

## Why Continue

Over the last month we looked at why the Bible is important to knowing Christ and making Christ known... what part Jesus plays in it all and why the church is important to knowing Christ and making Christ known... Each one of these things are important to Jesus and they should be important to us!

The question tonight is... why should these **continue** to matter to us?

We saw the importance of each of these but why should we **continue in these things**?

**Our Focus:** *The Christian life is a pursuit of maturity in Christ.*

READ: Col. 1:28-29

Our hope is for students and leaders to know Christ and make Christ known... but it **doesn't stop at just knowing** our hope for you is to grow into **mature Christians**!

Check out this **chart**... everyone in this room is somewhere on this chart...

far to the left completely lost... right on the tipping point of being in Christ... you're a new Christian... you've been a Christian for a long time but you're not very firm in your faith or maybe you are a growing maturing Christian...

Everyone in the room is somewhere on this list...

**Our hope is to help you take the next step close to maturity in Christ**... it doesn't just stop at Christ!

Maturity is important... mainly because it helps us look like Jesus!

*What do you mean mature in Christ?*

Maturity in Christ is growing into looking more like Christ... in all aspects of life...

Looking like... being like... acting like... speaking like Jesus is the goal!

The goal is to imitate Christ in every way! We're not there yet and will never be in this life... it is a process... as we mature as a Christian, we begin to look more like Christ... **less like us... more like him**.

## **4 Ways to Mature in Christ**

### ***1. Know Christ...***

Yes... the first one is a no duh... but you have to know Christ for the first time... you have to be in Christ to grow in Christ!

It's like to make it into the MLB you have to know how to play ball... to make it in a world-renowned orchestra...you have to know how to play the instrument!

Before maturity in Christ is even a pursuit... you must be **in Christ**.

*So, where are you at? Do you **know** Christ?*

How do you mature in Christ - **the first thing you have to do is know Christ!**

### ***2. Spend time in the Word (2 Tim. 3:16-17)***

If we are going to grow in Christ... we have to spend time in the Word!

The Bible for us is the way we learn... we would know nothing about Christ apart from God's Word!

Listen how Paul describes what the Bible is...

***2 Tim. 3:16-17 - All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for **teaching**, for **reproof**, for **correction**, and for **training in righteousness**, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.***

The Bible teaches us... corrects us... trains us!

All for the reason of leading us to completion... that's the **maturity** we are talking...

The Bible doesn't just stop at us knowing Christ... it helps us **grow** in the image of Christ!

Many of us know the Sunday school answers... we know some truths about God... about man... about sin...

At some point we have to grow from these foundational baby truths we know... into deeper understanding and greater knowledge of the truths of the Bible – at some point we have to start studying the Bible... **for real!**

***Hebrews 5:13-6:1***

Like babies go from milk to food... at some point we have to as well...

Spending time in the Word is **crucial** for the believer if they are to mature in Christ!

*If we are not in the Word... how are we able to live it out?*

God has spoken, he has given us his Word to read and know... everything we need to know... everything God himself desires for us to know is right **here!**

God reveals himself through the Word, we find instruction and guidance through it.

*So, how much are you in the Bible? What if someone was to imitate your time in the Word...?*

### **3. Get guidance and accountability (Phil 3:17-21)**

Daily we need to surround ourselves with people who have the same goal... it's really difficult if we are constantly surrounded by those who are constantly leading against, leading us away from the Lord...

You face people every single day who pull you a million different directions... you need a core... you need a group of people who regardless of what is going on want what is ultimately best for you! - **Spiritual leaders!**

This means people helping guide you through life, but also helping hold you *accountable!*

We need people in our lives that we can go to and ask questions about the Bible yeah, but also life in general... *should I do this, go here, be with them etc.*

We've gotta surround ourselves with people who will keep our feet to the fire... that will hold us to what we say we believe... if they see us straying in any way, they help... bringing our attention to it and help us address it... they push us to look more and more like Jesus and point out when we don't...

Ultimately... we need good role models that look like Jesus and want to help us look like Jesus.

You've got leaders that can be those people... you've got friends that could be those people!

So... we need each other... we need the church in continuing our walk with Christ!

### **4. Depend on Jesus to guide you and sustain you (Matthew 28:20)**

We have a call in this world... to be like Jesus... to follow Jesus... to share Jesus...!

This whole Christian life though is hard... everything we talked about it's difficult... especially today... in this world... around the people we are around everyday...

At times we feel like we don't belong... at times we feel like we are all on our own in this life...

***the truth though, is that we are not... we've got Jesus.***

At the end of **Matthew 28**... Jesus is commissioning his disciples. He's telling the disciples to go and share the good news of him...

Jesus knows what he is asking his disciples... and us to do would be **difficult**...

But Jesus knowing this gives the greatest comfort...

Think about that... Jesus knew how difficult our school lives would be... he knew how difficult being the only one in your family whose a Christian would be... he knew how we would feel left out...

But even as he knew that... he said, ***I am with you***...

He sent the Holy Spirit to be with us... to guide us in this life and also to sustain us...

He keeps us going he and points us in the right direction... toward himself.

*Jesus has promised to be with his followers... always! The question we've got to ask is will we lean on him when this walk gets hard...*

### **Now what??**

1. We know Christ... but seriously... do you?
2. We spend time in the Bible! ... do you?
3. We come to church! Don't be on campus... be here here!
4. We face this world boldly knowing Jesus is with us!

### **Questions:**

1. What stood out?
2. What is maturing in Christ?
3. Why is the Bible important to our walk?
4. What does Jesus promise us as we are in this world?
5. What are ways week can hold each other accountable?