

Tracking Final Maturity

1. **This teaching is for life not for knowledge.** God's word, Jesus says, is like a seed. There is life dormant in the seed of the text. These truths must be planted in our hearts, not merely our heads.
2. God's Word declares, with no uncertainty, that **the church will come to maturity**. Here are four areas in our call to maturity:

Ephesians 4:13 (CSB) *...until (a time frame) we all (an unknown quantum / principle of representation) reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God's Son, **growing into maturity** with a (**Stature**) measured by Christ's fullness. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be little children, tossed by the waves and blown around by every wind of teaching, by human cunning with cleverness in the techniques of deceit. (**Stability**)¹⁵ But speaking (**Speech**) the truth in love, let us grow in every way into him who is the head — Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament, promotes the growth of the body for building itself up in love by the proper working of each individual part (**Service**).*

3. Maturity requires that we don't take God's truth lightly. We cannot allow it to be heard and seen and then...**forgotten!**

James 1:22-25 (CSB) *But be **doers of the word** and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³ Because if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like someone **looking at his own face in a mirror**. ²⁴ For he looks at himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of person he was. ²⁵ But the one who **looks intently** into the **perfect law of freedom** and **perseveres** in it and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer who works — this person will be blessed in what he does.*

4. **Hearing** but not *doing*. **Seeing** but not *remembering*. **Looking** but *lacking sufficient intensity* (i.e. ^{v.25} *who looks intently...and perseveres in it*)

John 8:32 (CSB) *You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.*

5. God's truth has the ability to set you free. God's truth is not really hard on us, it is hard on our illusions.

6. God's truth provides a "**You are here**" experience. This builds a new frame of reference. It restructures how we think.

- a. **Translation** = A new understanding of the world and our place in the world. It provides insight into God's purposes for the world. Translation grounds us in a biblical worldview.
- b. **Transformation** = This empowers us to live differently and to become suitable for God's indwelling. (See Isaiah 66:1-2)

7. The journey into spiritual maturity requires human effort. Effort is needed but intimacy is first.

Philippians 3:12-14 (CSB) *Not that I have already reached the goal or am already perfect, but I **make every effort** to take hold of it because I also have been taken hold of by Christ Jesus. ¹³ Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and **reaching forward** to what is ahead, ¹⁴ I pursue as my goal the prize promised by God's heavenly call in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ Therefore, **let all of us who are mature think this way.***

Romans 12:1-2 (CSB) *Therefore, brothers and sisters, in view of the mercies of God, I urge you to **present your bodies** as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your true worship. ² Do not be conformed to this age, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.*

Ephesians 1:18 (CSB) *I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so **that you may know** what is the hope of his calling...*

1 Corinthians 9:24 (CSB) *Don't you know that the runners in a stadium all race, but only one receives the prize? **Run** in such a way to win the prize.*

8. Running this race toward maturity requires spiritual transactions with God. Deeper maturity empowers us by releasing a new sense of destiny and purpose.

- a. As we mature, we are guided and empowered to grow through this process. We move from:
 - i. A *personal* relationship with God
 - ii. To an *intimate* relationship with God
 - iii. To an *organic* relationship with God

John 15:4-5 (MSG) *Live in me. Make your home in me just as I do in you. In the same way that a branch can't bear grapes by itself but only by being joined to the vine, you can't bear fruit unless you are joined with me.*

⁵ *I am the Vine, you are the branches. When you're joined with me and I with you, the relation **intimate and organic**...*

9. We are destined to maturity.

Ephesians 4:13-15 (CSB) until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God's Son, **growing into maturity with a stature measured by Christ's fullness**...¹⁵ But speaking the truth in love, let us **grow in every way into him** who is the head — Christ.

10. This is a journey is not just a journey *to Christ* but also *with Christ*.

Matthew 28:20 *...remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*

11. One of the key components of final maturity is **faith**. "*The just shall live by faith.*"

Hebrews 11:6 (CSB) *Now without faith it is impossible to please God, since the one who draws near to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.*

12. Maturity of faith allows us to **pull down heavenly resources** into our world and lives.

Ephesians 1:3 (ESV) *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places...*

Ephesians 4:10 (GNT) *So the one who came down is the same one who went up, above and beyond the heavens, to fill the whole universe with his presence.*

13. Final maturity requires a **finalized commitment** to advance to the end of time. We are not time-bound creatures; we are eternal beings!