

Why We Must Mature In Christ

(NKJV) Ga 4:1 Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, 2 but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father.

3 Even so we, when we were children, were in *bondage under the elements of the world*.

(NIV84) Ga 4:2 He is subject to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father. 3 So also, when we were children, we were in slavery under the basic principles of the world.

Condensed: Ga 4:2, 3

Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, He is subject to guardians and in slavery under the basic principles of the world.

Consider Technology – the result of better understanding the rules of the universe in which we live unleashes our potential to do what was once considered impossible.

We fly, drive, watch TV, internet, books, Cell phones, space travel

**AS WE BETTER UNDERSTAND THE WORD OF GOD, OUR POTENTIAL IN THE SPIRIT IS UNLEASHED!
NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE TO US!**

SPIRITUAL IMMATURITY LIMITS OUR AUTHORITY AND BLESSINGS IN THIS LIFE

Gal 4:4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

THROUGH CHRIST WE HAVE BEEN SET FREE BY GOD AND MADE HIS SONS TO ACCOMPLISH HIS PURPOSES IN THE EARTH

(NKJV) Jn 8:31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (*Giving us the power of a child of God*)

33 They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, ‘You will be made free?’” (*Thinking naturally*)

34 Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin. 35 And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever. 36 Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

WE MATURE IN OUR FREEDOM BY ABIDING IN THE WORD OF CHRIST

Gal 4:6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” **7** Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

AS MATURE CHILDREN OF GOD WE HAVE THE POWER OF GOD AVAILABLE TO US

(NKJV) Jn 14:12 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. *(The promise of Christ)*

13 And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. **14** If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

CHRIST HAS GIVEN US HIS POWER OF ATTORNEY

I. It is a divinely ordained truth. You have been adopted as a child of God. You are no longer a child of the world. You are an exceptional person!

(NKJV) 1 Pe 2:9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation *(set apart by God)*, His own special people, that you may *proclaim the praises* of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; **10** who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

WE MUST REMEMBER WE ARE SET APART AND NOT A PART OF THE WORLD!

11 Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, **12** having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.

A. You have been adopted as a child of God. You are no longer a child of the world. Quite frankly; endued with the power of God to be a witness for God. The power of the Holy Spirit who dwells within you.

(NKJV) Lk 24:49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”

(NKJV) Ac 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

1. You and I have not come to the full awareness of what God has done for us. He has called us a special people with a purpose to proclaim his praises.

2. We are a special people. We must begin to recognize what God desires to do through us and fearlessly allow God to work in us to fulfill his will in us.
3. I want to whet your appetite to the possibilities of what God can possibly do through you.

B. You are not a child of the world: You must stop thinking like the world!

YOU ARE NOT OF THE WORLD! YOU MUST STOP THINKING LIKE THE WORLD!

(NKJV) 2 Co 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, (God has laid aside or withdrawn His wrath! We are special from the world!)

and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, (the work of laying aside our wrath towards one another)

MATURE CHRISTIANS WORK OUT DIFFERENCES WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS

19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. (What we are to preach!)

20 Now then, we are *ambassadors* for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

MATURE CHRISTIANS PROCLAIM THE PRAISES OF GOD

21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

II. You are not a child of the world. It's time to mature in the revelation of this and become what Christ wants us to become! Witnesses for Him!

A. It's time to grow up! We have been born again!

(KJV 1900) 2 Co 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

WHEN YOU ARE MATURE IN CHRIST, YOU NO LONGER ALLOW YOURSELF TO BE DEFINED BY THE WORLD

1. Once again we see we are a new creation. We have been born again!

- a. You are not defeated. You have the promises of God to assure your victory.
(NKJV) 2 Pe 1:3 as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

WE MATURE IN CHRIST THROUGH GROWING IN HIS WORD AND BECOME FREE

- 2. If there is a new life, we must grow to understand this new life.
- 3. In fact the Bible tells us
(NKJV) Ro 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.
 - a. Transformed by maturing in the mind

- B. Paul gives us a clearer understanding of this revelation by what precedes 2 Cor 5:17 in verse 16. This is the evidence of growth and maturity.

(NKJV) 2 Co 5:16 Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer.

AS WE MATURE AS CHILDREN OF GOD WE BEGIN TO THINK DIFFERENTLY THAN THE WORLD

- 1. We must begin to recognize what Christ has done for us! We are a new creation! If we are in Christ, we are no longer black, white, brown, olive, yellow, red or any other thing defined by the human mind.
- 2. God has another plan for our lives. Why should we submit ourselves to earthly standards?
- 3. Why have we allowed satan to rob us of the vision God wants to give us for our future? Why do we allow satan to have so much authority over us. He enslaves us in our minds!

- C. We must start allowing ourselves to become mature. We must begin to submit ourselves to the will of God for our life in Christ.
 - 1. This is a conscience decision to allow ourselves to let go of the past and see things from a new perspective. The perspective of Christ in us.
 - 2. We must stop putting on the old man!

WE MUST LEARN THINKING LIKE THE WORLD IS NOT FOR MATURE SONS OF GOD!

(NKJV) 2 Co 5:16 Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer.

(NKJV) Ga 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.
27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

(NKJV) Col 3:11 where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave nor free, but Christ is all and in all.

IN CHRIST THERE IS NEITHER

1. JEW OR GREEK
2. SLAVE OR FREE
3. MALE OR FEMALE
4. CIRCUMCISED OR UNCIRCUMCISED
5. BARBARIAN OR SCYTHIAN

TRUE MATURITY IN CHRIST IS REACHED WHEN WE NO DEFINE PEOPLE BY WORLDLY CLASSIFICATIONS

D. In Christ FIVE (5) major distinctions of the flesh are gone now!

1. **Jew nor Greek** - we stop speaking of race; this is no longer a major priority!
 - a. The church should take its stand against racial prejudice!
 - b. Only Christ can solve our racial problems!
2. **slave nor free** – Class differences, rich/poor, educated/uneducated, yellow/chocolate
3. **male nor female** – gender distinctions we must show respect to women
4. **circumcised or uncircumcised** - this speaks of religious distinctions
 - a. Baptist, Catholic, Methodist, Pentecostal, Mormon, Church of God, COGIC, Charismatic...etc
 - b. This denomination thing is wrong!
5. **barbarian, Scythian** - cultural & national differences. This is what causes wars among us!

IN CHRIST A PERSON IS NO LONGER DEFINED AS

1. JEW OR GREEK – Racial
2. SLAVE OR FREE - Class
3. MALE OR FEMALE – Gender
4. CIRCUMCISED OR UNCIRCUMCISED - religious
5. BARBARIAN OR SCYTHIAN – National or Cultural

BUT AS A CHILD OF GOD!

E. We have been changed! We are children of God! These are descriptions of the flesh. If this is what we see, we are not seeing correctly because our spiritual eyes have not matured properly.

1. We have not truly learned to live in the spirit!
2. We are still speaking words of the flesh. The flesh is death!
 - a. By you referring to your race, or any reference according to the flesh of yourself, you are degrading yourself from the high standard that Christ has set for you!

16 So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer

- b. We must also stop classifying other Christians by the world's definition.

**WE MUST SEE PEOPLE IN ONLY ONE OF TWO CLASSIFICATIONS
SAVED OR LOST**

3. We now have eternal life. We have the key to share with all; not regarding their race as anything to be regarded!
 - a. Worldly definitions are a deception of the devil.

III. The evidence of growth as a Christian is coming to the reality that the definitions of the world no longer apply to the child of God. We must not see others according to the world.

- A. We must be about saving all mankind while there is still time!
2 Cor 5:20 Now then, we are *ambassadors* for Christ, as though God were pleading through us:

**WE MUST BE ABOUT THE BUSINESS OF OUR LORD SERVING AS BROTHERS
TOGETHER TO SAVE THOSE LOST**

- B. *The evidence of the growing maturity of a Christian is that we no longer regard each other according to the ways of the world. We begin to operate in what is the reality of love when we see each other not by the world's way of definitions.*

We see each other as children of God, brothers and sisters of the family of God.

1. Any hint of division is not the will of our father God. We war against that!
2. Peter also confirms this first Peter 2:9 we are no longer defined by this world.

(NKJV) 1 Pe 2:9 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy

3. There are no black Christians, there are no white Christians, there are no Hispanic Christians they are just Christians. We are all children of God.

**LET US BEGIN TO THINK DIFFERENT & MATURE IN CHRIST.
LET US STOP ALLOWING THE WORLD TO DICTATE TO US OUR ABILITIES.**

**LET US BECOME MATURE PROCLAIMING THE PRAISES OF GOD SO WE MAY
RECEIVE MORE OF THE FAVOR OF GOD!**