PATREON PREMIUM GUIDE · RICK PINA

FOUR LEVELS OF MATURITY



Babe. Child. Disciple. Son.

God operates by grace. We operate by faith. As you learn to live this way, you grow up.

Full teaching • Scriptures • Reflection • Seven-day action plan

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You Were Born Again. Now Keep Growing.

Hey family, I pray all is well with you. I was in North Carolina with my son for a soccer tournament when I recorded this. On our way to the next game, I was meditating on the stages we go through as believers, and I wanted to talk to you about it.

On this Patreon, I talk a lot about AI. I talk about business. I talk about being efficient. But I do not ever want to stop teaching you how to live by faith and embrace the grace life. **Everything we do as believers, we do by faith.** We walk by faith. We pray by faith. We overcome by faith.

Here is what I want you to see: **God's grace does not just get you born again. His grace empowers you to live the life He called you to live.** As you learn to trust Him, you grow. You develop. You begin to live from who you already are in Christ.

So let me walk you through four stages: a babe, a child, a disciple, and a son. As we go through them, think about your own life. Where are you? Where do you need to grow?

EPHESIANS 2:8 · TPT

For by grace you have been saved by faith. Nothing you did could ever earn this salvation, for it was the love gift from God that brought us to Christ!

IN THIS GUIDE

01 Babe: pursue the Word

02 Child: know who you are in Christ

03 Disciple: put the teaching into practice

04 Son: be led by the Holy Spirit

01 / BABE

You Have The Desire. Now Pursue The Word.

Think about a newborn baby. When that baby gets hungry, what does the baby do? The baby cries. The baby cannot explain what is going on. The baby cannot tell you what he or she needs. But the desire is there.

That is what it is like when you first get born again. You have a hunger for God. You want His Word. You want to understand the things of God. You just do not know how to communicate it yet. You do not even know what questions to ask.

When I first got born again, I was in Kuwait, and I spent hours in the Word of God. I am not exaggerating. At least two hours, sometimes three or four hours a day. **I had a hunger, and I pursued it.**

1 PETER 2:2 · AMPC

Like newborn babies you should crave (thirst for, earnestly desire) the pure (unadulterated) spiritual milk, that by it you may be nurtured and grow unto [completed] salvation,

Now, here is the issue. Some people have that desire for years, but they never develop the discipline to pursue it. The Holy Spirit is in them. The hunger is there. But they stay at the same stage.

You do not have to stay where you started. Open your Bible. Ask your questions. Make time for what your spirit is hungry for. God has more for you to discover.

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?

Make time for the Word you are hungry for.

Choose a time to get into the Word this week. When you come across something you do not understand, write it down and ask someone who can help you. Keep learning. Keep growing.

02 / CHILD

You Have To Know Who You Are Before You Can Live Like It.

A child can talk. A child can tell you what is on his or her mind. Now, you may not like what comes out! Think about those teenage years. The child can communicate, but the child may still resist instruction, push against authority, and lack discipline.

We can do the same thing spiritually. You know how to talk about God. You know some scriptures. But you still need people in your life who will provide structure, teach you, and help you grow.

GALATIANS 4:1 · TPT

Let me illustrate: As long as an heir is a minor, he's not really much different than a servant, although he's the master over all of them.

Picture the heir Paul is describing. There is an inheritance with that child's name on it. The child owns it, but the child is not yet mature enough to manage it. **Having an inheritance and understanding what you have inherited are two different things.**

That is the picture I want you to carry into your own life. You have been born again. You belong to God. But if you do not know who you are in Christ, how are you going to believe what God believes about you?

Your identity has to shape your activity. As you learn who you are, let that truth change how you handle your time, your money, your relationships, and the instruction you receive.

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?

Let somebody help you grow.

Think about an area where you keep resisting instruction. Bring it before the Father. Receive the help of a pastor or mature believer who can teach you what you need to learn.

03 / DISCIPLE

You Grow When You Put What You Are Learning Into Practice.

Now you are connected. You have a local church. You have a pastor. You may be part of a small group, a men's ministry, or a women's ministry. You are around people of like precious faith, and you know you are part of a family.

You are being taught. You are being mentored. You are being coached. There is structure in your life, and you are learning to receive it. **This is discipleship. You are learning by doing.**

MATTHEW 28:19 · TPT

Now wherever you go, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Jesus told us to make disciples. We cannot get people born again and then leave them at the baby stage. We have to help them learn how to live the life they have received.

And here is where you begin to see the difference. Somebody says something that used to set you off, and you do not respond the way you used to respond. A situation that once controlled your emotions no longer gets the same reaction. You are being developed. You are being instructed in righteousness. **What you are learning is changing how you live.**

Did you catch that? Growth shows up in real life. It shows up at home. It shows up at work. It shows up in the conversation where you used to fly off the handle.

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?

Take the teaching into your next conversation.

Think about something you have been taught recently. Where can you apply it today? Stay connected to the people God is using to develop you, and let them help you follow through.

04 / SON

Get To The Point Where The Holy Spirit Is Your Primary Instructor.

When I say a son, I mean sons and daughters. I am talking about growing to the point where you live submitted to the Father and led by His Spirit. You already belong to Him. Now you are learning to live like it.

Notice something. You still value your pastor. You still appreciate your elders, your ministers, and the people who have helped you grow. There is safety in godly counsel. **But your primary instructor is the Holy Spirit.**

ROMANS 8:14 · TPT

The mature children of God are those who are moved by the impulses of the Holy Spirit.

Think about how Jesus lived. He would get away to spend time with the Father. Then He would come back with instructions. He knew what to do. He knew what to say. He lived submitted to the One who sent Him.

That is what I mean when I say, **get your orders from headquarters.** You get up in the morning and submit your day to the Father. Your life is not your own. Your money is not yours to do whatever you want with. Your body, your decisions, your plans, all of it belongs to Him.

You begin to say, “Father, what do You want me to do?” Then you follow His leading. That is how you learn to live from the inside out.

SO WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOU?

Get your instructions before you get into your day.

Bring a real decision before the Father. Spend time in His Word. Listen to the Holy Spirit. Receive godly counsel. Then do what He leads you to do.

DAILY DEPENDENCE

You Can Be Led By God In The Middle Of Your Everyday Life.

Jesus did not live independently of the Father. He did not come to earth to do His own will. He was fully submitted, and He shows us what that life looks like.

JOHN 5:19 · ERV

But Jesus answered, "I assure you that the Son can do nothing alone. He does only what he sees his Father doing. The Son does the same things that the Father does.

So what does that mean for you? When you go into a meeting, you can be led. When you have a conversation, you can be led. When you have to make a decision, you can be led. **The Holy Spirit lives in you. You can depend on Him throughout your day.**

Before you respond, bring your heart back to the Father. "What would You have me say? How would You have me handle this?" Let Him lead you right there, in the middle of what you are doing.

GALATIANS 5:16 · AMPC

But I say, walk and live [habitually] in the [Holy] Spirit [responsive to and controlled and guided by the Spirit]; then you will certainly not gratify the cravings and desires of the flesh (of human nature without God).

I love that word in the Amplified, **habitually.** This becomes the way you live. You are responsive to the Holy Spirit. You are guided by Him. You learn to submit to Him in all things.

KEEP GROWING

Let People See The Life Of God In You.

You started as a babe. You had a desire you could not explain. Then you became a child who could communicate, but you still needed discipline. As a disciple, you became connected, teachable, and willing to put the Word into practice. Now you are learning to live as a son or daughter whose primary instructor is the Holy Spirit.

Here is what I want you to take from this: **keep growing.** Thank God for what He has already done in you. Then let Him keep teaching you.

ROMANS 8:19 · TPT

The entire universe is standing on tiptoe, yearning to see the unveiling of God’s glorious sons and daughters!

Paul is pointing ahead to the future revealing of God's sons and daughters in glory. As we wait for that day, people around us should see the difference God is making in our lives. Your family can see it. The people you work with can see it. The people who knew how you used to respond can see it.

You are called to represent your Father in the earth. Let Him teach you. Let Him develop you. Let Him live through you.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Where Are You, And Where Do You Need To Grow?

Be honest with yourself. Which of these sounds like an area of your life right now? Bring it before the Father, and let Him show you what to do next.

[ ] I have a hunger for God, but I need to make time for His Word.

[ ] I know what to say, but I still resist the discipline I need.

[ ] I am connected and being taught, and I want to put it into practice.

[ ] I want the Holy Spirit to lead my decisions throughout the day.

What is the Father showing you, and what are you going to do about it?

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

1. Which of these four stages describes where you are right now?

2. What used to trigger you that no longer gets the same response?

3. Where do you need to submit to the Holy Spirit this week?

SEVEN-DAY ACTION PLAN

Put This To Work In Your Life.

Here are seven things you can work through this week. Take one each day. Trust God for the grace to follow through, and pay attention to what He is teaching you.

[ ] DAY 1 · Get into the Word

Read 1 Peter 2:2. Set aside time to feed the hunger God has put in you.

[ ] DAY 2 · See yourself the way God sees you

Write down a truth about who you are in Christ. Think about how it changes the way you live.

[ ] DAY 3 · Receive instruction

Reach out to someone God has used to help you grow. Be willing to receive what they share.

[ ] DAY 4 · Do something with what you learned

Take one teaching and apply it to a real situation today.

[ ] DAY 5 · Let God lead your response

When something gets under your skin, pause. Ask the Holy Spirit how He wants you to respond.

[ ] DAY 6 · Get your orders from headquarters

Bring your day and your decisions before the Father. Make yourself available to His leading.

[ ] DAY 7 · Recognize what God is doing in you

Look back over the week. Thank God for His grace, and identify where you need to keep growing.

What did God teach you this week?

SPEAK THIS IN FAITH

Declaration of Faith

Father, I thank You that I am Your child by grace!

I have a hunger for Your Word that I will pursue!

I see myself the way You see me in Christ!

My identity in You shapes the way I live today!

I receive the instruction You provide through the people You send!

I put Your Word into practice in my everyday life!

I submit my responses to the leading of Your Spirit!

My life belongs to You, and I follow Your instructions!

I receive Your grace to keep growing in every season!

Your life in me will be visible to those around me!

I declare this by faith. In Jesus' name. Amen!

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