

THE DOCTRINE OF THE SIX STAGES OF GRACE (#4) **Growth Maturity Grace**

We are currently studying the doctrine of the six stages of God's Grace in the Christ Way of Life (CWL).

- Saving Grace
- Logistical Grace
- **Growth Maturity Grace**
- Undeserved Suffering Grace
- Dying Grace
- Surpassing Grace.

These five stages of God's Grace cover the entire CWL from salvation to eternity in heaven (2 Cor.5:6-8).

As a pastor-teacher, I was burdened with the task of feeding the Lord's sheep (John 21:15-17). I wasn't theologically trained in how to develop spiritual growth maturity. However, the grace of God met my need by allowing me to learn from another pastor-teacher, R.B. Thieme.

What I have learned about the development of spiritual growth maturity I will share with you in the **THIRD STAGE** of GRACE (Growth Maturity Grace).

I have discovered the importance of:

- **Milk (Soteriology) doctrines** for the baby believer (1 Pet.2:2; Heb.5:13)
- **Meat (Nepiology) doctrines** for the immature believer (2 Pet.3:18; Eph.4:14-15)
- **Meat (Teleology) doctrines** for the mature believer (Heb.5:14; Col.1:28-29).

Therefore, I speak with confidence when I ask you to study at least one year with us at DSBC and you will “**grow** (auxano) (p.a.impv.2pl) **in** (en+loc) **the grace (charis) and knowledge (gnosis) of our Lord and Savior (soter) Jesus Christ.**” (2 Pet.3:18) Then you will have something to compare your other church growth experiences.

This lesson will study five aspects of spiritual growth Maturity Grace.
--

1. **Milk (Soteriology) doctrines are essential for spiritual growth of a newborn baby believer to advance to the immature stage of an adult believer. (SEE 50 Things Free at www.doctrinalstudies.com).**

Under the principle of grace salvation, every Church Age Believer (CAB) enters the Christian Way of Life(CWL) equal in spiritual growth status as a “brephos”, a babe (1 Pet.2:2).

(1 Pet.2:2) “Like **newborn** (artigenetos) **babes** (brephos), long for the pure **milk** of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation (soteria).”

(Heb.5:13) “For everyone who partakes only of **milk** is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a **babe** (nepios).”

“They cannot grasp the deeper theology of advanced Christian truth.” (Renaissance of NT, pg.194)

(Eph.4:14-15) “As a result, we are no longer to be **children (nepios)**, tossed here and there **by waves**, and carried about **by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming**; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ.”

(1 Cor.3:1) “And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, **as to babes (nepios)** in Christ.”

2. When a spiritually mature (teleios) believer goes into reversionism (Prov.14:14) [backslides], he relapses to the immature (nepios) stage of spiritual growth.

He doesn't lose his salvation but he does lose his spiritual growth maturity status (John 10:28-30).

(Heb.10:25) “Not forsaking our own assembling together, as the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and the more, as you see the day drawing near.” (Heb.13:17; Col.1:25; 1 Pet.5:1-4)

(Heb.5:12-13) “For by this time you ought to be teachers, you have **need again** for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God; and you **have come to need milk and not solid food (meat)**. For everyone who partakes **only of milk** is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a **babe (nepios)**.”

(Heb.6:1a) “Therefore **leaving** (aphiemi / a.a.ptc.nplm) the elementary teaching about Christ, let us **press** (phero / p.m.subj.1pl) on to maturity (ten teleiotes / asf)”

3. Therefore spiritual growth depends on the type of Categorical Bible Doctrine (CBD) being cycled by faith in your Christian Way of Life (CWL).

- Newborn baby (brephos) needs Soteriology milk doctrines (1 Pet.2:2; Heb.5:13).
- Immature believer (nepios) needs Nepiology milk doctrines (2 Pet.3:18; Eph.4:14-15).
- Mature believer (teleios) needs Teleiology meat doctrines (Heb.5:14; Col.1:28-29).
- Reversionistic believer needs Nepiology milk doctrines (Heb.5:12-13; 6:1).

4. Spiritual growth is never static. We are either progressive or retrogressive (Eph.4:11-16).

- **Progressive** is moving from **milk** (Soteriology and Nepiology) to **meat** (Teleiology) doctrines. Reaching and maintaining maturity means a steady meat diet of Teleiology doctrines (advanced theology).
- **Retrogression** is either never reaching maturity because of carnality (1 Cor.3:1-3) or relapsing back to immaturity because of reversionism (Heb.5:12-13; 6:1).

5. While there are stages to spiritual growth maturity, there are no stages to spirituality.

- The immature believer (nepios) can be spiritual on milk doctrine because of the indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor.3:1-3; 6:19-20; Eph.5:18; Gal.5:16-17).
- The mature believer (teleios) can be carnal on meat doctrines because of lust trends of the old sin-nature (OSN) (Gal.5:16-17; James 1:13-15; 1 Cor.3:1-3) and because of old man cosmos diabolicus thinking (OMCD) (Col.3:5-10; Rom.12:2).

The length of time as a believer or as a member of a church does not determine one's spiritual growth status.

(2 Pet.3:18) “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.”