

Paul's Hope and Expectation for Believers → Purposeful Maturity (1 Thes 4:1-3)

1 Thes 3:8-13 – Hope & Expectation – What Does a Mature Believer Look Like?

1. That they would remain standing in the Lord (8)
2. That Paul would get the chance to see them, in order to repair what was missing in their faith (9-10)
3. That they would increase and abound in sacrificial care toward each other, following Paul's example (11-12)
4. That God would fixate their hearts blameless in active holiness as judged in the presence of God at the return of their Lord Jesus (13)

How does Christian maturity happen? Do we grow up automatically? Accidentally? Arbitrarily? NO!!

1 Thes 4:1-3

(NKJ) ¹ Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God; ² for you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus. ³ For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;

(BGT) Λοιπὸν οὖν, ἀδελφοί, ἐρωτῶμεν ὑμᾶς καὶ παρακαλοῦμεν ἐν κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ, ἵνα καθὼς παρελάβετε παρ' ἡμῶν τὸ πῶς δεῖ ὑμᾶς περιπατεῖν καὶ ἀρέσκειν θεῷ, καθὼς καὶ περιπατεῖτε, ἵνα περισσεύητε μᾶλλον. ² οἴδατε γὰρ τίνας παραγγελίας ἐδώκαμεν ὑμῖν διὰ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ. ³ Τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, ὁ ἁγιασμός ὑμῶν, ἀπέχεσθαι ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ τῆς πορνείας,

(KES) Finally therefore, brethren, we entreat you and exhort by the Lord Jesus, that just as received from us how it is necessary for you to be walking and to be pleasing God, just as also you are walking, in order that you might be increasing more.

For you have come to know why commands we gave to you through the Lord Jesus.

For this is will of the God, the sanctification of you, that you abstain from the sexual immorality,

(NAU) Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us *instruction* as to how you **ought** to walk and please God (just as you actually do walk), that you excel still more.

For you know what **commandments** we gave you *by the authority of the Lord Jesus*.

For this is the **will of God**, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality;

1. The Process of Maturity

1a – Progression – “Finally, therefore” – builds on previous – one truth leads to another; teaching → practice

1b – Authentication

1c – Instruction – Eph 2:20; 4:11-12 → we are equipping you, not entertaining you with information. 2 Tim 2:19; James 2:18-26

2. The Activity of Maturity

To be walking – continual practice – lifestyle – conduct – what you do

To be pleasing God – continual purpose – motivation – why you do it

3. The Expansion of Maturity

Current Practice – “just as you are walking” (NASB) – assumes some type of Christian walk

Continual Progress – “that you might abound more and more” – Don’t stop! There’s much room to grow! You can **ABOUND!** Never think that you have arrived! Never become satisfied with where you are at spiritually!

4. The Necessity of Maturity

“How you ought” – dei – “must” – “You must be born again” – “A bishop must ... be blameless”

“commandments” – military term – Yes, we’ve been told what to do and why to do it.

“by [the authority] of the Lord Jesus” – we’re not making this up ourselves – the Commander-in-Chief has spoken!

“will of God” – not something hidden, but something very, very clearly stated!

5. The Elements of Maturity (developed more next week)

Maturity involves stopping some behavior

Maturity involves starting some behavior

Maturity involves avoiding some behavior