

Small Group Guide



Key Takeaways

1. Identity and maturity are not the same thing. Being born again gives you a new identity in Christ instantly. Growing into that identity is a lifelong process that requires time, effort, and participation.
2. Everyone starts as an infant. No one enters the Christian life as a spiritual superhero. Expecting instant maturity sets believers up for discouragement and leads to hiding their struggles rather than bringing them into the light.
3. Struggle does not disprove your identity. Failures, falls, and stumbles are not evidence that what God says about you is false. They are part of the process by which God shapes you into what he says you already are.
4. Maturity requires your participation. As Philippians 2:12 describes, believers are called to work out their salvation actively. God empowers the process, but he will not complete it without your engagement.
5. Remaining an infant is not an option. As Ephesians 4:14-15 makes clear, immaturity leaves believers vulnerable, directionless, and unable to represent Christ to the world. The goal is always growth.

Discussion Questions

Opening Question : When you first came to faith, which picture better represented how you thought the Christian life would go: Superman or a newborn infant? How has that expectation shaped your experience?

1. The sermon describes a common objection many believers feel: "If I am all the things Scripture says I am, why don't I look like it?" Have you wrestled with this tension? How has it affected how you see yourself as a Christian?

2. Jeff listed a wide range of topics -- the death penalty, money, marriage, enemies, the poor -- and asked whether we have genuinely sat at the feet of Jesus on these things or simply brought our prior beliefs with us. Which of those topics felt most convicting to you? Are there areas where you have not yet invited Jesus to reshape your thinking?
3. The sermon makes this distinction: "You are not maturing so that you become the children of God. You mature because you are the children of God." Why does that difference matter? How does getting it backwards affect the way a person approaches the Christian life?
4. Jeff said, "Hiding my struggles protects immaturity. Honest relationships expose my life to grace and truth." How honest are you in your closest relationships about where you are actually struggling? What makes that kind of honesty difficult?
5. The sermon challenges the idea that we should wait for mature feelings before we take mature actions -- that obedience and faith often come first. Can you think of a time when you acted in obedience before it felt natural, and something changed in you as a result? What happened?
6. Ephesians 4:14 describes immature believers as being "tossed back and forth by the waves" and vulnerable to deception. Where do you see that kind of drift happening in your own life or in the broader culture around you?
7. Jeff asked several pointed diagnostic questions. Take a moment with these as a group:
 - How are you consistently feeding your mind truth? What is competing for that space?
 - Are you bringing your struggles into the light, or are you protecting your immaturity by keeping them hidden?
 - Are you being faithful in the small things God has already called you to do?
8. The sermon closes with this challenge: "Stop interpreting the ways you stumble as proof that you are not a new creation." Is there a specific area of your life where you have been using your failures as evidence against your identity in Christ? What would it look like to receive your identity by faith instead?