

Grow Up

God is trying to mature His church in a culture increasing in immaturity.

Bridal Partnership

(Ep 5:25-27) Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might 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.

His finished work (sanctify) and ongoing work/responsibility (cleanse by word)

Our ongoing cooperation (receive word)

(Jas 1:21-22) Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

(Rev 19:7-8) “Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

We make ourselves ready, but are *given* garments,

from good works *we do* that *He prepared* for us. (Eph 2:10)

We are to be cooperating with Him in Maturing into a Bridal Partner for Him.

(1Co 13:10-13) But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. 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. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

context: Mature Love – Knowing Him (higher than religious obedience ~ concubine)

what we “put away” is childish, immature love

(ex: long married couple – make marriage look easy)

Parable of 10 Virgins (Bridegroom)

(Mt 25:12-13) “But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ “Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

Know Him – Bridal Partnership, pursue Mature Love

What does “making ourselves ready” (maturing in love) look like?

Recognize our need to grow in mature understanding and wisdom

(1Co 14:20) Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature.

context: supernatural spiritual gifts

(1Co 2:6-7) However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory,

carnal minds cannot receive spiritual wisdom (1 Cor 2:14), must be renewed (Rom 12:2)

Where is this “hidden wisdom”? His Word

(1Pe 2:2) as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,

to Mature we have to take His Word to the next level (Skilled)
(Heb 5:12-14) 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. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

We must become skilled with His Word through use.

How do we “use” His Word?

(2Ti 3:16-17) All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Use His Word to guide our actions and interactions

makes us mature for good works (bridal garments)

(Heb 4:12) For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Use His Word to change us internally (renew mind)

Temptation of Jesus (Mt 4)

Use His Word to exercise authority (spiritual warfare – Eph 6:17)

None of these are Optional

(Jdg 3:1-2) Now these are the nations which the LORD left, that He might test Israel by them, that is, all who had not known any of the wars in Canaan (this was only so that the generations of the children of Israel might be taught to know war, at least those who had not formerly known it),

Does God allow battles in our lives to teach us to war?

(Nu 33:55) ‘But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall be that those whom you let remain shall be irritants in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and they shall harass you in the land where you dwell.

Practical Indicators of Maturity

Self Feeding (Word)

Self Control (Pr 25:28)

Emotional Stability

(Phl 3:13-15) Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you.

the past (whether done by you or to you) is covered under His Part

Your part is to press into your Bridal Partnership Future

You can't carry your past into His future. Let it go, its holding you back.

Ability to get along (Love)

(1Co 3:1-3) And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. 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; for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men?

Responsibility (vs victim mentality, excuses, expectation on others) 2 Cor 5:10

He is Growing Up His Bride – the Whole Body

(Ep 4:13-16) till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

Unified in Knowing Christ (Mature Love)

Mature in Spiritual Wisdom and Understanding

Value Truth and Love over personal interests

Confident in ours and each others Calling

(Col 2:19) and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God.

We must “hold Fast” to Christ *and* His Body

because body interaction causes Growth