

Why We Must Mature In Christ II

(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*.

**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, endowed 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 endowed 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!
(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.

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

Remember the 3rd type of soil? What kept it from being productive?

(NKJV) Mt 13:22 Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

We need to come to know who we really are! Paul prayed for us to realize the truth. That will make us free!

(NKJV) Eph 1:16 do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, 18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power 20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

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.

(NKJV) Eze 36:26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

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!

11 Here (*When Christ is in us, we begin to show*) **there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all.**

Ga 3:26

You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, 27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (*In the mind of God*)

C. Can we move into true unity? Yes!

(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.”

D. We can obtain the unity that Jesus prayed for by spending more time in the word of God to know in Christ, we are all God's children.

E. We are part of the same family.

IV. Reviewing Peter's words,

(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.

A. Now how do we mature as children of God?

(NKJV) 1 Pe 2:2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,

V. Back to 1 Peter

(NKJV) 1 Pe 1:13 Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, *as in your ignorance*; 15 but as He who called you is holy (*set apart*), you also be holy (*set apart*) in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”

17 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one’s work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear;

18 knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers,

(NIV84) 1 Pe 1:18 For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers,

19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.

20 He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you 21 who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. 22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,

23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, 24 because “All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away, 25 But the word of the LORD endures forever.” Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.

1 Pe 2:1 Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. 2 Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, 3 now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.

A. You are not a child of the world. You have been honored by God!
(NKJV) Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy (*set apart*) and without blame before Him in love, 5 having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself (*set apart*), according to the good pleasure of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.

7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace 8 which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, 9 having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself,