

Christian Creed and Gracious Conduct Maketh Maturity

“Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” 2 Peter 3: 18

Introduction: Children grow to be adults from innocence and gullibility. Untaught un-nurtured children grow to be childish adults. DNA can be corrected by godly nurturing but un-grown adult parenting can turbo-charge sinful nature and further compound the unregenerate condition, thus humanity. Christian Creed gathered without its living is failed childish Christianity. How do you fair thus far?

1. Growing in Knowledge of Christ Produces Gracious Growth (Eph 4 14, 15).

- a. Christian maturity means – no longer childish behavior. Sound doctrine maketh sound minds. Well nursed and lovingly nurtured children are the healthiest children (**v14a**- teaching the truth in a loving way). A sound mind and a healthy body mark Christian maturity. Note: ‘*no longer children*’ that is lack of knowledge and therefore gullible and foolish. **v14**
- b. Christian maturity means – growth in gracious conduct (**v 15** – ‘*they will grow up into Him*’). To grow up in Christ mould, to be just like Him. Like Christ like Christian.

2. Growing in Grace Grows Others to Christ-like Conduct (vv16-19).

- a. Produces harmonious living and function of the Body as one (**v 16**). Childish behavior of un-grown adults stifles growth in others. A diabolic thorn in the flesh is grievous pus not a gracious plus for character refinement. Are you a godly plus or grievous pus?
- b. Knowledge of Christ gives purpose for gracious growth. Christian maturity is more and more of Christ and less and less gentile (**vv17-21**).
- c. Renounce the old mindset and renew the mind set on Christ for Christian maturity. The mind directs the body- so goes the conduct. (**vv22-24**)

3. Gauging Christian Maturity (vv25-5:2).

- a. Lying or speaking the truth? (**v25**)
- b. Sinful anger or righteous anger? (**vv26, 27**).
- c. Dishonest gain or rightful gain? (**v28**).
- d. Damaging language or building speech? (**29, 30**). Words damage or build relationship and what destroys relationships grieve the Holy Spirit.
- e. Harbored resentment and bitterness or kindness and forgiveness? (**31, 32**) Forgive our sins even as we forgive the sins of others? Nothing between me and my Savior means nothing between me and my saved brethren.

Conclusion (5: 1, 2):

If God is dear, He is near. We His children dear are washed and cleansed by Christ’s precious blood, are now a sweet-smelling savor. Christian maturity is the perfume of Christ sending an aroma of grace in a world of stench. CHRISTIAN MATURITY IS WALKING IN CHRIST LOVE!

How do you measure up?