

# GROW

## Stages Of Growth

**Foundation Statement:** *When you're born again you resemble Jesus. You have all the parts he has, but your parts don't look like his parts, but you have the potential to grow up and be just like him. There are stages of spiritual growth just like there are stages of natural growth. Before spiritual development can begin you must be born again. When you're born again you are born a baby on the inside. Next you become a child on the inside. Then you become a youth. You are no longer a child, but you are not a spiritual adult. To be a spiritual adult doesn't mean that you're done developing. It just means you've entered the final stage of spiritual adult. People assume time equals growth/development and it does not. You should be at each of these stages for so long and you should spend the majority of your life at the stage of spiritual adulthood. The main way you go from stage to stage is by feeding on and exercising the Word.*

- I. **Stages of growth** Be conservative about where you think you are in terms of growth and development
  - A. There are stages of spiritual growth just like there are stages of natural growth; The natural is a pattern of the original which is the spiritual-1 John 2:12-14
    1. When a baby is born in the natural, he has all the natural parts his parents have, but those parts are underdeveloped and don't look like the parts his parents has in growth and development; That baby has the potential to grow up and have it's parts look just like it's parents parts – Likewise when you're born again you resemble Jesus, but you don't look like him in development; You have all the parts he has, but your parts don't look like his parts, but you have the potential to grow up and be just like him-*John 14:9-He that has seen me has seen the father*
  - B. The first step every human being must take before spiritual development can begin is they must be born again-*John 3:6-7*
    1. A physical baby who is not born can't develop-It has to be born before it can develop
  - C. When you are born again you are born a baby (ON THE INSIDE); Babes in Christ is spiritual, not natural-1 Corinthians 3:1, Hebrews 5:13
    1. **Babes** (Nepios)-Infant, little child, minor, not of age, childish, untaught, unskilled
  - D. One of the next stages of spiritual development we see is that of a spiritual child (ON THE INSIDE)-Galatians 4:8-19
    1. 8-11-This is a group of people he's poured into that are being tossed to and fro with different doctrines; Their not babies, they've been taught some
      - a. 1- **Child** (Nepios)-Infant, little child, minor, not of age, childish, untaught, unskilled
    2. 12-15-The respect for him is not there, they're easily persuaded, being tossed around, they do want the truth

3. 16-Part of growing up is hearing something you might now want to hear and having somebody in your life that will say it
  4. 11-What's he laboring to do? 19-He's laboring for their spiritual growth, for them to be like the master
    - a. *AMP-Until Christ is completely and permanently (formed) molded within you*
  5. 19-**Children** (Teknon)-Little child, teachers address disciples this way b/c by their instruction they nourish the minds and mold the character of their students, child – You're not a baby, but you're not a youth/teen, you're a child
- E. One of the next stages of spiritual development is this idea of **young men/women** (Neos)-Youthful, younger, young man, recently born-Titus 2:1-8
1. 1-3-Sound doctrine is simply good teaching-It's the sound teaching that's going to help the aged men and women develop and grow
  2. 2-This doesn't have anything to do with natural age; A 60 year old man can be a youth spiritually and a 30 year old man can be an aged man spiritually; The spiritually older should teach the spiritually younger – Should a 60 year old man/woman who is recently born again teacher who doesn't have much experience with the word be teaching other people just because he is 60 – NO-This is not talking about natural age-1 Timothy 3:6
- F. The final stage of spiritual development is this **perfect man**-Full grown, adult, full age, mature-Ephesians 4:13-14, James 3:2
1. This doesn't mean that you're done developing or that you're just like Jesus – It just means that you're a spiritual adult
  2. 1 John 2:18-**Fathers**-Advanced in years, one who has infused his own spirit into others, teaches, experienced
  3. *This is the stage you should spend most of your life at.*

## II. How do you grow up spiritually and progress from stage to stage?

- A. People assume that time equals growth and it does not-Hebrews 5:12-6:1
1. Time had past and they had not grown up – Time does not equal growth
  2. A teacher would be somebody who is not a novice, not a baby, not a child
  3. Who by reason of USE, not by reason of time
- B. They are getting corrected for being at a place of spiritual development below where they should be
1. God expects for us to go from stage to stage and to grow up; There comes a time spiritually where you shouldn't be a baby, a child, a spiritual youth anymore, you should be a full grown spiritual adult – You should only be at each of these stages for so long

- C. The thing that hinders people when you talk about spiritual growth is they look at their natural age; Just because you have an older body doesn't mean that you are mature spiritually; You can be born again for 20 years and be 50 years old and be a baby, a child, a teen spiritually
1. Servant-hood does not equal maturity; Titles do not equal maturity; Coming to church does not equal maturity; Time, titles, or how much you serve means nothing when it comes to growth; Are you feeding on the word, practicing the Word, becoming more like Jesus? If you are you're growing, if you aren't you're not
  2. How do we avoid being at a place of spiritual development below where we should be?