

# Growing Up – *The next step*

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## Experiencing fulfilment

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When believers do not progress beyond the stage of infancy in their Christian faith, they miss out on experiencing the reality of an exciting *fulfilled* life (John 10:10b), and will stumble and suffer unnecessarily in their lives on earth.

According to God’s prophet, Hosea, why were His people suffering?

Hosea 4:6 \_\_\_\_\_

Ignorance of God and His will for us is an unnecessary obstacle that blocks our progress in life:

- Preventing us from growing-up in our faith
- Preventing us from reflecting God’s character, and
- Preventing us from experiencing our potential in God and life.

What is our potential in God?

Romans 8:29 \_\_\_\_\_

One of the most enthusiastic believers of all time was the Apostle Paul. His life’s energy was completely directed towards his passion in life. Wherever Paul went, he urged others to join with him in life’s greatest and most satisfying pursuit.

What was Paul’s pursuit in life?

1 Corinthians 11:1 \_\_\_\_\_

What does it mean to *imitate* Christ?

What does it mean to *impersonate* Christ?

## Imitate Christ

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There is no greater pursuit in all of life than the pursuit of imitating Christ – for the satisfaction of our innermost needs in life comes from our becoming like Christ.

Learning to imitate Christ is a life-long process called “sanctification”. Sanctification is the process of learning to live a sin-free life, and all learning begins with the mind.

What does Paul urge us to do with our minds that will make it possible for us to experience God’s *good, pleasing* and *perfect* plan for our lives?

Romans 12:2 \_\_\_\_\_

## His *mind*

To imitate the life of Christ we must first be like-minded with Him. God’s Word, the Bible, reveals to us the mind of Christ. All we need to know about the Lord is recorded for us in God’s Word.

How should we react to God’s Word?

1 Peter 2:2a \_\_\_\_\_

What should our next step be after taking God’s Word into our minds?

James 1:22 \_\_\_\_\_

What should happen to us when we live out God’s Word?

1 Peter 2:2b \_\_\_\_\_

The writer of the Book of Hebrews expressed concern about his spiritual “babes” (new believers). What were his concerns?

Hebrews 5:12-14 \_\_\_\_\_

What does Peter urge believers to do?

2 Peter 3:18 \_\_\_\_\_

## **His actions**

As we continue to learn to live-out God's Word in our daily lives, we will grow-up more and more into Christ-likeness.

Having the mind of Christ makes it possible for us to act like Him; acting like Him ensures we will experience the special plan God has in mind for our lives.

What is the nature of God's plan for us?

Jeremiah 29:11 \_\_\_\_\_

What is Jesus' desire for each of us?

John 10:10b \_\_\_\_\_

## **His life**

Growing-up into the likeness of Jesus Christ gives us a fresh and new outlook on life.

- We are able to see life as God sees life
- We are able to live life as Christ lived amongst us – abundantly!
- We are able to enjoy life more fully – as God intended for us.

Living in the likeness of Christ is not always easy to do. At times the Christian life will seem an impossible battle. Doubt and fear of failing may tempt us to retreat back into old ways of living. Believing the lie that we will not be able to succeed in our journey may even tempt us to quit.

Whenever we find ourselves in this situation we need to remember that striving forward in the likeness of Christ is not something that was ever intended to be approached in human strength. Jesus, through the indwelling of His Holy Spirit, motivates, inspires and empowers us to face and overcome each and every hurdle, obstacle and challenge we encounter. It's comforting to know that **all the challenges we will face in our walk with the Lord have been carefully chosen by Him, for our good** (Psalm 37:23-24).

What does Jesus invite us to do?

Matthew 11:29a \_\_\_\_\_

What has He promised to do whenever we accept His invitation?

Matthew 11:29b \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, there is nothing more worthwhile in all of life than learning to walk and grow-up into the likeness of Jesus Christ – our peace, satisfaction and fulfilment is at stake.

Our lives no longer belong to ourselves – they now belong to Jesus Christ. He has sole right in the use of our lives for His purposes. And His purposes are always good, and right!

How did Paul state this truth?

Galatians 2:20 \_\_\_\_\_

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## Summary

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Moving ahead in the Christian faith is a life-long journey that requires a serious commitment and discipline to taking steps forward into Christ-likeness.

The following sessions in this book reveal additional growth steps that will lead you forward in your spiritual “growth” journey.

