

GROWING UP

What Christian Maturity Actually Looks Like (And Why So Many Never Reach It)

Introduction: The Thirty-Year-Old Baby

I've met a lot of Christians who have been believers for decades but are still spiritual infants.

They know the language. They know the songs. They know the routines.

But they can't digest solid food. They fall apart at the first sign of trouble. They get offended if you look at them wrong. They've never led anyone to Christ. They've never heard God speak to them directly—only through pastors or podcasts.

And nobody tells them the truth because nobody wants to be rude.

I'm going to be rude.

Not because I'm angry. Because I love you. And because the church is full of grown men and women drinking from baby bottles while the world starves around us.

Here's what I've learned after years of watching, failing, and growing:

Time does not equal maturity.

You can be a Christian for thirty years and still be a spiritual infant if you've never actually *grown*. You've just *aged*. And aging without maturing is tragic in the physical world. It's disastrous in the spiritual one.

This book is not for everyone.

It's for the person who suspects they're stuck. The one who has been coming to church for years but secretly knows something is missing. The one who wants to grow but doesn't know what growth actually looks like. The one who is tired of being bottle-fed and wants to learn how to hunt.

It's also for the person who thinks they're mature but isn't—and needs a mirror.

I'm not writing this from a place of superiority. I've been the infant. I've been the one who needed constant affirmation. I've been offended over nothing. I've been dependent on others to tell me what God said.

But I've also learned to hunt. I've learned to feed myself. I've learned what it costs to grow. And I'm still growing.

That's the thing about maturity: you never fully arrive. But you can stop being a baby.

That's what this book is about.

Let's grow up.

Chapter 1: What Immaturity Looks Like

Before we can talk about maturity, we have to name immaturity.

Not to shame anyone. But because you can't fix what you won't name.

I've seen immaturity wear a lot of masks. It shows up in deacons and pastors and worship leaders. It shows up in people who have been saved for forty years. It shows up in people who can quote Scripture but can't love their neighbor.

Here's what it actually looks like.

1. Selfishness disguised as "having needs"

The immature Christian talks constantly about what they need.

"I need more prayer."

"I need more attention."

"I need someone to check on me."

"I need this worship style."

"I need this translation."

And some of those needs are real. But immaturity makes every preference a need. The world revolves around them. Ministry exists to serve them. The church exists to meet their demands.

They rarely ask: *"What do others need? What does God need from me?"*

2. Offense as a lifestyle

This is the big one.

The immature Christian is always offended by something.

Someone didn't greet them at the door? Offended.

The sermon went too long? Offended.

The worship leader picked the wrong songs? Offended.

A brother or sister corrected them in love? Offended for weeks.

They collect offenses like badges of honor. They replay slights in their head. They rehearse conversations that never happened. They withdraw from relationships because someone said something they didn't like.

Proverbs 19:11 says: *"Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense."*

The immature Christian has no glory. They overlook nothing.

3. Constant need for affirmation

They need to be told they're doing well. Constantly.

If no one notices their service, they stop serving.

If no one compliments their prayer, they stop praying.

If no one affirms their gift, they feel rejected.

They can't function in secret. They can't serve without a shout-out. They need the stage, the mention, the thank-you card.

Maturity can wait for the reward that comes from God. Immaturity needs it now.

4. No spiritual fruit

Galatians 5:22-23 lists the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

The immature Christian knows the list. They can recite it. But look at their life and you don't see it.

- Are they patient? No. They're irritable.
- Are they peaceful? No. They're anxious and controlling.
- Are they kind? Only when it benefits them.

- Are they self-controlled? Their mouth, their temper, their spending, their screen time say otherwise.

They have the vocabulary of fruit but the orchard is empty.

5. Cannot receive correction

Watch what happens when someone gently confronts an immature Christian.

- They explode in anger.
- Or they withdraw in silence.
- Or they cry to manipulate.
- Or they change the subject.
- Or they blame someone else.

What they almost never do is say: *"You're right. I'm sorry. Help me change."*

Proverbs 12:1 says: *"Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates correction is stupid."*

Strong words. But true.

The immature Christian hates correction. Which means they stay stupid.

6. Gossip as primary communication

They don't confront. They complain.

They don't go to the person. They go to everyone *else* about the person.

They call it "sharing a prayer request" but there's no prayer happening. Just information. Just speculation. Just tearing down.

The immature Christian builds their relationships on a foundation of shared grievances. And they wonder why their friendships are shallow and temporary.

7. Love for the world disguised as "balance"

They want to look like Jesus on Sunday and like the world the rest of the week.

They call it "balance." But it's not balance. It's compromise.

The same movies. The same music. The same jokes. The same values. The same priorities as the world. Just with a little Jesus sprinkled on top.

1 John 2:15 says: *"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."*

The immature Christian reads that verse and thinks: *"But surely He doesn't mean MY movies. MY hobbies. MY career goals."*

Yes. He does.

8. Prayer only in crisis

They don't pray unless something is wrong.

No crisis? No prayer.

No sickness? No prayer.

No financial emergency? No prayer.

They treat God like a fire extinguisher—only useful when something is burning.

And then they wonder why they don't know His voice when the crisis hits.

9. Bible only when someone else opens it

They never open their Bible on their own.

They listen to sermons. They read devotionals. They follow along on the screen.

But a Bible in their own hands? In the quiet of their own room? Wrestling with the text? Asking questions? Meditating?

Rarely. If ever.

Their entire spiritual diet comes through a filter—someone else's sermon, someone else's book, someone else's interpretation.

And they've become weak because of it.

A Quick Test

Let me ask you honestly:

How many of these describe you?

- Selfishness disguised as needs
- Offense as a lifestyle
- Constant need for affirmation
- No spiritual fruit
- Cannot receive correction
- Gossip as communication
- Love for the world disguised as balance
- Prayer only in crisis
- Bible only when someone else opens it

One or two? You're human. Keep growing.

Three or four? You're stuck. Time to wake up.

Five or more? You're an infant in a grown-up's chair. And this book is for you.

Not to Shame, But to Save

I didn't write this chapter to make you feel bad.

I wrote it to make you see.

Because you can't fix what you won't name. And the church has been pretending immaturity is just "being a new believer" for way too long.

Some of you have been new believers for thirty years.

It's time to grow up.

Chapter 2: The Danger of Being Bottle-Fed Forever

Let me tell you something that might upset you.

A lot of churches *like* you immature.

Not consciously. Not with malice. But functionally.

Because immature Christians are:

- Easier to manage
- Less likely to ask hard questions

- More likely to stay in the seats
- More likely to give money
- Less likely to leave when things get uncomfortable

A mature Christian might say: *"Pastor, that sermon wasn't biblical."*

An immature Christian says: *"I liked the music."*

A mature Christian might say: *"We need to confront that sin in leadership."*

An immature Christian says: *"I don't want to get involved."*

A mature Christian might say: *"I feel called to start something new."*

An immature Christian says: *"What time does the service start?"*

Who do you think leadership finds easier to lead?

I'm not saying pastors are evil. Most of them are exhausted and overworked and genuinely love their people. But the system—the way we've structured church—rewards immaturity.

Keep them dependent. Keep them coming. Keep them consuming.

And never, ever challenge them to grow up.

The Unspoken Contract

Here's the deal that gets made in many churches without anyone saying it out loud:

We will keep feeding you milk—easy sermons, shallow worship, feel-good messages—if you keep showing up, keep giving, and don't cause any trouble.

You don't have to grow. You don't have to serve. You don't have to hunt for food. Just stay in your seat and we'll call you faithful.

And both sides pretend this is Christianity.

It's not. It's a mutual agreement to stay shallow.

Paul called it out two thousand years ago:

"I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not ready, for you are still of the flesh." (1 Corinthians 3:1-3)

He didn't celebrate their immaturity. He grieved it.

"Even now you are not ready."

They should have been ready. They should have grown up. But they stayed infants.

And Paul didn't adjust his ministry to make them comfortable. He told them the truth.

What Happens When You Never Wean

A baby who never weans doesn't stay a cute infant forever. They become a malnourished adult.

Same in the spirit.

When you stay on milk for decades:

- Your spiritual muscles atrophy
- You can't digest hard teachings (judgment, suffering, holiness, surrender)
- You remain dependent on others to hear God for you
- You become easily offended because you've never developed emotional resilience
- You produce no fruit because fruit comes from deep roots, not shallow soil

The writer of Hebrews was even blunter:

"For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil." (Hebrews 5:12-14)

"By this time you ought to be teachers."

But they weren't. They were still on milk. Still needing someone to hold the spoon.

And the writer didn't say "that's fine, take your time." He said *you should be ashamed*.

The Difference Between Milk and Meat

Let me clarify what I mean.

Milk is:

- The basics: Jesus loves you, God is good, sin is bad
- Easy to digest
- Comforting and familiar
- Necessary for newborns

Meat is:

- Deeper doctrines: the nature of God, the cost of discipleship, spiritual warfare, suffering, holiness, judgment, the unseen realm
- Requires chewing, thinking, wrestling
- Sometimes uncomfortable or challenging
- For those who have trained themselves to handle it

Milk is not bad. New believers need milk. But if you're still on milk after years of walking with Jesus, something is wrong.

You should be hungry for more. You should be bored with the basics. You should be asking harder questions.

If you're not, you're not growing. You're just repeating.

Why Churches Keep You on Milk

I need to say this plainly.

Some churches keep people on milk because:

1. It's safe – Milk doesn't offend anyone. Meat does.
2. It's easy – Milk doesn't require training to serve. Meat does.
3. It keeps the seats full – People leave when you challenge them.
4. It requires less of leadership – Meat takes time, depth, preparation, prayer.
5. It's profitable – Milk sells. Meat doesn't.

I'm not saying every church does this consciously. But many do it functionally. The system is set up to produce consumers, not disciples.

And consumers pay. Disciples cost.

What About You?

Here's where I get personal.

Are you being bottle-fed?

- Do you only hear God through your pastor?
- Do you only open your Bible when someone tells you to?
- Do you get restless or defensive when the sermon gets too deep?

- Do you prefer feel-good messages over ones that challenge you?
- Have you been a Christian for years but still can't explain the gospel to someone else?

If you answered yes to most of these, you're on the bottle.

And it's not your pastor's fault. It's yours.

Because at some point, you have to decide to grow up. No one can do it for you. No amount of good preaching will make you mature if you're not hungry for it.

The food is available. The question is: are you willing to chew?

A Loving Warning

I'm not writing this to make you leave your church.

I'm writing it to make you examine your diet.

Maybe your church is solid and you're the problem—you've been coasting, not chewing, showing up but not growing.

Or maybe your church is the problem—they only serve milk because meat would empty the seats.

Either way, the solution is the same:

You have to start hunting for yourself.

That's the next chapter.

But first, let this sink in:

Being bottle-fed your whole life is not faithfulness. It's failure to launch.

And the church is full of thirty-year-old babies who should be parents by now.

Don't be one of them.

Chapter 3: When the Milk Is Bad – False Teaching and Indoctrination

Not all milk is good milk.

That's the thing about being bottle-fed. You're trusting whoever is holding the bottle.

And if the person holding the bottle is feeding you poison, you don't know any better. Because you never learned to feed yourself.

This is how false teaching spreads. Not through obvious heresy that everyone recognizes. But through *slightly* wrong milk that gets passed down generation after generation until no one even questions it anymore.

The Two-Hundred-Year Lie

Here's what happens.

A teacher says something that's almost true. Not obviously false. Just... off.

Someone else repeats it. Then a pastor preaches it. Then a seminary teaches it. Then a denomination builds a statement of faith around it.

Two hundred years later, no one even remembers where it came from. But everyone believes it. And if you question it, you're the heretic.

This isn't hypothetical. It's happened hundreds of times.

- Doctrines that add to grace (faith + works for salvation)
- Doctrines that subtract from grace (once saved always saved no matter how you live)
- Doctrines about prosperity (God wants you rich)
- Doctrines about suffering (God never wants you sick)
- Doctrines about the Holy Spirit (He doesn't do that anymore)
- Doctrines about worship (only this style is acceptable)

All of these started somewhere. Someone taught them. Others repeated them. And now generations of Christians believe things the Bible doesn't actually say because they never learned to check for themselves.

They trusted the bottle.

But the bottle was bad.

The Bereans Were Better

Acts 17:11 gives us a model:

"Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so."

Paul himself—the apostle Paul—preached to the Bereans. And they didn't just nod and accept it.

They *examined*. They *checked*. They went to the Scriptures themselves to see if what Paul said was true.

And the Bible calls them *more noble* for doing it.

Not rebellious. Not suspicious. Not divisive.

Noble.

Because God doesn't want blind followers. He wants sons and daughters who know His voice and can test what they hear against His Word.

The Bereans were not immature. They were the opposite. They were hunters. They didn't need someone to tell them what to believe. They verified it for themselves.

Most Christians today wouldn't last five minutes in Berea.

They'd say: *"But Pastor said..."* or *"But my denomination teaches..."* or *"But my favorite YouTuber..."*

And the Bereans would say: *"What does the Scripture say?"*

How to Spot Bad Milk

Let me give you some tools.

Bad milk often has these characteristics:

1. It makes you dependent on the teacher.

If you can only "hear God" through this specific person—if their teaching is the only thing that feeds you—that's a red flag. A good teacher points you to Jesus and the Word. A bad teacher points you to themselves.

2. It adds to Scripture.

"The Bible says this, BUT God told me..."

If someone is adding new revelation that contradicts or adds to the completed canon of Scripture, run. God doesn't give new doctrine outside the Bible. He illuminates what's already there.

3. It subtracts from Scripture.

"That verse doesn't apply anymore."

"We don't really have to do that."

"That was for a different time."

Jesus said: *"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God"* (Matthew 4:4). Every word. Not just the comfortable ones.

4. It makes you feel good without changing you.

Bad milk comforts without confronting. It soothes without challenging. It leaves you feeling blessed but unchanged.

Good teaching may comfort, but it also cuts. It brings the cross. It demands a response.

5. It isolates you from other believers.

"Only our group really gets it."

"Don't listen to them."

"We have the truth and everyone else is deceived."

That's a cult, not a church. Mature Christians can disagree without isolating. They can learn from people outside their tribe.

The Danger of Indoctrination

Here's what indoctrination does:

It replaces *thinking* with *memorizing*.

It replaces *questioning* with *accepting*.

It replaces *relationship with God* with *loyalty to a system*.

An indoctrinated person can recite the creed but can't defend the faith. They know what they believe but not *why* they believe it. And if you challenge them with Scripture, they get defensive—not because they're protecting truth, but because you're threatening their security.

Indoctrination feels like safety. But it's actually a prison.

Because if you've only ever been told *what* to think, you've never learned *how* to think. And when the crisis comes—when the teacher falls or the doctrine crumbles—you have nothing to stand on.

The mature Christian isn't indoctrinated. They're *grounded*. They've done the work. They've wrestled with the text. They've asked the hard questions and found answers. They can give a reason for the hope within them (1 Peter 3:15).

A Test for Your Own Beliefs

Ask yourself:

- Can I find this in Scripture for myself, or do I just trust someone who said it?
- Would I believe this if no pastor ever preached it?
- Have I ever changed my mind about a doctrine because the Bible convinced me?
- Do I know what I believe and *why* I believe it?
- Could I explain the gospel to someone else without using Christian clichés?

If you're struggling with these questions, you might be running on secondhand faith.

And secondhand faith won't survive a storm.

What to Do If You've Been Drinking Bad Milk

First, don't panic. And don't get angry at the people who taught you. Most of them meant well. They passed on what they were given.

But now it's time to do what they didn't do:

Go to the source.

Open your Bible. Not a devotional. Not a commentary. Not a YouTube video. The Bible. Start reading. Start asking. *"God, what do You actually say about this?"*

Compare what you've been taught to what the text actually says.

- If it matches, good. You have deeper roots now.
- If it doesn't, you have a choice: keep believing the tradition or follow the Word.

The mature Christian follows the Word. Even when it's uncomfortable. Even when it means leaving a tradition. Even when it costs you relationships.

Because bad milk, drunk long enough, becomes poison.

And poison kills.

A Final Word for This Chapter

I'm not saying you need to be suspicious of every teacher. That's paranoia, not maturity.

I'm saying you need to *verify*.

Be like the Bereans. Receive the word with eagerness—but examine the Scriptures daily to see if these things are so.

Don't outsource your spiritual discernment to anyone.

Not your pastor.
Not your denomination.
Not your favorite author.
Not your grandmother.
Not me.

The Holy Spirit lives in you. You have the Word in your hands.

Use them.

Chapter 4: The Danger of Being Fed by Others – Even Good Ones

Now let me say something that might sound strange.

Even *good* teachers can be dangerous.

Not because they're false. Not because they're deceiving you. But because *dependency* on anyone—even the best teacher—will stunt your growth.

Let me explain.

The Problem Isn't the Teacher. It's Your Dependency.

There's nothing wrong with listening to good preaching. Nothing wrong with reading good books. Nothing wrong with learning from people who have gone deeper than you.

Paul said "*imitate me as I imitate Christ*" (1 Corinthians 11:1). He wasn't against following human examples.

But he also said "*you do not need anyone to teach you*" (1 John 2:27). John wasn't contradicting Paul. He was making a different point:

The Holy Spirit is your ultimate Teacher. And if you become dependent on human teachers to hear from God, you've put a ceiling on your growth.

Here's what I've seen happen:

A person listens to a great preacher. They learn a lot. They grow. They're fed.

But over time, something shifts. They stop opening their own Bible. They stop praying expectantly. They stop wrestling with hard passages. They just... consume.

Sermon after sermon. Podcast after podcast. Book after book.

And they're *full* of information. But they're *weak* in the Spirit.

Why?

Because secondhand food is never as nourishing as food you hunted yourself.

Secondhand Faith Is Weak Faith

Let me ask you something.

If your pastor disappeared tomorrow—if all your favorite teachers stopped making content—would your faith survive?

I don't mean intellectually. I mean practically. Would you still hear God? Would you still know how to feed yourself? Would you still have joy, peace, power?

Or would you shrivel?

The answer to that question tells you how dependent you really are.

Secondhand faith is faith that relies on someone else to:

- Interpret Scripture for you
- Hear God for you
- Motivate you to pray
- Convince you to obey

It's not *false* faith necessarily. It's just *weak* faith. Like a plant that only grows when someone waters it. The moment the water stops, it wilts.

Mature faith is like a tree planted by streams of water (Psalm 1:3). It sends its own roots down deep. It doesn't need someone to bring a bucket every day.

How to Know If You're Dependent

Here's a diagnostic test.

You might be dependent if:

- You can't remember the last time you opened your Bible without someone telling you to
- You only pray when you're in a group or at church
- You need a sermon to feel close to God
- You've never heard God speak to you directly from Scripture (only through a teacher's explanation)
- You feel lost or anxious when you don't have a podcast or sermon playing
- You measure your spiritual growth by how much content you consume, not by how much you've changed

You might be mature if:

- You regularly open your Bible on your own and God meets you there
- You can sit in silence and hear from the Holy Spirit
- You test what you hear from teachers against what you've already learned from Scripture

- You can feed yourself when no one else is feeding you
- Your faith doesn't depend on a weekly sermon to survive

I'm not saying you should stop listening to teachers. I'm saying you should stop *needing* them to survive.

There's a difference between *appreciating* a teacher and *depending* on a teacher.

One is healthy. The other is dangerous.

The Holy Spirit Is Your Primary Teacher

Jesus promised this:

"The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you"
(John 14:26).

Not a pastor. Not a seminary. Not a commentary.

The Holy Spirit.

Now, the Holy Spirit uses human teachers. He uses the church. He uses books and sermons and conversations. I'm not denying that.

But the Holy Spirit is not *limited* to human teachers.

He can teach you directly from the Word.

He can wake you up at 3am with a verse.

He can illuminate a passage you've read a hundred times.

He can show you something no commentator ever noticed.

And He wants to.

But He won't force you. If you're satisfied with secondhand faith, He'll let you stay there. But you'll be weaker for it.

The Difference Between Knowing About God and Knowing God

This is the heart of the issue.

Secondhand faith gives you *knowledge about* God.

Firsthand faith gives you *knowledge of* God.

You can know that God is love because someone told you.

Or you can know that God is love because He showed you. Because you experienced it. Because He spoke it to your heart from His Word.

One is information. The other is transformation.

You can know the doctrine of grace.

Or you can know the God of grace.

You can recite the theology of the cross.

Or you can stand at the foot of the cross in your spirit and weep.

Maturity isn't about having more information. It's about having *deeper encounter*.

And you can't encounter God through someone else's sermon. You have to show up yourself.

What About Pastors and Teachers?

Let me be clear so no one misunderstands.

I am not saying:

- Stop going to church
- Stop listening to sermons
- Stop reading Christian books
- Stop learning from mature believers

That's not maturity. That's isolation. And isolation is its own kind of immaturity.

What I am saying is:

Don't let those things replace your personal relationship with God.

The sermon is not your spiritual meal. It's a supplement. Your personal time in the Word and prayer is the meal.

The podcast is not your lifeline. The Holy Spirit is.

The teacher is not your mediator. Jesus is.

Use the gifts God has given the church. But don't idolize them. Don't depend on them for what only God can give you.

A Story

I knew a man once who listened to sermons constantly. Driving. Working. Exercising. Falling asleep.

He had a lot of knowledge. He could quote preachers. He knew the latest teachings.

But he didn't pray. He didn't read his Bible on his own. He didn't sit in silence and listen for God.

And when a crisis hit—when his marriage fell apart and his faith was shaken—all those sermons didn't help him.

Because he had never learned to hear God for himself.

He had a full stomach. But it was all secondhand food. And when the famine came, he starved.

Don't be that man.

A Challenge

For one week, try this:

No sermons. No podcasts. No Christian YouTube. No devotionals. No books.

Just you, your Bible, and the Holy Spirit.

Open the Word. Read it slowly. Ask God to speak to you. Sit in silence. Write down what you hear.

See if you survive.

See if you thrive.

You might be surprised how much God has been waiting to say to you—if you'd just stop letting others speak for Him.

Chapter 5: You Have to Go Hunting – Feeding Yourself on the Word

Here's where the rubber meets the road.

Everything so far has been diagnosis. Immaturity. Bottle-feeding. Bad milk. Dependency.

Now we get to the cure.

You have to learn to hunt.

Not wait to be fed. Not depend on someone else to put food in your mouth.
Not sit in the nest with your mouth open, hoping mama bird drops something in.

Hunt.

Go find your own food. Kill it. Clean it. Cook it. Eat it.

This is what separates the infants from the adults in the Kingdom of God.

The Hunting Christian vs. The Fed Christian

Let me draw a contrast.

The Fed Christian

The Hunting Christian

Waits for the sermon

Opens the Bible daily

Needs a podcast to pray

Prays without a prompt

Reads devotionals

Reads whole books of the Bible

Knows what others say about God

Knows God for themselves

Shallow roots

Deep roots

Shaken by wind

Stands firm

Dependent

Dangerous

The fed Christian is a consumer. They show up, open their mouth, and swallow what's given. If the food stops, they starve.

The hunting Christian is a son or daughter. They take responsibility for their own growth. They go after God themselves. If the church shut down tomorrow, they'd still be fine—because they know how to find food.

Which one are you?

Why Hunting Is Non-Negotiable

Because the Holy Spirit doesn't just speak through sermons.

He speaks through the Word. Directly. Personally. Specifically.

But you won't hear Him if you never open the Book yourself.

Here's something that might shock you:

The average Christian spends more time reading social media in one day than reading the Bible in a week.

The average Christian watches more hours of television in a month than they spend in the Word in a year.

And then they wonder why they're weak. Why they can't hear God. Why their prayers feel empty. Why they have no power.

You're starving. And you're waiting for someone to feed you a meal once a week while you ignore the feast sitting on your nightstand.

The Bible is not a decoration. It's not a good luck charm. It's not a book you put on a shelf to show you're religious.

It's *food*.

And you have to eat it.

What Hunting Looks Like

Let me be practical. Because "hunt" sounds cool, but you need to know what it actually means.

Step 1: Get a Bible you'll actually read.

Not the one with the fancy cover that's too nice to mark up. Get one you can write in. Underline. Scribble notes. Get dirty.

Translation matters less than you think. Just get one you understand. NIV. ESV. NASB. CSB. Even a good paraphrase like NLT to start. Just get one and read it.

Step 2: Set a time and place.

Hunting requires intentionality. You don't stumble into deer. You go looking.

Same with the Word. Pick a time. Pick a place. Protect it.

Early morning works for many. Others find time at lunch or after kids go to bed. Doesn't matter when. Just make it consistent.

Your phone will fight you. The enemy will distract you. Your own flesh will make excuses.

Hunt anyway.

Step 3: Read. Don't just scan.

Read slowly. Read out loud if it helps. Read until something catches your attention.

A verse. A phrase. A word. Something the Holy Spirit highlights.

Stop there. Sit with it. Chew on it.

This is the difference between scanning a menu and eating a meal. Scanning gives you information. Chewing gives you nourishment.

Step 4: Ask questions.

- What does this say about God?
- What does this say about me?
- Is there a promise to claim?
- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there a sin to confess?
- Is there an example to follow?

Don't rush to answers. Just ask. Let the questions simmer.

Step 5: Talk to God about it.

Pray the Scripture back to Him.

"Father, You said You are my shepherd. I confess I've been acting like I'm my own shepherd. Help me trust You to lead me."

This turns reading into conversation. And conversation is where relationship grows.

Step 6: Write it down.

Keep a journal. Doesn't have to be fancy. Just write what God showed you. Write your questions. Write your prayers.

This does two things:

- It helps you remember
- It gives you a record of how God speaks to you over time

Six months from now, you'll look back and see His faithfulness. And that will feed you when you're hungry again.

Step 7: Obey it.

This is the most important step.

James 1:22 says: *"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."*

If God shows you something and you ignore it, you just ate and vomited. No nourishment. Worse than not reading at all.

Obedience is digestion. It's how the food becomes part of you.

But I Don't Know How to Study the Bible

Good. That means you're humble enough to learn.

You don't need a theology degree. You don't need to know Greek and Hebrew. You don't need a library of commentaries.

You need a Bible, the Holy Spirit, and hunger.

Start with the Gospels. Read about Jesus. Watch Him. Listen to Him. Learn to love Him.

Then read the Psalms. Pray them back to God.

Then read Proverbs. Ask for wisdom.

Then read Acts. See how the early church lived.

Then read the letters. Learn what the apostles taught.

Then read the Old Testament. See the story of God's faithfulness.

You don't have to understand everything. You won't. Nobody does. Just keep showing up.

A little bit every day is better than a lot once a month.

What Hunting Will Produce

When you start feeding yourself—really feeding yourself—things will change.

- You'll hear God more clearly
- You'll sin less (not perfectly, but less)
- You'll love people more genuinely
- You'll have answers when people ask about your faith
- You'll be harder to deceive
- You'll have peace in chaos
- You'll have joy when circumstances are bad
- You'll walk in power you didn't have before

Not because you're special. Because you're *fed*.

A well-fed soldier fights better. A well-fed child grows stronger. A well-fed Christian walks in authority.

This isn't magic. It's just the way God designed it.

His Word is alive. It's active. It's sharper than any double-edged sword (Hebrews 4:12).

But a sword in the sheath doesn't help anyone.

Pull it out. Learn to use it. Go to war.

A Final Word for This Chapter

I can't make you hunt. No one can.

You have to want it. You have to be hungry enough to close the apps, turn off the TV, get up earlier, stay up later, and open the Book.

The food is there.

The Spirit is willing.

But are you?

The hunting Christian doesn't wait for permission. They don't wait for the right mood. They don't wait for someone to lead them.

They go.

Be that Christian.

Chapter 6: That's Where You Hear God

Now we get to the heart of it.

You've learned to hunt. You're opening the Book. You're reading. You're asking questions. You're chewing.

But here's what you're really after:

Hearing God.

Not just reading words on a page. Not just gaining information. Not just checking a box.

Hearing *Him*. The living God. The One who spoke the universe into existence. The One who still speaks today.

And here's the truth most Christians miss:

The primary way God speaks to His people is through His Word.

Not visions (though those happen). Not dreams (though those happen).
Not prophecies (though those happen). Not feelings (though those happen).

The Bible.

God Still Speaks

Let me be clear: I believe God still speaks today. He's not silent. He's not done. He's not just a God of the past.

But He's also not a God of chaos. He doesn't contradict Himself. He doesn't say something in 2026 that He condemned in 33 AD.

So how do you know if you're actually hearing God?

The answer is simple and profound:

What you hear will always align with what He's already said.

That's why hunting in the Word is so important. That's why you can't skip Chapter 5. Because the Word is the tuning fork. It's the plumb line. It's the filter.

If you think you're hearing God say something that contradicts Scripture, you're not hearing God. You're hearing something else—your own thoughts, your emotions, your desires, or something darker.

But if what you're hearing aligns with Scripture—if it flows from the same heart, the same character, the same truth—then you can trust it.

And that's where maturity grows.

The Difference Between Reading and Hearing

Let me make a distinction.

You can read the Bible without hearing God.
But you cannot hear God apart from the Bible.

Wait—let me clarify that second part. God can speak outside the Bible. He's God. He can do whatever He wants. But He will never speak *against* the Bible, and the primary, most reliable, most accessible way He speaks is through His written Word.

So here's the difference:

Reading is scanning the text. Getting through the chapter. Doing your duty. Checking the box.

Hearing is encountering the Author. Feeling the weight of His words. Sensing His presence. Receiving His specific word for your specific situation.

You can read a love letter from your spouse and just... read it. Or you can read it and *hear* their voice. Their heart. Their love.

Same words. Different posture.

The hunting Christian reads the Bible *to hear God*. Not to finish. Not to feel religious. To *listen*.

How to Hear God When You Read

Let me give you some practical gates.

1. Come hungry.

Don't open the Bible out of duty. Open it out of desperation. You need Him to speak. You'll die if He doesn't. That's hunger.

Hungry people hear better. They're paying attention. They're not distracted by snacks.

2. Come quiet.

Turn off the noise. Put the phone in another room. Close the tabs. Silence the notifications.

You cannot hear God with one ear on the world.

3. Come expectant.

Believe that He wants to speak. Believe that He *will* speak. Expectation is the soil where hearing grows.

If you open the Bible thinking "this is probably just an ancient book," you're right—that's all it will be.

If you open it thinking "the living God wants to speak to me through these words," you're right too. And you'll hear.

4. Ask before you read.

Simple prayer: *"Lord, speak to me. I'm listening. Open my eyes to see wonderful things in Your law"* (Psalm 119:18).

Then read.

5. Read slowly.

Speed-reading the Bible is like speed-eating a gourmet meal. You get full but you miss the taste.

Read a little. Stop. Chew. Ask: *"What are You saying here?"*

6. Listen for the whisper.

God doesn't usually shout. He whispers. A nudge. A phrase that sticks. A verse that glows. A sudden connection you hadn't seen before.

That's Him.

Don't dismiss it. Don't say "that's just me thinking." It might be both. He speaks through your thinking when your mind is soaked in His Word.

7. Write what you hear.

Keep a journal. Write the verse. Write what you think He's saying. Write your response.

This does two things:

- It makes it real
- It gives you a record to look back on

Months later, you'll see how He was speaking all along.

What Hearing God Sounds Like

People ask me: *"What does it actually sound like?"*

Most of the time, it doesn't sound like an audible voice. It's quieter than that.

It's more like:

- A verse you've read a hundred times suddenly hits you differently
- A word or phrase jumps off the page
- A question forms in your mind that you know didn't come from you
- A sense of conviction, comfort, direction, or warning
- An answer to something you've been praying about

It's not always dramatic. But it's *real*. And over time, you learn to recognize His voice.

Jesus said: *"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me"* (John 10:27).

Notice He didn't say "My sheep *might* hear My voice" or "My sheep *should try harder* to hear My voice."

He said "*My sheep hear My voice.*"

It's a characteristic. It's normal. It's expected.

If you're not hearing Him, it's not because He's not speaking. It's because you're not listening. Or you're listening to too many other voices. Or you haven't learned to recognize His yet.

Keep hunting. Keep listening. You'll learn.

Testing What You Hear

Not every thought is from God.

Not every nudge is the Holy Spirit.

You have to test it.

Here's how:

1. Does it align with Scripture?

If what you're hearing contradicts the Bible, reject it immediately. God doesn't contradict Himself.

2. Does it align with the character of God?

Would Jesus say this? Would the God of love, holiness, mercy, and justice say this? If it's mean, petty, vengeful, or greedy, it's not Him.

3. Does it produce peace? (Not comfortable peace—*holy* peace.)

Sometimes God's word disturbs us first. It convicts. It confronts. But underneath, there's a peace that says "*this is right.*"

If it produces constant anxiety, confusion, or fear, be cautious. God is not the author of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33).

4. Does wise counsel confirm it?

Proverbs 11:14 says: *"Where there is no guidance, a people falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety."*

Run it by someone mature. Someone who knows the Word. Someone who will tell you the truth.

If they're skeptical, don't ignore them. Ask why. Test further.

5. Does it bear fruit?

Jesus said you'll know false prophets by their fruit (Matthew 7:16).

Same with impressions. If following what you think you heard leads to good fruit—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control—it was probably God.

If it leads to chaos, division, sin, or destruction, it wasn't.

A Warning About Feelings

Here's where a lot of Christians get off track.

They chase feelings. They want the goosebumps. They want the tears. They want the dramatic.

And because they chase feelings, they end up hearing all kinds of things that aren't God.

Feelings are not bad. God often moves our emotions. But feelings are not the *measure* of whether you heard God.

Sometimes God speaks and it feels like nothing.
Sometimes your flesh manufactures feelings and calls it God.

Test what you hear. Don't just go by how you feel.

The Word is the anchor. If what you heard is in the Word, you can trust it—whether you feel it or not.

The Goal: Familiarity with His Voice

The goal of hunting in the Word is not just information. It's not just discipline. It's not even just spiritual growth.

The goal is *familiarity*.

You want to get to the place where you know His voice like you know your mother's voice. Like you know your spouse's voice. You don't have to analyze it. You just *know*.

And the only way to get there is time. Time in the Word. Time listening. Time testing. Time obeying.

The more you hear Him, the better you recognize Him.

The better you recognize Him, the clearer He speaks.

The clearer He speaks, the more you walk in confidence and power.

This is the path of maturity.

Not chasing experiences. Not accumulating knowledge.

Learning to hear and follow the Shepherd.

A Prayer for Hearing

If you want to hear Him, pray something like this:

"Father, I confess I've been listening to too many other voices. The world. My flesh. The enemy. My own fears and desires. I've neglected Your Word. I've settled for secondhand faith. But I want more. I want to hear You. Give me hunger. Give me discipline. Open my eyes as I read. Train my ears to recognize Your voice. I'm listening now. Speak, Lord. Your servant is listening."

Then open the Book.

And listen.

Chapter 7: You Have to Eat to Become Strong – Not Just to Survive

There's a difference between eating to survive and eating to become strong.

Survival eating is a bowl of rice a day. It keeps you alive. Barely. No energy. No muscle. No reserves.

Strength eating is protein. Vegetables. Real food. Enough calories to build something.

Most Christians are survival eaters.

They consume just enough spiritual food to stay conscious. A Sunday sermon. A short prayer before bed. A verse on Instagram.

They're not dying. But they're not thriving either.

And the church is full of undernourished, weak, barely-standing believers who have no idea why they have no power.

You're not just supposed to survive.

You're supposed to be strong.

The Purpose of Food Is Strength

Let's go back to the basics.

Why do you eat?

Not just to stop the hunger pains. To *fuel* something.

- A soldier eats to fight
- An athlete eats to perform
- A parent eats to keep up with kids
- A worker eats to labor

The food is not the goal. The *strength* the food produces is the goal.

Same in the spirit.

The Word and prayer are not the goal. They're the fuel. The goal is what you *do* with that fuel.

- Fight the enemy
- Serve the saints
- Share the gospel
- Endure suffering
- Walk in power
- Build the Kingdom

If you're eating but not doing any of those things, you're not eating for strength. You're eating for entertainment. Or habit. Or guilt relief.

And that's not maturity. That's just a full stomach on a couch.

What Spiritual Strength Looks Like

Let me paint a picture.

A spiritually strong Christian:

- Can pray for an hour without falling asleep or running out of things to say. Not because they're special. Because they've trained their attention span and they actually enjoy being with God.
- Can fast without becoming a monster. They've learned that hunger is not an emergency. They've built the spiritual muscle of self-denial.
- Can forgive the unforgivable. Not because it's easy. Because they've eaten enough of God's forgiveness to have some to give away.
- Can share their faith without fear. Not because they're naturally bold. Because they've eaten so much of the gospel that it spills out of them.
- Can endure suffering without cursing God. Not because they're stoic. Because they've eaten enough of God's character to trust Him when life falls apart.
- Can confront sin in love. Not because they enjoy conflict. Because they've eaten enough truth to speak it and enough grace to speak it kindly.
- Can wait without panicking. Not because they're patient by nature. Because they've eaten enough of God's faithfulness to know He always comes through.

These are not personality traits. These are *strength* traits. They come from eating well over a long period of time.

The Test of Strength

Here's how you know if you're eating for strength or just for survival.

Ask yourself:

- Can I pray for 30 minutes without looking at my phone?
- Can I go a day without eating and still be loving to my family?
- Can I forgive someone who hasn't apologized?
- Can I tell my coworker about Jesus without rehearsing it first?
- Can I sing worship songs when my life is falling apart?
- Can I say "no" to my flesh when it screams for satisfaction?
- Can I keep serving when no one notices or thanks me?

If you answered "no" to most of these, you're weak. Not condemned—*weak*. And weakness is not a sin. But staying weak when food is available *is*.

You don't need more information. You don't need a new anointing. You don't need a special conference.

You need to *eat more*.

From Surviving to Thriving

Let me tell you something the survival-eater doesn't know:

Thriving is possible.

Not just surviving. Not just getting by. Not just barely holding on.

Thriving.

Joy that isn't tied to circumstances. Peace that doesn't make sense. Power that surprises even you. Love that flows without effort.

This is not hype. This is the normal Christian life.

But you can't get there on a starvation diet.

You have to feast.

- Feast on the Word—not a verse, but whole books
- Feast in prayer—not a quick list, but hours of communion
- Feast in worship—not just songs, but lifestyle adoration
- Feast in community—not just attendance, but vulnerability and service
- Feast in obedience—not just avoiding sin, but running hard after righteousness

This is not legalism. This is *eating*.

A baby doesn't feast. A baby takes a little milk and falls asleep.

An adult feasts. And then they have energy to work, to fight, to build, to love.

Which one are you?

The Danger of Eating Just Enough

Here's what happens when you eat just enough to survive:

- You're always tired
- You're easily offended
- You're tempted by every little thing
- You have no answers when people ask about your faith
- You fall apart in trials
- You have no power for healing or deliverance
- You're useless to the Kingdom

You're alive. But you're not *dangerous*.

And the enemy is not afraid of a Christian who is barely surviving. He's afraid of a Christian who is *strong*. One who has eaten well. One who is full of the Word and the Spirit.

That Christian can cast out demons. That Christian can heal the sick. That Christian can stand before kings. That Christian can face martyrdom with joy.

That Christian is dangerous.

And that Christian is what God intended you to be.

How to Move from Survival to Strength

Here's the practical path.

1. Increase your portion.

If you're reading one chapter a day, read three.

If you're praying five minutes, pray twenty.

If you're fasting once a year, fast once a month.

Don't double it overnight. You'll burn out. But increase. Stretch your capacity.

2. Add resistance.

Muscles grow under load. Same spiritually.

- Add a day of fasting
- Add an hour of prayer
- Add a discipline of silence
- Add a commitment to memorize Scripture

It will be hard at first. That's how you know it's working.

3. Cut the junk.

You can't eat steak and then fill up on candy.

If you're filling your mind with entertainment, social media, news, noise—you're not hungry for the real food. Cut the junk. Watch your appetite return.

4. Eat with others.

You can hunt alone. But you feast with family.

Find a few people who want to be strong. Eat together. Pray together. Fight together.

Strength is contagious. So is weakness. Choose your company wisely.

5. Keep eating even when you don't feel like it.

Feelings are liars. Some days you won't feel hungry. Eat anyway.

Some days you won't feel like praying. Pray anyway.

Discipline becomes desire over time. But you have to start with discipline.

A Picture of Strength

I want you to see something.

Imagine a Christian who has eaten well for years.

- Their Bible is worn out from use
- Their prayer life is as natural as breathing
- Their joy is unshakeable
- Their peace is confusing to their enemies
- Their love is undeniable
- Their words carry weight
- Their presence shifts atmospheres

That person doesn't brag about their strength. They don't have to.

It just *shows*.

People feel it. Demons fear it. Angels recognize it.

That person didn't get there by accident. They got there by eating. Day after day. Year after year. Not for survival. For strength.

That could be you.

A Hard Question

Are you eating to survive or to become strong?

Be honest.

If you're just surviving, admit it. No shame. But then change.

The food is on the table. The Spirit is inviting you. The table is spread.

But you have to eat.

Not a little. Not just enough to stop the hunger pains.

Eat until you're strong.

The Kingdom needs soldiers, not invalids. The enemy is not afraid of the undernourished.

Get strong.

Chapter 8: Strong Enough to Feed Others – That's the Goal

Now we get to the purpose of it all.

Why do you need to be strong? Not for yourself.

You need to be strong so you can feed others.

This is where maturity is tested. Not by how much you know. Not by how long you pray. Not by how many verses you've memorized.

By whether anyone is being fed because of you.

The Shift from Consumer to Provider

Every Christian starts as a consumer.

You come to the table hungry. Someone feeds you. You grow. You get stronger.

That's the infant stage. Necessary. Good. But not the destination.

The goal is to become a *provider*.

Someone who doesn't just take food but gives it. Someone who doesn't just need ministry but ministers. Someone who doesn't just sit in the seat but serves the ones still sitting.

The writer of Hebrews was frustrated because by the time he wrote, his readers *should have been teachers*. But they still needed someone to teach them the basics (Hebrews 5:12).

They were still consumers. Still on the bottle. Still taking, not giving.

And that's not maturity. That's arrested development.

What Feeding Others Looks Like

Feeding others is not just preaching sermons on a stage.

Most of you will never stand behind a pulpit. That's fine. Feeding others looks like:

- Mentoring – Sitting with a younger believer, answering their questions, praying with them, showing them how to hunt
- Encouraging – Speaking life into someone who is discouraged, helping them see God's faithfulness when they can't see it themselves
- Teaching – Explaining a passage, sharing what God has shown you, helping someone understand something that used to confuse you
- Correcting – Gently, lovingly, pointing a brother or sister back to the path when they've wandered (Galatians 6:1)
- Modeling – Letting others watch your life and see what it looks like to follow Jesus when it's hard
- Serving – Meeting practical needs so someone else has the margin to seek God

Feeding others is not about having a title. It's about having *food* and being willing to share it.

And here's the test: Are there people in your life who are spiritually healthier because of you?

Not because of your pastor. Not because of a conference. Not because of a book.

Because of *you*.

If the answer is no, you're not mature yet. You're still a consumer. And it's time to change.

The Progression of Maturity

Let me lay it out simply.

Infant – Needs to be fed constantly. Cannot feed themselves. Cannot feed others. Everything is about their needs, their feelings, their comfort.

Child – Can feed themselves some of the time. Still needs help with the hard parts. Starting to think about others but mostly still self-focused.

Young Adult – Can feed themselves consistently. Has enough to share occasionally. Starting to see the needs of others and respond.

Parent – Feeds themselves daily. Has abundance to share. Actively looking for people to feed. Their joy comes from seeing others grow.

Grandparent – Feeds themselves. Feeds others. Raises up parents who will raise up more. Multiplies their impact across generations.

Where are you?

Most Christians never get past "child." Some get stuck at "infant" for decades.

But God is looking for parents. People who can say: *"I have food. Come eat with me."*

The Joy of Feeding Others

Here's something the consumer will never know.

There is joy in feeding others that you cannot get from being fed.

Watching someone's eyes light up when they finally understand a passage.
Seeing someone break through in prayer because you prayed with them.
Hearing someone share their faith for the first time because you modeled it.

That joy is deeper than anything you feel in a worship service.

Because you're not just receiving anymore. You're *participating* in what God is doing.

You're not a spectator. You're on the team.

And that's what you were made for.

Why Some Never Feed Others

Let me name the barriers.

1. Insecurity

"I don't know enough. I'm not qualified. What if I say something wrong?"

Newsflash: You'll never feel qualified. The apostles weren't qualified. They were fishermen and tax collectors. But they had food and they shared it.

You don't need a degree. You just need to share what you've learned.

2. Laziness

Feeding others takes time. Energy. Patience. It's easier to just go home after church and think about yourself.

But maturity requires effort. And feeding others is where the effort gets spent.

3. Pride

"Who am I to teach anyone? I still have so far to go."

Sometimes this sounds humble, but it's actually pride in disguise. You're so focused on your own imperfection that you ignore the people who need what little you already have.

You don't have to be perfect to feed someone. You just have to be ahead of them on the path.

4. Consumer Mindset

You're still stuck in "what can I get?" mode. You've never asked "what can I give?" Because you've never been taught that giving is the goal.

This book is trying to teach you. Pay attention.

5. Isolation

You're not connected enough to anyone to feed them. You go to church, you leave. No relationships. No discipleship. No one to pour into.

You can't feed people you don't know. Get connected. Get close. Get messy.

How to Start Feeding Others

You don't need a program. You don't need permission. You don't need a title.

Here's how you start.

1. Find someone younger in the faith.

Look around. There's always someone newer than you. Someone who doesn't know what you know. Someone who needs what you have.

2. Invite them to do something simple.

Coffee. A meal. A walk. "Hey, I'd love to hear your story. Let's grab lunch."

3. Listen more than you talk.

Don't show off your knowledge. Ask questions. Find out where they're struggling. Find out what they're hungry for.

4. Share what God has shown you.

Not a sermon. Just your story. What you've learned. How God has been faithful. What a passage means to you.

5. Pray with them.

Not a performance. Just simple prayer. "Can I pray for you right now?"

6. Point them to the Word.

Don't make them dependent on you. Show them how to hunt. "Here's a passage that helped me. Read it this week and let's talk about it."

7. Do it again.

Feeding others is not a one-time event. It's a relationship. Show up. Keep showing up.

The Multiplication Principle

Here's what happens when you start feeding others.

You feed one person. That person grows strong enough to feed someone else. That someone else feeds another.

Jesus started with twelve. Those twelve turned the world upside down.

Not because they were geniuses. Because they fed others who fed others who fed others.

This is how the Kingdom grows. Not through stages and platforms. Through one person feeding another person.

And you can be part of that.

You don't need a megachurch. You don't need a podcast. You don't need a book deal.

You just need to feed the person in front of you.

A Warning About Dependency

Let me add a caution.

When you feed others, don't make them dependent on you.

The goal is not to create followers. The goal is to create hunters.

Teach them to feed themselves. Teach them to hear God. Teach them to find their own food.

Then send them out to feed others.

If they still need you for every meal, you've created a baby, not a mature believer.

Paul didn't stay in every city he planted a church. He trained leaders and moved on. He knew that dependency on a single person is not maturity.

Feed them. Then let them go.

The Ultimate Goal

The ultimate goal is not just feeding others.

It's raising up *feeders*.

People who are so strong, so full, so mature that they instinctively pour into others.

A church full of consumers is a nursery.
A church full of feeders is an army.

Which one are you building?

A Final Question

Here's the question I want to leave with you.

If every Christian were exactly like you, would the church be healthy?

Would there be enough food to go around? Would the weak be cared for?
Would the young be trained? Would the lost be found?

Or would everyone just be sitting in their own seat, eating their own meal,
going home to their own life?

Be honest.

Because your answer will tell you whether you're mature or still a child.

The goal is not just to eat.

The goal is to feed.

And until you're feeding others, you haven't arrived.

Chapter 9: The Danger of Sitting and Being Fed Your Whole Life

Let me tell you about a danger that almost no one talks about.

It's the danger of *sitting*.

Sitting in the same seat every Sunday.

Sitting under the same teaching.

Sitting in the same small group.

Sitting, sitting, sitting.

Never standing.

Never serving.

Never going.

Never doing.

Just sitting. And being fed.

And here's the danger: Sitting feels safe. Sitting feels normal. Sitting feels like faithfulness.

But sitting your whole life is not faithfulness. It's *stagnation*. And stagnation is death in slow motion.

The Pew-Sitter Mentality

I need to name something uncomfortable.

There are people who have been "going to church" for twenty, thirty, forty years. They know the songs. They know the routines. They know the building.

But they have never:

- Led anyone to Christ
- Discipled a younger believer
- Served in any meaningful capacity
- Given sacrificially
- Stepped out in faith

- Done anything that required courage

They show up. They sit. They listen. They leave.

And they think this is Christianity.

It's not.

It's *attendance*. And attendance is not the same as discipleship.

A cow can attend a pasture every day. That doesn't make her a farmer.

A rock can sit in a river for a hundred years. That doesn't make it a fish.

Sitting in a church building does not make you a disciple.

Following Jesus makes you a disciple. And following requires *movement*.

The Difference Between a Member and a Disciple

Churches love members. Members fill seats. Members give money.

Members make the numbers look good.

But members are not automatically disciples.

Let me show you the difference.

Member	Disciple
Attends	Serves
Consumes	Contributes
Has rights	Has responsibilities

Asks "what can I get?"	Asks "what can I give?"
Needs to be fed	Feeds others
Shows up when convenient	Shows up when costly
Knows about Jesus	Follows Jesus
Sits in the boat	Walks on water

See the difference?

The member is a consumer. The disciple is a soldier.

The member is a passenger. The disciple is a crew member.

The member is a spectator. The disciple is a participant.

And here's the hard truth: Many churches are full of members. Few are full of disciples.

Jesus didn't say "Go and make members."

He said "Go and make *disciples*" (Matthew 28:19).

But you can't make a disciple out of someone who just wants to sit.

The Comfortable Prison

The pew is comfortable.

It's padded. It's familiar. There's no risk. No danger. No challenge.

You can sit there and feel religious without ever actually following Jesus.

You can hear about the Great Commission and nod along—without ever going.

You can hear about loving your neighbor and agree—without ever loving.

You can hear about taking up your cross and say "amen"—without ever dying to anything.

The pew is a comfortable prison.

And millions of Christians are serving life sentences in it, unaware that the door has been open the whole time.

What Sitting Produces

Let me tell you what happens when you sit your whole life.

You become weak.

Muscles that aren't used atrophy. Same spiritually. If you never serve, never step out, never risk, your spiritual muscles turn to jelly.

You become entitled.

You start thinking the church exists to serve you. The music should be to your taste. The sermon should meet your needs. The seats should be comfortable. The service should end on time.

You forget that *you* are the church. The church doesn't have servants—*you* are supposed to be one.

You become critical.

Sitters have time to notice problems. They're not busy serving, so they notice when the carpet is dirty, when the worship leader missed a note, when the pastor said something they didn't like.

Productive people don't have time to be critical. They're too busy working.

You become bored.

This is the saddest one. Sitters get bored. The same songs. The same sermons. The same faces.

They're bored because they're not participating. You can't be bored when you're on the field. Only when you're in the stands.

You become useless.

When a crisis comes—when the church needs leaders, when people need help, when the enemy attacks—the sitters are useless.

They've never trained. They've never served. They've never built any spiritual capacity.

They just sit. And when sitting is no longer enough, they have nothing to give.

The Biblical Pattern

Look at the early church.

They didn't sit. They *scattered*. They *preached*. They *healed*. They *served*. They *suffered*. They *died*.

And when persecution came, they didn't say "well, I guess church is cancelled."

They said "we must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29) and kept moving.

The early church had no pews. They had no buildings for the first three hundred years. They met in homes, in catacombs, in secret.

They didn't sit. They *stood*. And they *went*.

We've invented a version of Christianity where sitting is the main activity. That would have been unrecognizable to the apostles.

They would have asked: "Why are you all just sitting here? The fields are white for harvest. Go!"

But I'm Not Called to Ministry

This is the excuse I hear most often.

"I'm not a pastor. I'm not an evangelist. I'm not called to ministry. I'm just a regular Christian."

Friend, let me tell you something.

If you're a Christian, you're called to serve.

Not necessarily from a stage. Not necessarily with a title. But to serve.

- The early church had people serving meals (Acts 6)
- They had people opening their homes
- They had people giving money
- They had people praying
- They had people encouraging
- They had people teaching children
- They had people visiting prisoners

Everyone had a role. Everyone served. Not just the "professionals."

Ephesians 4 says the apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers were given *to equip the saints for the work of ministry*.

Not to *do* the ministry. To *equip* the saints to do it.

That means *you* are the minister. The pastors are the trainers. You're the player on the field.

If you're sitting in the stands while the trainers are shouting instructions, you've missed the point entirely.

The Test of a Sitter

Ask yourself these questions.

- When was the last time I served someone who couldn't serve me back?
- When was the last time I gave up my comfort to help someone else?
- When was the last time I invited someone to church or shared my faith?
- When was the last time I used my spiritual gifts to build up the body?
- If my church stopped having services next week, would my absence matter?

If you're struggling to answer these, you're probably a sitter.

And it's time to get up.

How to Get Out of the Pew

1. Repent of the sitter mentality.

Confess it. "God, I've been a consumer. I've been sitting while others serve. I've been taking while others give. Forgive me. Change me."

2. Find a place to serve.

Your church has needs. Nursery. Greeting. Set-up. Tear-down. Tech. Cleaning. Visiting. Praying. Teaching. Leading a small group.

Ask: "Where can I serve?" Then do it.

3. Start small.

You don't have to preach. Just show up early and help set up chairs. Stay late and help clean up. Send an encouraging text to someone who is struggling.

Small faithfulness leads to bigger responsibility.

4. Stop waiting to feel ready.

You'll never feel ready. Feelings are liars. Just start. You'll learn as you go.

5. Get uncomfortable.

Serving is not always convenient. It will cost you time. It will cost you energy. It will cost you comfort.

That's the point. That's how you grow.

A Word to Pastors and Leaders

If you're a pastor reading this, let me speak to you directly.

Stop letting people sit.

Stop enabling the sitter mentality.

Start expecting more from your people. Challenge them to serve. Tell them the truth: that sitting is not discipleship.

You're not doing them favors by letting them remain consumers. You're stunting their growth.

Make it hard to be a member and easy to be a disciple. Flip the script.

The health of your church is not measured by how many seats are filled. It's measured by how many people are serving.

The Invitation

Here's what I'm really saying.

Get up.

Get out of the pew.

Stop being a spectator in the Kingdom of God.

The harvest is plentiful. The workers are few (Matthew 9:37). The workers are few not because God hasn't called them, but because they're still sitting in the seats.

Stand up. Step out. Get in the game.

You were not saved to sit.

You were saved to serve.

You were not called to consume.

You were called to contribute.

You were not made for the stands.

You were made for the field.

The game is happening. The enemy is attacking. The harvest is ready.

And you're sitting in a padded chair.

Get up.

Chapter 10: What Maturity Actually Looks Like (The Portrait Chapter)

We've spent a lot of time talking about what immaturity looks like.

The offense. The selfishness. The dependency. The sitting.

Now let me paint a different picture.

Let me show you what maturity actually looks like.

Not perfection. Not a Christian who never struggles, never fails, never doubts. That doesn't exist this side of glory.

But a Christian who has *grown up*. Who has put away childish things. Who has become dangerous to the enemy and useful to the King.

This is a portrait. Look at it. Let it stir something in you.

The Mature Christian Serves Quietly

They don't need a title. They don't need a stage. They don't need recognition.

They just see needs and meet them.

Setting up chairs. Making coffee. Changing diapers in the nursery. Mowing the church lawn. Sending an encouraging text. Visiting the sick. Praying for the struggling.

No one claps. No one notices. No one thanks them.

And they're fine with that.

Because they're not serving for applause. They're serving for an Audience of One.

"Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ." (Colossians 3:23-24)

The immature Christian serves when watched. The mature Christian serves when no one is looking.

The Mature Christian Forgives Quickly

They don't collect offenses. They don't rehearse slights. They don't keep a mental ledger of who wronged them.

When someone sins against them, they forgive.

Not because it was easy. Not because the person deserved it. But because they have been forgiven so much themselves.

"Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." (Colossians 3:13)

The immature Christian forgives slowly, if at all. The mature Christian forgives quickly, even when it hurts.

The Mature Christian Doesn't Need Constant Affirmation

They know who they are in Christ. They don't need someone to tell them they're doing a good job every five minutes.

They can serve in obscurity for years without a shout-out. They can give without a tax receipt. They can pray without a "amen" from the crowd.

Their identity is not in their performance. It's in Christ.

"For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ." (Galatians 1:10)

The immature Christian craves validation. The mature Christian rests in God's approval.

The Mature Christian Produces Fruit

Not fake fruit. Not performance. Not religious activity.

Real fruit.

Love that is patient and kind. Joy that isn't dependent on circumstances. Peace that passes understanding. Patience that doesn't snap. Kindness that isn't calculated. Goodness that flows naturally. Faithfulness that endures. Gentleness that disarms. Self-control that says "no" to the flesh.

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." (Galatians 5:22-23)

The immature Christian talks about fruit. The mature Christian bears it.

The Mature Christian Receives Correction

When someone gently points out a blind spot, they don't explode. They don't withdraw. They don't blame.

They listen. They consider. They repent if needed. They thank the person who had the courage to speak.

"Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates correction is stupid." (Proverbs 12:1)

The immature Christian hates correction. The mature Christian welcomes it as a gift.

The Mature Christian Doesn't Gossip

They don't tear down others to build themselves up. They don't share "prayer requests" that are really just information about someone else's sin.

If they have a problem with someone, they go to that person (Matthew 18:15). They don't go to everyone else.

"Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear."
(Ephesians 4:29)

The immature Christian gossips. The mature Christian builds up.

The Mature Christian Loves the World Less and Less

They don't need the world's entertainment, approval, or validation.

They've tasted the Treasure. Everything else has lost its shine.

Not because they're trying to be holy. Because they've found something better.

"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (1 John 2:15)

The immature Christian chases the world and calls it balance. The mature Christian has lost their taste for it.

The Mature Christian Prays Without Ceasing

Not always on their knees. But always in communion.

They talk to God throughout the day. Driving. Working. Washing dishes. Walking.

Prayer is not an event. It's a continuous conversation.

"Pray without ceasing." (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

The immature Christian prays in crisis. The mature Christian prays constantly.

The Mature Christian Hunts for Themselves

They don't rely on sermons and podcasts to hear from God.

They open their own Bible. They wrestle with the text. They ask questions. They listen for the Spirit.

They can feed themselves. They don't starve when the preacher is on vacation.

"Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation." (1 Peter 2:2)

The immature Christian waits to be fed. The mature Christian hunts.

The Mature Christian Feeds Others

They don't just take. They give.

They pour into younger believers. They mentor. They encourage. They correct gently. They model what it looks like to follow Jesus.

Their joy comes not just from receiving, but from watching others grow.

"By this time you ought to be teachers." (Hebrews 5:12)

The immature Christian consumes. The mature Christian contributes.

The Mature Christian Endures Suffering Well

When trials come—and they will—they don't curse God. They don't fall apart. They don't lose their faith.

They grieve honestly. They lament. They cry out. But underneath it all, there's a trust that God is good and He will not waste their pain.

"Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness." (James 1:2-3)

The immature Christian crumbles under suffering. The mature Christian is refined by it.

The Mature Christian Walks in Power

Not because they're special. Because they're dependent.

They've died to themselves. They've learned to obey. They've been tested and proven faithful in small things.

And God trusts them with more.

Demons flee. The sick recover. The lost find Jesus. Not because of the mature Christian's gift, but because of their surrender.

"Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father." (John 14:12)

The immature Christian talks about power. The mature Christian walks in it.

A Final Thought on This Portrait

I don't want you to look at this list and feel condemned.

I want you to look at it and feel *hungry*.

This is what God is doing in those who say yes to Him. This is the normal Christian life. This is what it looks like to grow up.

Not all at once. Not perfectly. Not without stumbles.

But progressively. Really. Actually.

You can be this person. Not because you're strong. Because He is strong in you.

The only question is: are you willing to grow?

Chapter 11: What Is Expected

We've painted the portrait. Now let's talk about expectations.

Because here's something the modern church doesn't like to say out loud:

God expects things from you.

Not to earn your salvation. That's a gift. Free. Unearned. Unearnable.

But once you're in the family, there are expectations. A father expects his children to grow up. A king expects his soldiers to fight. A master expects his servants to work.

And God expects His children to mature.

The Parable of the Talents

Remember this story?

A master gives his servants different amounts of money. Five talents. Two talents. One talent. Then he leaves.

When he returns, he asks what they did with what he gave them.

The first two invested and doubled what they received. The master's response?

"Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master." (Matthew 25:21, 23)

But the third? He buried his talent. Did nothing. Played it safe. Returned exactly what he was given.

The master's response?

"You wicked, lazy servant!" (Matthew 25:26)

Not "well done." Not "faithful." *Wicked and lazy.*

And the talent was taken from him and given to someone else.

Here's what this means:

God expects a return on His investment.

He has given you gifts. Time. Resources. The Holy Spirit. A mind. A body. Relationships. Opportunities.

He expects you to do something with them. Not bury them. Not play it safe. Not coast.

Multiply.

Grow. Serve. Give. Go. Build.

If you've been sitting on what God gave you, doing nothing, expecting to be rewarded for simply not losing it—you're in for a shock.

The expectation is not just to *keep*. It's to *grow*.

To Whom Much Is Given, Much Is Required

Jesus said this plainly:

"Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more." (Luke 12:48)

Let me translate.

If you've been a Christian for twenty years, more is expected of you than of someone saved last week.

If you've read the Bible cover to cover, more is expected of you than of someone who just opened it for the first time.

If you've been taught deep doctrine, more is expected of you than of someone who only knows the basics.

If you have spiritual gifts, more is expected of you than of someone who hasn't discovered theirs yet.

You cannot coast on past faithfulness. You cannot rest on yesterday's obedience. The expectation grows with the revelation.

This is why the Hebrew writer was so stern:

"For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God." (Hebrews 5:12)

By this time. By *this* time.

God had expectations for them based on how long they'd been in the Kingdom. And they weren't meeting them.

He has expectations for you, too.

What God Expects from a Mature Christian

Let me be specific.

He expects you to know His Word.

Not every verse. Not a PhD. But enough to feed yourself. Enough to spot false teaching. Enough to give an answer when someone asks about your hope.

"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15)

He expects you to pray.

Not just when you need something. A real prayer life. Communion. Listening. Wrestling. Thanksgiving.

"Pray without ceasing." (1 Thessalonians 5:17)

He expects you to obey.

Not perfectly. But genuinely. When He speaks, you move. When He commands, you do. Not out of fear, but out of love.

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments." (John 14:15)

He expects you to serve.

Not just attend. Not just consume. Serve. Use your gifts. Meet needs. Build the body.

"As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." (1 Peter 4:10)

He expects you to produce fruit.

Not activity. Fruit. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. And the fruit of souls brought to Christ.

"I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide." (John 15:16)

He expects you to feed others.

You've been fed. Now feed. You've been taught. Now teach. You've been disciplined. Now disciple.

"What you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." (2 Timothy 2:2)

He expects you to grow.

Not stay the same. Not plateau. Not coast. Grow. Change. Become more like Christ every year than you were the year before.

"Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:18)

The Judgment Seat of Christ

Let me remind you of something we touched on in Book One.

We will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10). Not to determine our salvation—that's already settled for those in Christ. But to be rewarded for what we've done in the body.

Paul says some will build with gold, silver, precious stones. Others with wood, hay, straw. The fire will test each one's work. If it survives, they receive a reward. If it burns up, they suffer loss—though they themselves are saved, but only as through fire (1 Corinthians 3:12-15).

Here's what that means:

You can be saved with nothing to show for your life.

Barely saved. Singed. Empty-handed.

God doesn't want that for you.

He wants you to stand before Him one day with arms full of fruit. With souls you led to Christ. With disciples you raised up. With acts of love and service and sacrifice that glow with eternal weight.

But that requires *expectation*.

You have to live like someone who will give an account.

"So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." (2 Corinthians 5:9-10)

The Danger of Low Expectations

Here's what happens when we stop expecting things from Christians.

They stay immature. They stay selfish. They stay on the bottle. They stay in the pew.

Because no one told them God expects more.

We've lowered the bar so far that barely showing up is considered faithful.

We've celebrated attendance like it's discipleship.

We've applauded giving like it's sacrifice.

We've called people "mature" just because they've been around a long time.

And we've produced a generation of weak, childish, powerless Christians who think they're fine because no one has ever told them they're not.

I'm telling you.

Not to be mean. To be honest.

God expects more from you than you're giving. And it's time to admit that and change.

A Loving Warning

I'm not saying God is angry at you. If you're in Christ, His anger has been satisfied at the cross.

But He is *grieved* when His children refuse to grow.

A parent isn't angry when a child struggles to learn to walk. But a parent is heartbroken when a grown child still refuses to stand.

He wants more for you. He wants more *from* you.

Not because He needs you. Because He loves you. And He knows that your joy, your purpose, your power—all of it—is tied to you becoming who He made you to be.

A stagnant Christian is an unhappy Christian. A disobedient Christian is a powerless Christian. An immature Christian is an ineffective Christian.

Not because God is punishing you. Because that's just how it works.

You cannot reap what you haven't sown. You cannot be strong without eating. You cannot mature without effort.

The expectation is not cruelty. It's love.

A Self-Assessment

Before we close this chapter, let me ask you to be honest.

- Have you been coasting?
- Have you been sitting while others serve?
- Have you been consuming without contributing?
- Have you been a Christian for years but still need to be bottle-fed?
- Have you been avoiding the hard things—evangelism, giving, forgiveness, sacrifice?

If so, it's not too late. But you need to admit it.

Because you can't fix what you won't name.

And God's expectation for you hasn't changed just because you've been ignoring it.

He still expects you to grow.

He still expects you to serve.

He still expects you to bear fruit.

He still expects you to feed others.

The question isn't "Does God expect these things?"

The question is "Will you meet His expectations?"

Not to Condemn, But to Call

I want to be clear.

I'm not writing this to make you feel condemned. There is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1).

I'm writing this to *call* you.

To lift the bar back to where God placed it. To remind you that you were made for more than sitting and consuming. To invite you into the adventure of actually following Jesus.

The expectations are high. They've always been high.

But the grace is sufficient. The Spirit is willing. The power is available.

You can meet His expectations. Not in your strength. In His.

But you have to try. You have to cooperate. You have to get up and move.

He won't do it for you.

He'll do it *with* you. *Through* you. But not *instead of* you.

So here's the question:

Are you ready to meet His expectations?

Not someday. Today.

That's Chapter 11.

Now for the final chapter. Chapter 12: A Call to Grow Up – coming right up.

Chapter 12: A Call to Grow Up

We've come to the end.

Eleven chapters. A mirror held up to immaturity. A portrait of what maturity looks like. The expectations laid bare.

Now the only question left is the one that matters:

What are you going to do?

Because reading a book is not growth.

Feeling convicted is not growth.

Agreeing with the truth is not growth.

Doing something about it—that's growth.

No More Excuses

I've heard them all. Maybe you've used them.

- "I'm just not there yet."
- "Growth takes time."
- "I'm going through a season."
- "I'm waiting on God."
- "I'm not gifted like that."
- "I'm too busy right now."
- "Maybe someday."

These are not reasons. They're excuses.

And excuses are the walls that keep you in the prison of immaturity.

Yes, growth takes time. But you have to actually *grow* during that time. Time alone does nothing.

Yes, seasons are real. But seasons change. And some seasons have lasted twenty years because you never chose to end them.

Yes, God is at work. But He's waiting for you to cooperate. He won't drag you into maturity against your will.

The excuses are comfortable. They let you off the hook. They let you stay where you are without feeling guilty.

But they're also lies.

And you've believed them long enough.

No More Waiting

Here's what I need you to hear:

You don't need more information.

You don't need a better Bible study.

You don't need a different church.

You don't need a special anointing.

You don't need to feel ready.

You need to *start*.

Start serving. Start praying. Start reading. Start forgiving. Start giving. Start sharing. Start discipling.

Start where you are. With what you have. Today.

Not tomorrow. Not Monday. Not January 1st.

Today.

The longer you wait, the harder it gets. The more excuses you build. The more comfortable your immaturity becomes.

The best time to start growing was ten years ago.

The second best time is right now.

Practical First Steps

Let me give you something concrete. Something you can do *today*.

1. Repent.

Not just feel bad. Turn. Change your mind about your immaturity. Call it what it is. Ask God to forgive you for coasting, for sitting, for consuming, for refusing to grow.

"Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out." (Acts 3:19)

2. Open your Bible.

Not tomorrow. Today. Right now if possible. Just one chapter. Read it slowly. Ask God to speak. Write down what you hear.

Do this again tomorrow. And the next day. And the next.

3. Pray for thirty minutes.

Not five. Not ten. Thirty. It will be hard. Your mind will wander. Do it anyway.

Talk to God. Listen. Sit in silence if you run out of words. Just be with Him.

4. Find a place to serve.

Email your church today. "I want to serve somewhere. Where do you need help?"

Then show up. Do whatever they ask. Even if it's small. Even if no one notices.

5. Find someone to disciple.

Look for someone younger in the faith than you. Ask them to grab coffee. Listen to their story. Share what God has taught you. Pray with them.

Start simple. Just meet once a week. Just be present.

6. Cut something.

Identify one thing that's been feeding your flesh and starving your spirit. A show. A habit. A relationship. A distraction.

Cut it. For a week. For a month. Forever if needed.

See what grows in the space you clear.

7. Get accountable.

Find one person who will ask you hard questions. Not someone who will let you off the hook. Someone who loves you enough to tell you the truth.

Give them permission to ask: "Are you growing? Are you serving? Are you feeding yourself? Are you feeding others?"

Then actually answer.

The Cost of Staying Where You Are

Let me be honest with you.

If you close this book and do nothing, here's what will happen.

You'll stay immature. You'll stay weak. You'll stay powerless.

You'll keep getting offended over nothing. You'll keep needing constant affirmation. You'll keep consuming without contributing.

You'll keep sitting in the pew while the harvest rots in the field.

You'll stand before the judgment seat of Christ one day with empty hands. Saved, but barely. Like someone escaping a fire with nothing but the clothes on your back.

And you'll regret it.

Not because God is mean. Because you'll see what you could have been.
What you could have done. Who you could have reached.

And you'll know that the only thing standing in your way was you.

I don't want that for you.

Neither does God.

The Reward of Growing Up

But let me end with something beautiful.

When you choose to grow—when you stop making excuses and start taking responsibility—everything changes.

You'll hear God more clearly. You'll sin less. You'll love more purely. You'll serve more joyfully.

You'll walk in power you never knew was available. You'll see prayers answered. You'll see people saved. You'll see the sick healed.

You'll become dangerous to the enemy. You'll become useful to the King. You'll become a blessing to everyone around you.

And one day—one glorious day—you'll stand before Jesus with arms full of fruit. Souls you led to Christ. Disciples you raised up. Acts of love and sacrifice that glow with eternal weight.

And He will look at you with eyes full of joy and say:

"Well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of your Master."

That's what's waiting for you.

But you have to grow up to get there.

The Final Word

I've said what I came to say.

I've named immaturity. I've painted maturity. I've laid out expectations. I've called you to action.

Now the rest is up to you.

You can close this book and forget everything you read. Go back to sitting. Go back to consuming. Go back to being bottle-fed.

Or you can close this book and *change*.

Serve. Pray. Read. Give. Go. Forgive. Grow.

Not perfectly. But really.

Not someday. Today.

The church needs adults. The world needs disciples. The Kingdom needs soldiers.

And God is calling you to be one of them.

So here's my final question:

Will you grow up?

"When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put aside childish things." (1 Corinthians 13:11)

It's time to put aside childish things.

Grow up.