

Teaching and Maturity

3.22.09

28 Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. 29 For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me. Colossians 1:28-29 ESV

“teaching everyone with all wisdom” Carefully teaching those who are following Jesus.

P: “Teaching everyone with all wisdom” is an important part of our proclamation of Jesus.

CHURCH:

1. Public teaching of the Bible on Sundays. Community Groups working through sermons. Little Groups. Men’s / Women’s Ministries. Mentoring.
 - a. Relationships are an important part of the process for us.

INDIVIDUALS:

1. *Am I taking full advantage of the opportunities before me? To be taught? To teach?*
2. *As parents, am I taking advantage of every opportunity to teach my kids?*

How to Do This :

1. Ask what they are learning (church, school, friends, etc.)
2. Take advantage of *every* opportunity. Look for teachable moments.
3. Tell stories and use illustrations. Use what is around you.
4. Share what you are learning. (church, personal devotional times, group, etc.)
5. Remember the goal is not just information but transformation.

“that we may present everyone mature in Christ” The reason why he does what he does.

P: The goal of our proclamation should be moving people toward maturity in Christ—including ourselves.

What does Spiritual Maturity look like? (Think TREE.)

P: Maturity in Christ ultimately looks like—Christ (Lk. 6:40).

As time progresses, am I looking more and more like Jesus?

A: Read the Gospels and ask yourself questions like these:

- “Do I do the things that I see Jesus doing?” (teaching, serving, bringing healing, loving the unloved)*
“Do the things that make Jesus happy make me happy?” (eg. children, seeing people meet God)
“Do the things that make Jesus mad make me mad?” (hypocrisy, taking advantage of the poor)

P: The Greatest Commandment is a good guiding principle (Mk. 12:30).

A: Ask: *Am I loving God with all of my heart, soul, mind and strength? Am I loving my neighbor as myself? Am I growing in these areas? If not, why not?*

*What areas do I see that most need to grow in maturity? Personal devotional life Relationships
Husband/Wife Parenting Identity in Christ Financial Life Addiction*

How Do We Get There? :

P: Growing in maturity is a silent, progressive, PROCESS. (Tree growing.)

- Both a FORMAL and INFORMAL PROCESS.
- Both GRADUAL and includes KEY EXPERIENCES (both Life and Church).
- Both INDIVIDUAL and COMMUNAL.
- Both ACTIVE and PASSIVE in nature.
- NOT a STRAIGHT LINE. (Ups & downs, rapid & slow, can even go backward.)

P: Moving toward Maturity is a PARTNERSHIP between the Holy Spirit, the individual, and the Church. (A tree needs certain things to grow.)

The Spirit’s Role: Work Internally and Externally to make us like Jesus.

Internally: Convict us of sin, draw us toward God’s Word, God’s people and God’s will (as revealed in Scripture—all we should be and do).

Externally: Providential Intervention in all our circumstances. Life is learning.

The Church’s Role: Provide teaching, shepherding, environments and opportunities where maturity can happen.

This includes serving in various ways. Also, understanding that community is not just for us, but also for how we can minister to others.

The Individual’s Role: Listen to the Spirit, partner with the Church, fulfill our personal responsibility.

Includes, but is not limited to: Personal study of the Bible, prayer, ‘active involvement’ in a solid church, repentance as a way of life, giving of our resources, practically serving other people, suffering and sacrifice, sharing Jesus, looking and listening for what God is up to in our lives, etc.

A: Am I participating in all aspects of the partnership and fulfilling my responsibility?

“For this I toil” Strong word meaning ‘working to the point of exhaustion.’
“struggling” Strong word; where we get ‘agonize,’ showing intense exertion.
“with all his energy that he powerfully works within me” God’s power at work within Him.

P: Like Paul, we should strive *in God’s strength* to see maturity become reality—both for others and ourselves.

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Phil. 2:12-13 ESV

Am I walking in the appropriate BALANCE of how maturity takes place in my life?

Am I seeking to move myself and others toward maturity in Christ?

**Teaching, maturity and healthy, balanced striving,
all begins with and flows from the Gospel.**