

In Maturity

Scripture:	
Announcements:	
Scripture Reading:	
RECAP:	<p>Last week we started a couple week study in Hebrews 5:11-14.</p> <p>—We looked at our first 2 points which were hearing and discipling.</p> <p>— —We saw that those that the book of Hebrews was written to were dull of hearing. This is why it was hard for them to understand the things of God.</p> <p>— — —We also saw that these who where supposed to be hearing and mature were immature and not teaching but in need of being taught again.</p> <p>— — — —We looked at how we can also become dull of hearing and not be able to understand the things of God when we allow other things to get in the way.</p> <p>— — — — —We saw that we all are called to teach and we are called to spread the gospel; the question that was asked last week; are we doing these things? Who are we taking the biblical truth to?</p>
INTRODUCTION:	<p>Today we are going to look at spiritual maturity and on the flip side of that, spiritual immaturity.</p> <p>—We will investigate what spiritual maturity really looks like and how it effects the church.</p> <p>—We will also see how those who received the letter of Hebrews were not progressing and how we can not progress.</p>
Passage Begins	

Scripture:	
<p>Hebrews 5:11–14 (NASB95): 11 Concerning him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.</p> <p>12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food.</p> <p>13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant.</p> <p>14 But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.</p>	<p>So we are going to move on to our next reason the immature don't understand.</p> <p>—3. They are not maturing.</p> <p>— —What is maturity? Well Merriam-Webster dictionary says mature is: "having a completed natural growth and development, having undergone maturation, having attained a final or desired state, having achieved a low but stable growth rate."</p> <p>— — —If we are going to try to understand the importance of maturity in the life of a Christian we need to understand what spiritual maturity is.</p> <p>— — — —In the Christian faith, spiritual maturity is: becoming more like Jesus Christ.</p> <p>— — — — —No matter what your stage of spiritual maturity, Christian's are always in the process of spiritual growth (even if it is slow).</p> <p>- Before you "mature" Christians check out and stop paying attention or think in your head, "I hope so and so is listening," this message is for you too. The most spiritual mature people I have ever met don't think themselves to be spiritual mature.</p>

Scripture:	
	<p>As Christian's our goal is to mature spiritually and grow in wisdom and knowledge of God.</p> <p>— This is a life long on going process and every phase of life presents a whole new set of opportunities to grow.</p> <p>— — READ: Philippians 3:12–14 (NASB95): 12 Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. 13 Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.</p> <p>— — — The reality of what we are to press on towards is that we will never obtain perfection on this earth but we are to press on towards that goal.</p> <p>— — — — We will fall flat on our faces often in this process but we must get back up and continue on in the process.</p> <p>— — — — — The other thing is that we will encounter massive opposition and who we will be challenged.</p> <p>— — — — — — Maturing Christians face opposition with perseverance and self change with dying to themselves. What about you? Do you meet opposition with perseverance or with anger or do you give up? Do you face having to change yourself by dying to self or convincing yourself you are fine how you are? That is just the way I am. I am made this way. There is no changing me now.</p>

Scripture:	
	<p>See, Christian maturity requires life change.</p> <p>— It requires a change in priorities.</p> <p>— — Our priorities are no longer defined by us but they are now defined by God and His word.</p> <p>— — — <u>READ: Matthew 6:33 (NASB95): 33</u> “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.</p> <p>— — — <u>READ: Romans 12:1–2 (NASB95): 1</u> Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.</p>
	<p>We have to do seek out and do those things that bring us closer to God if we want to pursue spiritual maturity.</p> <p>— Paul, while in prison, and was most likely facing death, asked Timothy for this: <u>READ: 2 Timothy 4:13 (NASB95): 13</u> When you come bring the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments.</p> <p>— Paul was not done doing the things that bring him closer to God.</p> <p>— — Even facing certain death he continued to do that which brought him close to God.</p>

Scripture:	
	<p>There is a maturity that a church congregation needs in it in order to really thrive.</p> <p>—The problem is in the church in America today there is a massive immaturity that is dominating and we are see the effects of that immaturity now.</p> <p>— —Many of those in the church are still spiritual children even if they think they are spiritually mature.</p> <p>— — —Many in the church today do not internalize the teaching of God.</p> <p>— — — —We are good at knowing of them and we are good at pointing those things out in others but not internalizing them.</p>
	<p>This is exactly what is pointed out by the author of Hebrews when he writes about needing the basic principles of the oracle of God again.</p> <p>—Immature Christians will be able to tell you what the basic ideas of God’s word are but they are not putting them into practice.</p> <p>— —Don’t believe me? Let’s think about pride for a second.</p> <p>— — —The bible is very clear about pride and how we should drop our pride.</p> <p>— — — —C. S. Lewis wrote, “According to Christian teachers, the essential vice, the utmost evil is pride. Unchastity, anger, greed, drunkenness, and all that, are mere flea bites in comparison: it was through pride that the devil become the devil.”</p> <p>— — — — —John Stott wrote, “Pride is your greatest enemy, humility is your greatest friend.”</p> <p>— — — — — —<u>READ: Proverbs 8:13 (NASB95): 13</u></p> <p>“The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverted mouth, I hate.</p>

Scripture:	
	<p>Yet, many are in the church and they are proud.</p> <p>— Now, I know what your thinking, “I am not prideful Jeremy.”</p> <p>— — Pride is giving ourselves the credit for God work.</p> <p>— — — Pride is taking the glory that belongs to God.</p> <p>— — — — It is self worship, self reliance, and self centered living.</p> <p>— — — — — Especially when our pride spills over to our interactions with others.</p>
	<p>How about this elementary principle of the word of God:</p> <p><u>READ: Matthew 7:3–5 (NASB95):</u> 3 “Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? 4 “Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ and behold, the log is in your own eye? 5 “You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.</p> <p>— Yet, how many of us go speck hunting on a regular basis?</p> <p>— — Albert Mohler wrote, “Our spiritual life should be such that we are learning to take responsibility for our own growth. We must be developing an appetite for grace, knowledge, and understanding.”</p> <p>— — — As much as we think we can skip to bigger and better things in our spiritual walk we have to understand that we will not be able to grasp bigger biblical truths if we do not understand basic biblical truths.</p>

Scripture:	
	<p>This is where our author tells those who he wrote this letter to, that they need milk when they should be feasting on solid food.</p> <p>—We see a similar rebuke in: <u>READ: 1 Corinthians 3:1–3 (NASB95): 1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ. 2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, 3 for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?</u></p> <p>— —Milk is given to infants because that is all that they can digest but as we grow we should be able to digest solid food.</p> <p>— — —The author of the Hebrews calls them to develop more; they will never grow on a diet of milk.</p> <p>— — — —He points out that what should be taking place in the congregation of believers who have been there enough time is not taking place.</p> <p>— — — — —This congregation that the author is talking to should be eating spiritual steak right now but they are still stuck on spiritual milk.</p>
	<p>So what about you? Are you feasting on spiritual steak right now (and if you are thinking, “I don’t really like steak I will answer the question for you; NO)?</p> <p>—Are you still taking in milk when you should eating solid food?</p> <p>— —If so, I want to ask you, why? Why are you stuck?</p> <p>— — —What has hindered your growth for God?</p> <p>— — — —How do you get that out of your way so that you can mature and really dine of the glories of God’s word?</p> <p>— — — — —Mohler wrote this, “To willingly remain an infant in Christ makes one a person of the flesh and unfit for righteousness.</p>

Scripture:	
	<p>So what is our take away? How do we apply this to our lives?</p> <p>—We need to think about our spiritual maturity. Are you really mature? Or is your maturity a false maturity masked by pride?</p> <p>— —Are you spiritually growing? You should never pause or stop.</p> <p>— — —Are you part of the growth of the congregation that you are a part of? Or is your spiritual growth and your involvement in the church not effecting the church at all?</p>
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