

BOOK OF 2 PETER
MATURING IN CHRIST
PETER—A MAN WHO MATURED IN CHRIST
2 PETER 1:1-14

Introduction

God's desire is for every child of God to mature in their Christian walk!
But we need to realize that **the mature Christian life doesn't just happen!**

When we were born again by the Spirit of God we became gloriously saved at that very moment, but **we all began as babes in Christ.**

1 Peter 2:2—"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby."

When our children were born, my wife and I had a plan to bring them to the maturity of Adulthood. For the most part, by God's good grace and help, we can say "*Mission Accomplished!*"

Just as **it takes a plan to grow children into physical and emotional maturity**, so also **it takes a plan, God's plan, to grow us into Spiritual maturity.**

If we are going to be successful in maturing in our Christian walk **we must allow our Heavenly Father to use His plan to grow us up in Him.**

There are a number of approaches to living the Christian life that will not bring forth maturity in our lives: (Let me share 4 things.)

- 1. Don't try to live the Christian life if you haven't personally trusted Christ as your Saviour and Lord!**
 - a. Serving the Lord takes a Divine Power.
(Something that is dead cannot grow!)
 - b. The Divine Power needed for growth to happen comes from Christ's Divine Nature taking up residence and living within us.
 - c. It may seem simplistic, but **life must precede growth!**

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- 2. Don't try to live the Christian life by merely relying on your ability to keep a set of rules!**

(We can't finish by human effort what we have begun by faith—Galatians 3:1-5)

Just as **we must rely on the Lord for our Salvation**, so also **we must rely on Him for our maturity!**

- 3. Don't try to live the Christian life by just making a weekly pilgrimage to Church!**
 - a. Now don't get me wrong, meeting with the people of God is very important.
Hebrews 10:25—"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."
 - b. However, the Christian Life is not just a once-a week, twice-a-week, or even three times-a-week happening, it is to be a day to day relationship with the LORD!

- 4. Don't try to live the Christian life by simply doing good!**
(That is too general a statement and is wholly inadequate because there is more to the Christian life than simply doing good!)

In order to live a life pleasing to the Lord, we must be growing and maturing Spiritually in our lives.

- 1. But don't confuse length of time saved with Spiritual maturity. (Hebrews 5:12-14)**
(Example—Their was an adult man living on the same road our family lived on when I was growing up by the name of Talmedge.

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Talmedge was about the same age as my mom, but Talmedge suffered brain damage as a six year old child. He had the body of an adult man but because of the brain damage he had the mind of a 6 year old child all the way until he died.

That was sad, but seeing a Christian that hasn't grown is sadder.

So, don't confuse length of time saved with Spiritual maturity.

2. **Don't confuse Bible knowledge with Spiritual maturity.** (James 1:22; 4:17)
3. **No matter how much we mature, there is room for more maturity.** (2 Peter 1:12-13; Philippians 3:12-14)
I may be your Pastor, but I'm still maturing! I still haven't arrived!

In the time we have left this evening, I want us to consider the life of Peter, the man who was used by the Holy Spirit to write this book:

1. **Peter was one of Christ's original twelve disciples**—He had seen the power of Christ first hand. (By that, I mean that he saw Christ healing the sick, raising the dead, multiplying the loaves and the fishes, and doing other miracles that only God could do.)
2. **Peter was a member of what we know as the "inner circle" of the disciples**—(Peter, James, and John)
As part of that "*inner circle*:"
 - a. He was there on the mountain where the Lord Jesus Christ was transfigured. (Matthew 17:1-8)
 - b. He was there in the Garden of Gethsemane. (Matthew 26:36-46)
3. **Peter knew what it was like to get it right.** (Matthew 16:13-17)

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4. **Peter knew what it was like to get it wrong.** (Matthew 16:21-23)
5. **Peter knew the agony of failing the Lord.** (Luke 22:61–62)
6. **Peter walked on the water.** (Matthew 14:22-32)
7. **Right after that, as his attention turned from Jesus to his circumstances, he sank in the same water.**
8. **Peter was then lifted out of the water by Christ.**
9. **Peter knew what it was like to be called of the Lord.**
 - a. **Jesus said "Follow me."** (Matthew 4:19)
 - b. **Jesus said "Feed My sheep" and "Follow Me."** (John 21:15ff)
10. **Peter knew what it was like to learn at the feet of Jesus.**
11. **Peter was in the upper room for the coming of the indwelling Holy Spirit.** (Acts 1:13)
12. **Peter knew the joy of being obedient to the Lord—**
 1. **There Was About 3000 Saved When He Preached On The Day Of Pentecost**—Acts 2
 2. **There Were Also Some Things He Experienced As An Apostle Of The Lord:**
 - a. He healed the lame man at the gate of the temple. (Acts 3)

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- b. He showed the Church the serious nature of sin. (Acts 5—Ananias & Sapphira)
- c. He was used of God to open the Gospel to the Gentiles. (Acts 10—Cornelius)
- d. He was delivered from prison by an angel in response to the prayer. (Acts 12:5ff)

13. And as he penned these words, Peter was about to know what it would mean to die for the Lord. (2 Peter 1:14; John 21:18-19)

Conclusion

Peter was once an immature believer, but he had grown into maturity.

When Peter was immature, he walked where **he** wanted to go. If we are walking where **we** want to go, we are immature too!

When Peter was mature, he walked where **the Saviour** wanted him to go. If we're walking where the Saviour wants us to go, no matter the consequences, then we have attained a degree of Spiritual maturity in our lives!

As we look into this portion of Scripture, we will discover that Peter, who grew into maturity, gives us God's plan for maturing us.

- 1) He Describes God's Part In The Process Of Maturity.
- 2) He Describes Our Part In The Process, Including 7 Steps To Spiritual Maturity.
- 3) He Promises Success To All Who Will Follow The Plan.

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In 2 Peter 1:1-4, we learn the Lord doesn't expect us to live by our own strength or knowledge.

God has given us His power and nature and has promised to help us.

If God wants us to walk on water, move a mountain, overcome temptation, forgive someone, show love to someone, or lead a person to Christ, we can be sure that He has already given us **all that we need** in order to do it.