

Spiritual Maturity

Back to the Basics | Week 3

Hayden | October 1st & October 4th 2026 | Gabe Cleave



Key Scripture: Ephesians 4:11–16

God's goal is not simply that we become believers, but that we become fully mature in Christ (Colossians 1:28). Hebrews 5:11–14 contrasts spiritual infancy with believers who have been trained to recognize right from wrong.

"...we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ." — Ephesians 4:13

1. A mature disciple is unified with other believers. — v. 13

"...until we all come to such unity in our faith..."

- Maturity is not merely individual. Mature Christians know how to live in unity with the body of Christ.
- Community requires unity. What unifies us is Jesus and His death on the cross.
- Immature believers divide over preferences, personalities, offenses, and secondary issues.
- Mature believers can disagree without disconnecting. They forgive, reconcile, and prioritize the mission and the body over getting their own way.

See also: 1 Corinthians 1:10; John 17:20–23; Romans 12:16–18; Ephesians 4:1–3; Philippians 2:1–4; Colossians 3:13–14

ASK: Am I unified with this body of believers?

2. A mature disciple increasingly knows and resembles Jesus. — vv. 13, 15

"...knowledge of God's Son...growing in every way more and more like Christ..."

- Spiritual maturity is more than Bible knowledge, church attendance, or having answers to theological questions.
- Knowledge matters, but it must be applied in order to change us.

Galatians 5:22–23 — The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

KEY TRUTH: Information + application leads to transformation.

ASK: What area of my life needs to look more like Jesus?

3. A mature disciple is grounded in God's Word. — v. 14

"We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching..."

- There is a stability to maturity: mature believers are not constantly chasing the newest teaching or easily deceived by something that merely sounds spiritual.

See also: Psalm 119:11, 105 • 2 Timothy 3:16–17 • Hebrews 4:12

ASK: Am I familiar with the Word of God?

4. A mature disciple loves people well. — vv. 15–16

“...speaking the truth in love...” • “...the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.”

Mature Christians become loving people.

- They forgive.
- They are patient.
- They bear with difficult people.
- They serve when it's inconvenient.
- They care about someone else's growth.
- They tell the truth when silence would be easier.
- They don't weaponize truth.
- They sacrifice for others.

1 Corinthians 13:1–7 reminds us that knowledge, faith, sacrifice, and spiritual gifts amount to nothing if they are not accompanied by love.

One of the greatest measurements of spiritual maturity is how you love people.

ASK: Am I loving others well?

5. A mature disciple uses their gifts to serve and invest in others. — v. 16

“As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow...”

- The role of church leaders is to equip God's people to do the work of ministry so the church is built up (Ephesians 4:11–12).
- Maturity means moving beyond merely attending church and being ministered to.
- A mature Christian eventually begins ministering to others: serving, discipling, caring, giving, evangelizing, leading, encouraging, teaching, mentoring, and meeting needs.

1 Peter 4:10 — God has given each believer a gift; we are to use those gifts well to serve one another.

KEY TRUTH: Mature Christians don't just consume the ministry of the church; they contribute to the ministry of the church.

ASK: Am I contributing or consuming?

