

## Time to Grow Up

Surely the Lord is visiting His church to prepare her for His coming. His current work is to “sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish” (**Eph. 5:26-27**).

### He is fashioning her to shine light that draws the nations:

**Phil. 2:15** ...that you may be blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.

### This was foretold:

**Isa. 60:1-3** Arise, shine; for your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the Lord will arise over you, and His glory will be seen upon you.

Preparation toward “holy and without blemish” comes by “the washing of water by the word”. We are to **long for this word as a baby longs for milk** that we might grow thereby (1 Pt. 2:2).

All Christian **growth** is tied to **God’s word** because it, alone, both **cleanses** and **nourishes** us...

It is, of course, **abnormal for newborns and infants not to grow**. Likewise, it is abnormal for Christians not to grow or for the corporate church not to grow. Consider the following scriptures:

**1 Corinthians 3:1–3** <sup>1</sup> And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual *people* but as to carnal, as to **babes** in Christ. <sup>2</sup> I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able *to receive it*, and even now you are still not able; <sup>3</sup> for you are still carnal....

**Gal. 4:1-3** Now I say that that the heir, as long as he is a **child**, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.

**Heb. 5:11-13** ...of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a **babe**.

In each of the above references, “nepios” is used to designate a young child **below** the developmental **level of using speech**. This would be **normal for new believers**, but not older ones. Remaining in that state is wrong. Thus, the **Hebrews** passage above **rebukes** the **condition**.

The Galatians passage (4:1-3) **opens a longer passage warning of going backwards** to being immature. The context continues:

**Galatians 4:4-11, 19-20** <sup>4</sup> But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup> to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the **adoption** as sons. <sup>6</sup> And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba, Father!” <sup>7</sup> Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. <sup>8</sup> But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods. <sup>9</sup> But now after you have known God, or rather

are known by God, how *is it that* you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? <sup>10</sup> You observe days and months and seasons and years. <sup>11</sup> **I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain.**

<sup>19</sup> My little children, for whom **I labor in birth again** until Christ is formed in you, <sup>20</sup> I would like to be present with you now and to change my tone; for I have doubts about you.

Clearly, Paul **believed** that those he nurtured as young believers **ought to have grown up**; he goes so far as to say he is like a pregnant Mom who can't wait until the birth occurs. Today, **Jesus is maturing His church and spiritual growth is being accelerated.**

**We are under powerful Spirit direction to “grow up into Him.”** In order to yield most fully to this call we **start with making a determined decision** to grow individually and corporately until we can say with Paul:

**I Cor. 13:11** When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

With this firm decision, we can **recognize** some of the **babyish characteristics** these scriptures point out and **call on the Lord to wash them away** through our repentance from dead works and faith toward God.

- **Jealousy, strife, envy**
- **Tossed about by changing conditions**
- **Running after new doctrine**
- **Legalism**
- **Need for re-education in basic truth**
- **Inability to instruct others**
- **Poor insight and judgment**
- **Party spirit**

Amen! These traits are **expected in babies but not in those who are maturing.** Jesus is calling us out of these habits and conditions. In **Gal. 4:4-6, adoption** does not signify entrance to God's family; being born-again sets you in God's family. This Greek word is “**weothesia**”, a compound of “weos” meaning “son” and “thesia” meaning “to place”.

This is the act of one's **Father removing** the cloak of childhood and **placing the “toga virilus”** or cloak of manhood on His child, thereby establishing them publicly as sons, mature ones.

It is time to press into this truth with all diligence, for the **Spirit of Son Placement is calling globally** to raise up a **remnant church to live victoriously** in the last days. He is in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. Give Him all you've got.