

Grow Up! (To Be Like Jesus) Ephesians 4:14-16

Introduction

NJFK—What do you want to be when you grow up?

Ephesians 4:12-13

¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

¹⁴ so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. ¹⁵ Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

1. Grow Up in Truth—Doctrinal Maturity (14-15)
2. Grow Up in Love—Practical Maturity (15-16)

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Children—infants

Jesus often speaks of children in favorable ways. Humble as a child; trusting like a child

Matthew 19:14

Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven.

But children's lack of maturity and experience makes them more easily deceived—gullible; lack self-control, indecisive and easily thrown off course by difficulties

When they grow up, they should be less vulnerable, less easily fooled.

tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine

A stormy ocean of all kinds of instruction contrary to the Scriptures—true in the first century; certainly true today. The ancient world was literate and very connected; with

the internet we are more connected than ever, and we are exposed to much more of the falsehoods.

There is only one truth, but the falsehoods are infinite in number. One of the today's lies is that there is no such thing as absolute truth (except, of course, the one absolute that there is no absolute truth)

Human cunning—dice-playing; intentional cheating and fraud

Craftiness—cleverness, trickiness

Deceitful schemes—methods that cause people to wander astray from the right path

Speaking the truth in love—truthing in love

Truth is not just academic facts. It is truthful. It flows into honesty of life, transparency. A person can be deceptive in his ways just as much as in his words.

To proclaim and to display the gospel—the two MUST go together

Get off in your doctrine you throw off your duty. Get off in your duty and you will distort your doctrine.

False teachers are liars in what they say.
And/or they are corrupt in how they live—
impurity, pride, greedy—unloving.

Biblical truth produces love. It is loving or it is not truthful. And Biblical love is consistent with truth. It is truthful or it is not love.

Ephesians 4:15

Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ.

Grow up in every way into him (Christ) the head—the brains of the operation; the one in charge who directs all the functions of the body; the ruler of the church body

Notice “we”—not just the individuals, all the members of the body together

For the body to function as it should it must do what the head tells it to do.
For us to live in love as we ought to live we must adhere to the truth Christ has revealed.

Neglect of biblical doctrine turns a church into a gullible, out of control infant.

2. Grow Up in Love—Practical Maturity (15-16)

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head, into Christ, ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

The whole body—all of us together

Joined (fit together—sewing; harmonized or orchestrated like musical parts)

Held together (united)—ligaments, sinews, joints

Joint—every joining place through which the body is supplied

Equipped—like outfitting a large play with all the costumes and props needed or an army with all the weapons and supplies it needs

Working properly—operating, energizing

Build up—construction of a building; body-building

In love—the hallmark of a healthy and mature church

Conclusion

1 Corinthians 13:11

When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways.

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2. Grow Up in Love—Practical Maturity (15-16)

“True Christ-honoring growth of His body the church does not come through clever programs and brilliant innovations. It comes from the power of the Lord Himself coursing through the members of the body in close contact with each other. Every saint equipped by the teachers of God’s Word to serve in loving ministry till we all reach Christlike maturity.” February 1, 2004. “The Effects of Effective Ministry”