"GROW UP!"

Ephesians 4:13-16
5-17-2023

INTRODUCTION:

***God wants us (the "Body" of Christ - v. 12) to <u>grow up</u>!**

Why grow?

I. We need to grow so that we would have <u>unity</u> (v. 13a)
(Growth promotes balanced harmony in the Body)

II. We need to grow so that we would have <u>maturity</u> (v. 13b)
(Growth builds and develops the Body)

III. We need to grow so that we would have <u>stability</u> (v. 14)
(Growth aids the protective defense system of the Body)

IV. We need to grow so that we would have <u>ministry</u> (v. 15-16)
(Growth depends on each part doing its job in the Body)

A. <u>Speaking</u> together (v. 15)

B. <u>Working</u> together (v. 16)

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In hearing messages by your pastor-teacher, some say, "Here we go again."

I say it should be: "Here we grow again."

The pastor-teacher
1) equips
2) so that each can minister
3) with the result of edification

Note the words in the context which speak of growth:
"perfect" (v. 13)
"fullness" (v. 13)
"no more children" (v. 14)
"grow up" (v. 15)
"increase" (v. 16)
"edifying" (v. 16)

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Why grow?

I. We need to grow so that we would have unity (v. 13a)
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"We all" - God desires each and every believer to grow up (spiritually).

The church Body is diversified in its gifts, but unified in its goal.

Our basis for unity is not "love" but doctrine.

Truth (doctrinal truth) spoken in love (v. 15) = a united growth

Two cardinal doctrines to which all believers should be agreed (unified):

1) "The Faith" (salvation by grace through faith - the finished work of Christ)

2) "The knowledge of the Son of God" - a personal knowledge regarding the nature of the person of Christ (His deity, His humanity)

II. We need to grow so that we would have <u>maturity</u> (v. 13b)
(Growth builds and develops the Body)

God's goal is that we would be "a <u>perfect</u> man" = a complete, mature man (in contrast to the reference to "children" - v. 14)

God's goal is that we would <u>receive all that Christ has to offer us</u> - for life and godliness.

God wants us to have the whole measurer of Christ's fullness. His will is that we come to a full maturity. This fullness does not come from us, but from Christ.

If we only grow half way, we have not fulfilled God's will for our lives. His will is total maturity.

No parent would be pleased if their children only grew up to the second grade education or up to 10 years emotionally, or up to 12 years physically.

ILLUS: the sadness of mental and physical retardation is not as sad as spiritual retardation - when we fail to grow up (Heb. 5:11-14).

III. We need to grow so that we would have <u>stability</u> (v. 14)
(Growth aids the protective defense system of the Body)

"Children" - babies; immature small children.

ILLUS: how small children believe anything you tell them. They are so impressionable; so gullible, so easily indoctrinated.

"**Tossed to and fro"** - to be passively driven or agitated by waves

"<u>Carried</u> about with every <u>wind</u> of doctrine" - the picture is that of a small sea vessel in the midst of a storm. When the winds blow from the west, the ship can do no other than move east. The picture is of helplessness, instability, passivity.

The winds of time cannot move the mature believer. The new philosophies, religions, and cults cannot sway the Christian who is firmly anchored to the solid Rock!

In the last days, God warned us that the winds of doctrinal deviation would increase.

In the last days . . . "some shall depart from the faith giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils" (I Tim. 4:1)

Paul warned that the time would come when people "will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (II Tim. 4:3-4).

"By the sleight of men" - "sleight" = kubeia (cube) - referred to wicked dice playing. It refers to intentional fraud, craftiness, or trickery to deceive.

"They lie in wait" - Satan has his messengers waiting for you! Look out! Know the truth so you can be set free!

Many winds of doctrines are blowing in our city -

--The Jehovah's Witnesses, who teach a works salvation and deny the deity of Christ.

--The Mormons - who follow the extra-Biblical "revelations" of Joseph Smith and teach that man can become God.

--The Christian Science - which is neither Christian nor Science; founded by Mrs. Mary Baker Glower Patterson Eddy. This cult calls "sin" a type of insanity, and says that in reality there is no such thing as sin, sickness and death.

--Baha'ism - which teaches that Jesus was only a prophet and not the last one at that. Rather Murza Husain Ali Nuri (Bahaullah for short) is the final prophet.k

--Seventh Day Adventism - promoted by Eden G. White, which teaches works salvation, bondage to the O.T. Law, soul sleep, annihilationism, that Christ came in 1844 to begin an "investigative Judgment"

--Hare Krishna - which promotes reincarnation and pantheism (God is in everything)

--Follow the teachings of Gautama (6th Cent. BC), who taught that people don't need the "outside support" of a Supreme Being, but need the enlightenment that comes from within themselves.

--Hinduism - millions of gods

--Islam - Muhammed and Allah via the Koran

--Demonism - promoted by the rock artists and church of Satan

--The New Age Movement - teaches that man's greatest achievement is to discover the Deity that is in him. The only difference between Christ and us is that He discovered His deity, we have not yet.

IV. We need to grow so that we would have <u>ministry</u> (v. 15-16)
(Growth depends on each part doing its job in the Body)

Why should we grow? So that we will have something to <u>give</u> - to help someone else grow!

"Speaking" - the <u>mode</u> of our communication (We need to talk!)

"The truth" - the <u>content</u> of our communication (We must teach God's Word and not adulterate it)

"In love" - the <u>manner</u> of our communication (how we say it is just as important as what we say. Don't be obnoxious, rude, crude, abrasive, unthoughtful in defending the Truth)

"Grow up. . . in all things" - God desires that we grow in every way, totally, that we be well rounded.

Doctrinally (not riding hobby horses, or pet peeves, not single-issue-oriented)

"From whom" - the whole Body is connected to the Head and receives its directions from the Head.

--We are <u>joined</u> together (by the Holy Spirit - I Cor. 12:13)

--We are <u>held</u> together (compacted) by the joints (sinews or ligaments) which provide a supply of spiritual food to each part.

Just as in our human body each part does its share in aiding the growth of the rest of the Body, so it is in the Body of Christ.

Each believer via his connectedness to other believers imparts (passes on) spiritual nutrition to them.

"the edifying of itself" - the human body actually builds and mends itself. So will the church Body when each part does its ministry.

"Love" is the immunity system of the Body of Christ. Love fights off every spiritual virus Satan sends.

A. Speaking together (v. 15)

B. Working together (v. 16)

CONCLUSION:

Why grow?

I. We need to grow so that we would have unity (v. 13a)
(Growth promotes balanced harmony in the Body)

II. We need to grow so that we would have maturity (v. 13b)
(Growth builds and develops the Body)

III. We need to grow so that we would have stability (v. 14)
(Growth aids the protective defense system of the Body)

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