

Vulnerability & Maturity

We're all on the continuum toward maturity, and we need
grace, truth, and time.

Vulnerability is beautiful, courageous, and powerful

Guest Teachers: Brene' Brown and Henry Cloud (with Donald Miller)

Brene' Brown is on TED Talks online or on YouTube

Donald Miller hosted Henry Cloud on the DVD "Convergence" on the topic, "Growth"

Scripture-based exploration

The book of Ecclesiastes: the author is usually considered to be Solomon, the wise king of Israel. At this time, he is exploring ... restless. His explorations in finding fulfillment are listed at the beginning of the book. He is vulnerable in that he chronicles his attempts at happiness (and his subsequent failures). By the end of the book, what is his conclusion? How do you see him mature through the book? In what ways do you observe the elements of grace, truth, and time in his journey? What do you notice that he lacks?

How is Peter showing vulnerability and maturity in Matthew 14:22-33?

Observe Jesus' style of teaching and training His disciples (learners) toward maturity (I am intentionally using a different version to "wake up" our interaction with passages that may be very familiar):

With many stories like these, he presented his message to them, fitting the stories to their experience and maturity. He was never without a story when he spoke. When he was alone with his disciples, he went over everything, sorting out the tangles, untying the knots. ~ Mark 4:33-34 (The Message)

So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed **maturity** in you. ~Romans 12:1,2 (The Message)

That's exactly what Jesus did. He didn't make it easy for himself by avoiding people's troubles, but waded right in and helped out. "I took on the troubles of the troubled," is the way Scripture puts it. Even if it was written in Scripture long ago, you can be sure it's written for *us*. God wants the combination of his steady, constant calling and warm, personal counsel in Scripture to come to characterize *us*, keeping us alert for whatever he will do next. May our dependably steady and warmly personal God develop **maturity** in you so that you get along with each other as well

as Jesus gets along with us all. Then we'll be a choir—not our voices only, but our very lives singing in harmony in a stunning anthem to the God and Father of our Master Jesus! ~Romans 15:3-6 (The Message)

The mystery in a nutshell is just this: Christ is in you, so therefore you can look forward to sharing in God's glory. It's that simple. That is the substance of our Message. We preach *Christ*, warning people not to add to the Message. We teach in a spirit of profound common sense so that we can bring each person to **maturity**. To be mature is to be basic. Christ! No more, no less. That's what I'm working so hard at day after day, year after year, doing my best with the energy God so generously gives me. Colossians 1:27-29 (The Message)

Consider it a sheer gift, friends, when tests and challenges come at you from all sides. You know that under pressure, your faith-life is forced into the open and shows its true colors. So don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way. ~James 1:2-4 (The Message)

1 Thes 5:23: "Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you *entirely* ([3651](#) /*holotelēs*); and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved *complete* ([3648](#) /*holóklēros*), without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (NASU).

Js 1:4: "And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and *complete* ([3648](#) /*holóklēros*), lacking in nothing" (NASU).

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Strong's Concordance

holokléros: complete, entire

Original Word: ὁλόκληρος, ον

Part of Speech: Adjective

Transliteration: holokléros

Phonetic Spelling: (hol'-ok'-lay-ros)

Short Definition: complete in every part, sound, perfect

Definition: complete in every part, sound, perfect, entire.

Strong's Concordance

teleios: having reached its end, i.e. complete, by ext. perfect

Original Word: τέλειος, α, ον

Part of Speech: Adjective

Transliteration: teleios

Phonetic Spelling: (tel'-i-os)

Short Definition: perfect, full-grown

Definition: perfect, (a) complete in all its parts, (b) full grown, of full age, (c) specially of the completeness of Christian character.

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

complete, perfect, mature

From [telos](#); complete (in various applications of labor, growth, mental and moral character, etc.)

Cognate: **5046** *téleios* (an adjective, derived from [5056](#) /*télos*, "consummated goal") – *mature* (consummated) from going through the necessary stages to reach the *end-goal*, i.e. *developed* into a consummating *completion* by fulfilling the necessary *process* (*spiritual journey*). [See 5056](#) (*telos*).

[This root (*tel-*) means "reaching the *end* (*aim*)." It is well-illustrated with the old pirate's telescope, unfolding (extending out) one stage at a time to function at full-strength (capacity effectiveness).]

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----- **Non-Scripture Readings/Books**

[Emotionally Healthy Spirituality](#), Scazzero, through page 134.

[Sensible Shoes](#)

The list of 130+ questions Jesus asked: go to

<https://mondaymorningreview.wordpress.com/2010/05/14/137questionsjesusasked/>

Artwork for the creatives

What does maturity look like? Express that artistically.

What does vulnerability look like? Express vulnerability artistically.

Movies

"The Painted Veil": The main character begins as a very immature woman, but through vulnerability and some difficulties, becomes a lovely, mature woman. Think about this ... write about how she matured and what role vulnerability played in her maturing.

“Pride and Prejudice”: Lizzie matures beautifully in this excellent film. Enjoy. And watch it again. :-)

Questions to ponder

- 🕒 Picture that “Immaturity to Maturity continuum.” Do you give yourself grace? Do you tell yourself the truth? Do you allow yourself time and space to grow into maturity?
- 🕒 In what ways do you observe the elements of grace, truth, and time in your own journey?
- 🕒 Do you sense that you’ve had more grace or more truth? Which one do you tend to give more readily?
- 🕒 Describe a mature person. Pay attention to what words you use.
- 🕒 Describe a vulnerable person. Would you say you know how to be vulnerable? When in your life have you been vulnerable? Do you regret it?
- 🕒 With whom do you allow yourself to be vulnerable?
- 🕒 Is vulnerability an issue for you?
- 🕒 In what way can you relate to this AA saying: “You’re as sick as your secrets, and your secrets will keep you sick”?
- 🕒 In your lifetime, how have you observed Brene’ Brown’s research conclusion that if we choose to numb our difficult feelings (fear, grief, frustration, shame), we also numb our positive emotions (happiness, gratitude, joy)?
- 🕒 What questions do you need to ask yourself from Jesus’ questions list? Take time and do it.
- 🕒 **Would you describe Jesus as vulnerable and mature? What do you think about His vulnerability? His maturity?**
- 🕒 **For Jesus, vulnerability and maturity led to sacrificial obedience and sacrificial love. Is it the same for us? How do you know? What can you share about this? I challenge you to get into a good conversation about this during this month...maybe over a meal and a glass/cup of something. Take your time and explore the relationship between vulnerability, maturity, Jesus, and sacrifice.**

Consider these songs for worship (close to being in order):

Come to Me, Jenn Johnson
Magnificent God, Big Daddy Weave
Redeemed, Big Daddy Weave
How He Loves, David Crowder Band
Lose Myself, Toby Mac
Outcast, Kerrie Roberts
Hungry, Joy Williams
Find You on My Knees, The More I Seek You, You are For Me, Kari Jobe
Restless, Audrey Assad
Just As I Am, Glad Acapella