

Stop This Train

A Study on Maturing for Couples

*I want to get off and go home again
I can't take the speed it's moving in
I know I can't but honestly won't someone stop this train*

*So scared of getting older
I'm only good at being young
So I play the numbers game to find a way to say that life has just begun.*

-- John Mayer (*Stop This Train*)

Opening Question

What areas of your character do you believe are mature? How about immature?

Bible Study

The Immature Heart

Luke 8:11-15 NIV

“This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. [12] Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. [13] Those on the rocky ground are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. [14] **The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature.** [15] But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and **by persevering** produce a crop.

- What makes a heart stay immature?
- What do you think an immature heart is?
- What “life's worries, riches, or pleasures” distract you from God and maturing spiritually? Why?

The Immature Relationship

Ephesians 4:11-16 NIV

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, [12] to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up [13] until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. [14] **Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching** and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. [15] Instead, **speaking the truth in love**, we will grow to become in **every respect the mature** body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. [16] From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and **builds itself up** in love, as each part does its work.

- Do you seek after people to speak the truth to you to help you become mature?
- Which of your friends speak the truth to you?
- What are ways you can resist or isolate from relationships like this?

Becoming Fully Mature

Colossians 1:28-29 NIV

He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone **fully mature** in Christ. [29] To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.

- What does it take to become fully mature?
- Focus on the following three areas to help you get there.

#1 Identifying Emotionalism & Distorted Love

2 Timothy 3:1-7 NIV

But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. [2] People will be **lovers of themselves**, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, [3] without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, [4] treacherous, rash, conceited, **lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God**--- [5] having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people. [6] They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over gullible women, who are **loaded down with sins** and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, [7] always learning but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth.

- What does someone live by if they love themselves?
- How can you start learning to really love God and others?

#2 Maturing Your Relationship

Ephesians 5:21-33 NIV

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. [22] **Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands** as you do to the Lord. [23] For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. [24] Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. [25] **Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her** [26] to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, [27] and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. [28] In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. [29] After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church--- [30] for we are members of his body. [31] “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” [32] This is a profound mystery---but I am talking about Christ and the church. [33] However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

- How do you need to submit your life to build up and help your girlfriend/boyfriend or spouse?
- How do you resist this kind of relationship so you can still do whatever you want?
- Are you humble enough to be transparent and allow your girlfriend/boyfriend or spouse to help you?

#3 Building Mature Relationships with People

Philippians 2:1-8 NIV

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, [2] then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. [3] Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. **Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,** [4] **not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.** [5] In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: [6] Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; [7] rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. [8] And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death---even death on a cross!

- How have others been interested in and sacrificed for you to get you to where you are at?
- Someone who is mature is not only seeking their own success but is interested in others. Are you interested in other people enough to help them grow?



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