



Cycle of Growth

Recap

Old/New Commandment

Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against a fellow Israelite, but **love your neighbour** as yourself. I am the Lord. [Leviticus 19:18](#)

But I say, **love your enemies!** Pray for those who persecute you! [Matthew 5:44](#)

These are all **fraudulent** forms of love because they are all setting up a kind of **exchange** where you help others in order to help yourself. [Tim Challies](#)

Recap

Claim/Test

Such people **claim** they know God, but they **deny him by the way they live**. They are detestable and disobedient, **worthless** for doing anything good. [Titus 1:16](#)

Examine yourselves to see if your faith is genuine. **Test** yourselves. Surely you know that Jesus Christ is among you; if not, you have failed the test of **genuine faith** [2 Corinthians 13:5](#)

I don't believe most Christians **intentionally** pose as fakes. They have either been handed a **counterfeit** Jesus or **drifted** away from the radical life Jesus calls his followers to imitate. [Frank Powell](#)

Recap

'Look,' they say, 'how they [Christians] love one another' (**for they themselves hate one another**); 'and how they are ready to die for each other' (**for they themselves are readier to kill each other**)."
[Tertullian, Bishop of Carthage, c.ad 160-c.225](#)

Don't just **pretend** to love others. Really love them. Hate what is **wrong**. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honouring each other. [Romans 12:9-10](#)

Three Biblical Signs of Spiritual Immaturity Adriel Sanchez

Faithfully going to church doesn't automatically make you a mature Christian. I'd never discourage you from being in church every Sunday, but hearing the word isn't the same thing as heeding it. I fear that some believers, despite their ability to articulate true things about God, are not **progressing** in Christian maturity.

Three Biblical Signs of Spiritual Immaturity Adriel Sanchez

Spiritually immature Christians are gullible to **strange doctrines**.

Spiritually immature Christians aren't able to play nice with **other believers**.

Spiritually immature Christians are controlled by their **fleshly impulses**.

The Hidden Failure of Our Churches, McLean's 1961

Our Christian churches **look healthy**. But within, church leaders themselves fear the churches are **unfit**: too lazy, too social, too weak. Ralph Allen reports on where they've gone wrong and what they can still do about it

The traditional forms of instruction in our churches have not provided most Christian students coming into the university with a grasp of the faith sufficiently **mature** to serve as a basis for their intellectual life. [Commission on the Church and University, Canadian Council of Churches.](#)

Three Tests

If we **claim** we have no sin

If someone **claims**, "I know God," but doesn't obey God's commandments

If anyone **claims**, "I am living in the light," but hates a fellow believer

I am writing to you who are God's children because your sins have been forgiven through Jesus. I am writing to you who are mature in the faith because you know Christ, who existed from the beginning. I am writing to you who are young in the faith because you have won your battle with the evil one.

I have written to you who are God's children because you know the Father. I have written to you who are mature in the faith because you know Christ, who existed from the beginning. I have written to you who are young in the faith because you are strong. God's word lives in your hearts, and you have won your battle with the evil one. [1 John 2:12-14](#)

I am writing to you who are God's **children** because your sins have been **forgiven** through Jesus.

Salvation is **surrender**

"I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. So don't be surprised when I say, 'You must be **born again**.' [John 3:5-7](#)

The curse of the church has always been **immature Christians**, Christians who never grow up, Christians who cease their progress soon after beginning the Christian life... **Christians who are yet babies after ten, twenty, thirty, even forty years of Christian life**, these are the problem. They are immature, **they refuse to grow up**. John now comes face to face with this problem and in the text before us he describes three stages of spiritual development, three levels of growth in the Christian life [Ray Stedman](#)

Western Church



I am writing to you who are **mature** in the faith because you **know** Christ, who existed from the **beginning**.

Ginosko: to learn to know, come to know

The mature know the **author** and **finisher** of their faith

When John spoke of the increasing knowledge of God, he did not mean that the Christian would become an ever more learned theologian; he meant that throughout the years he would become more and **more intimately friendly with God**. [William Barclay](#)

I am writing to you who are **young** in the faith because you have won your **battle** with the evil one.

The "Young" to John have battle scars, they are winning their battle against the enemy and his various attacks. They also may have lost some. **But a battle is not a war**.

"Whatever conflict remains for them afterwards, is with a baffled and **conquered** enemy." [Henry Alford](#)

I have written to you who are God's **children** because you **know** the Father

John switches out teknon (baby) for **paidion** (toddler) which is child that is now under a teachers care

In the second repeated verse, John now shows that this same baby who started their spiritual journey by confession (surrender) now places themselves in the **care and development** of the church community

I have written to you who are mature in the faith because you **know** Christ, who existed from the beginning.

Christians start out as babies, not totally mature specimens. It's probably not a news flash that everyone is **rebellious** by nature. Spiritual growth is not easy but it's possible. Thankfully, God offers grace (again and again) when we decide we know more than God. Any growth you and I recognize is because God made all the changes—we only yielded. [B. C. Wise](#)

I have written to you who are mature in the faith because you **know** Christ, who existed from the beginning.

A spiritually mature Christian filters **everything** through what Christ would do – their words, actions, thoughts. They strive to reach for godliness and holiness. They live the message rather than talk about it. They've stopped, long ago, pointing out other Christians' faults. Matured in faith Christians become wholly dependent on God. They push themselves toward spiritual disciplines and don't need someone else to encourage them to keep pressing on. **BCW**

I have written to you who are young in the faith because you are strong, God's **word** lives in your hearts, and you have won your battle with the evil one.

A characteristic of a "young" Christian is their desire to **read and understand** the bible. It would become a **hunger** for understanding

"If you are thinking of becoming a Christian, I warn you are embarking on something which is going to take the whole of you, **brains and all**." **C. S. Lewis**

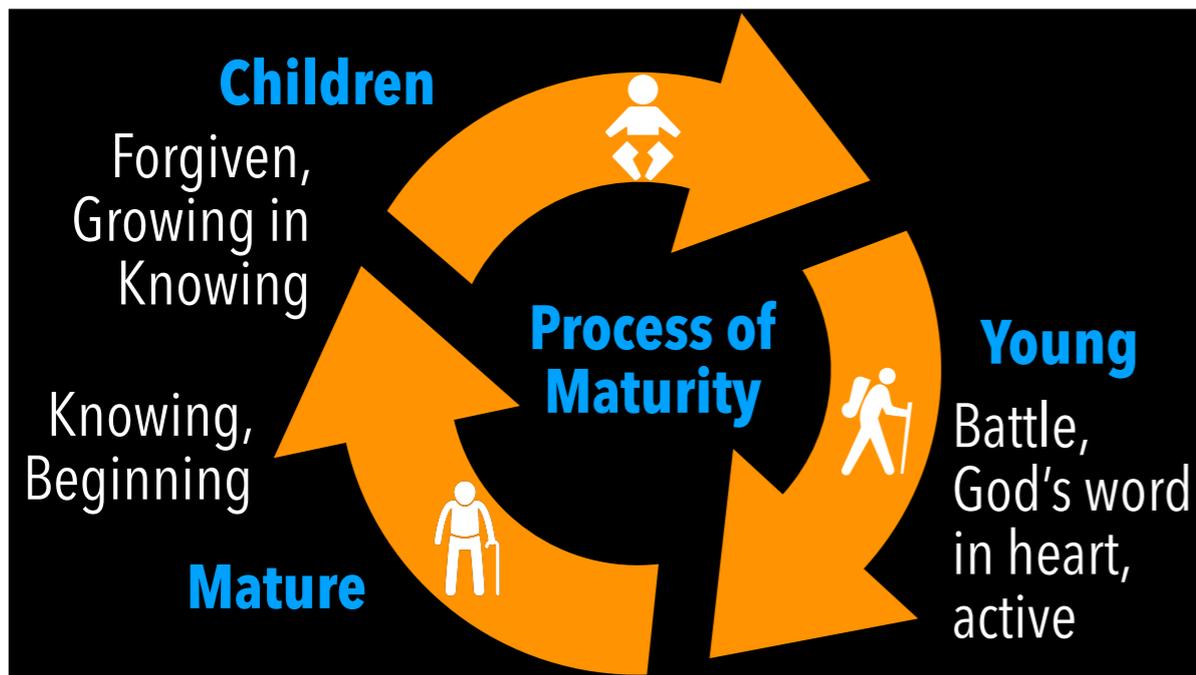
Note that the first 3 occurrences of write (grapho) (1Jn 2:12-13) are in the **present tense** and the last 3 (1Jn 2:13b, 1Jn 2:14) are in the **orist tense**.

Present Tense: continuous action, habitual action, often reflects a lifestyle

Aorist Tense: States that an action occurs without regard to its duration. It is analogous to a snapshot which captures an action at specific point in time

(Repetitive) I am writing: sins are forgiven, you know Christ, battle the evil one

(Moment in time) I have written: know the Father, you know Christ, know God's word



If we claim we have no sin	Confession	I am writing to you who are God's children
If someone claims , "I know God," but doesn't obey God's commandments	Knowing	I am writing to you who are mature
If anyone claims , "I am living in the light," but hates a fellow believer	Battle	I am writing to you who are young

"The next best thing to being wise oneself is to live in a **circle of those who are.**" CS Lewis

There is much more we would like to say about this, but it is difficult to explain, especially since you are spiritually dull and don't seem to listen. **You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others.** Instead, you need someone to teach you again the **basic things about God's word**. You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food. For someone who lives on milk is still an infant and doesn't know how to do what is right. Solid food is for those who are mature, who through **training** have the skill to recognize the difference between right and wrong. [Hebrews 5:11-14](#)

UCC TRIVIA NIGHT

**Wednesday,
February 24th, 7pm**



MISTRESS OF MYSTERY

text2give

226-909-0014



eTransfer

info@uccwaterloo.ca

(auto deposit)