Moving to Maturity 5.15.10

[11]And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, [12]to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, [13]until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, [14]so that we may no longer be children , tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. [15]Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, [16]from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. (Ephesians 4:11-16)

This is a passage about maturity, and the Apostle Paul wants us to discover five things about it.

1. Immaturity is a big problem (*Eph 4:14*)

- Do you realize that there are cunning, crafty, and deceitful enemies that want to lead you away from the faith? (*2 Cor 11:13-15*)
- If you do not mature you will be captured by their bad doctrine

2. The goal of the Christian life is maturity in Christ (*Eph 4:13*)

- The goal of our growth in maturity is described in four ways. We grow up until we attain . . .
    - The unity of the faith (*Eph 4:1-6*)
    - The knowledge of the Son of God (*Col 1:9-10*)
    - Mature manhood (*Heb 5:14*)
    - The measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (*Eph 4:15*)
- The call to Christian maturity is to grow up and be like Jesus

3. The way we become mature is by talking to one another (*Eph 4:15*)

- The goal is growing up into Christ
- The means of achieving the goal is by speaking to one another
    - The content of our speech is truth (*Eph 4:25*)
    - The method of our speech is love (*1 Cor 13:1*)

4. Jesus gives the Church ministers to equip them for maturity (*Eph 4:11-12*)

- Jesus loves his church and gives ministers to them as a gift
    - Apostles (*Acts 2:42*)
    - Prophets (*Eph 2:20*)
    - Evangelists (*2 Tim 4:5*)
    - Pastor-Teachers (*1 Pet 5:1-2*)
- Jesus gives these ministers to equip the saints for ministry
- As the saints are equipped, the body is built up

5. Moving to maturity is ultimately the work of Jesus himself (*Eph 4:16*)

- Jesus gets the glory for our maturity in two ways
    - He is the one who gives the ministers to help us grow (*Eph 4:11*)
    - He is the one who "*makes the body grow.*" (*Col 2:19*)
- Moving to maturity is a work of grace, but this does not mean there is no effort on our part (*Phil 2:12-13*)