

THE MARK OF MATURITY

I John 2:12-14

Growth a mystery, evasive. How? Why some faster?
What causes it? Can you speed it up?

THIS PASSAGE GIVES INSIGHT INTO MATTER OF GROWTH...
and REVEALS WHAT MATURITY CONSISTS OF.

1. Growth is gradual and in stages...Compared to physical. Don't move right from child to adult...must pass through teenage years. I'm not a babe, but not mature, am I then CARNAL? No, an adolescent.

2. Passage doesn't refer to physical age. Note difference between Child of vs. 12 and v. 13.

Teknia refers to natural relationship, begat, young in years..

PAIDIA emphasizes subordination, train, chastise, young in experience.

JOHN wouldn't write to babies. Or leave out mothers and young women.

THESE REFER TO STAGES IN SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND EXPERIENCE, maturity.

3. GIVES the predominant note, mark, the point of emphasis at that stage of growth. OVERLAPPING because all know the Father and the fathers are strong and have overcome Devil. But at different ages, you sum up life differently. Your point of emphasis changes

I. CHILDREN "have known the Father..." This is basic, the starting point, the initial consciousness of salvation. A new relationship with God, a sense of SONSHIP is emphasis. I'M SAVED!

THE HOLY SPIRIT makes him aware of his sonship...

II. YOUNG MEN "strong, word of God abides, overcome evil one." Busily involved in battle of Christian living. Realizes the warfare...CONFLICT AND CONQUEST EMPHASIS on CONQUEST.

They have reached a stage of development where they are strong, overcoming temptations, defeating the enemy...

VICTORY, POWER, AUTHORITY...this is their point of emphasis.

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It's a mystery, growth. How does it happen? Why do some grow faster than others? What makes you grow? Why can't you speed it up?

This passage shows that growth is gradual and in stages...don't jump from child to adult...must pass through teenage years.

This passage doesn't refer to physical age. He wouldn't be writing to babes, children, or just to the Fathers and not mothers, to young men and not young women. When he refers to the whole group, he calls them "children" teknon.

He marks to predominant note, theme, characteristic. They all know the Father, and the fathers have overcome the wicked one. But at that particular stage, there is a predominant mark -- what Christianity ~~means~~ means to them, the sum of ~~their~~ their salvation. And just like life means different things to different ages, so salvation, eternal life means different things to different ages.

A child is hopeless attached to toys, childish things and interests. You can't change them or wean them from them. Maturity will take care of it. Try to disinterest a four year old in her dolls and interest her You can't. All the talking and reasoning and pleading won't do it. Only maturity.

I can preach and preach that the epitome of sal. is knowing Christ, etc., and still some, upon hearing of a miracle, will run breathlessly and excited to see and duplicate. He just can't be satisfied with KNOWING CHRIST., can't hold his attention. He wants to see things happen, miracles, get all excited about that. It used to discourage me.

I often give my testimony. "Even the demons are subject unto me." And the Lord said, "Don't get excited about that. Something greater than that is that your names are in the book. "Yeah, that's right, Amen, Praise the Lord. But, Man, you should've seen the demons being subject unto us..."