

Title: What Does a Grown Up Christian Look Like?

Text: 1 Thessalonians 5:12-15 **Date:** November 12, 2017

Background. Paul has just discussed that Jesus is soon returning, and both dead and living believers will be secure with Christ for all of eternity (1 Thess. 4:13-5:11). Now he begins drawing the letter to a close by offering several pastoral exhortations that Christians should focus on as their character is shaped to be more like Christ.

Main Idea. Just as a child grows to become an adult, a disciple of Christ will pursue holiness, fight sin, and allow the Spirit of Christ to move him toward maturity.

Group Questions:

1. Why do you think the New Testament writers put such a high degree of emphasis upon honoring your spiritual leaders? See 1 Thess. 5:12, 1 Tim. 5:17-18, 1 Cor. 11:1, and Heb. 13:7, 17.
2. Is there a connection between discipleship that is *taught* and discipleship that is *caught*? How can leaders effectively model what they teach?
3. The word ‘admonish’ in 1 Thess. 5:12 literally means *to put sense into the head of the listener*. It can also carry overtones of rebuke and correction. Do Christians today have a teachable spirit? Do folks get upset about “getting their toes stepped on in church”?
4. What is a pastor’s primary job, according to the New Testament? (Hint: praying, preaching, and equipping/discipling the church to reach the lost.)
5. Why do you think some in the church today have major trust issues with spiritual leaders?
6. What does idle-living look like in today’s busy society? Has our busyness made us more effective for God’s Kingdom? Or less effective?
7. In what ways can you bring comfort to a discouraged believer and help those who are weak? Get practical and share ideas, because depression in society today is real and on the rise!
8. Think of the most patient person you know. How do they behave? Are they rushed? What is the secret to their patience? Give examples of occasions when you struggle being patient in today’s world.
9. Why is it so hard for a Christian to forgive others, in light of Christ’s forgiveness of us? Can you think of an extraordinary example of forgiveness and kindness?
10. What are the most common hindrances that prevent Christian maturity today?