energizing power

the energy (ἐνέργεια – energeia) of him (1:29; 2:12)

that which is energizing (ἐνεργέω – energeō)

in me (*within me is God's energy!*)

in power (δύναμις – dunamis). (1:11; 1:29) – ability (*bark WITH bite*)