

## Be Infants

Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature.

*1 Corinthians 14:20 (ESV)*

Just a few days ago, we celebrated our daughter Lily's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday and I was struck by how different birthday celebrations are with adult children. This year, she picked out her own birthday present and we weren't even sure if she would even take a few minutes of her own time to celebrate her birthday, let alone be able to spare time with her parents. It was a blessing to us to hear that her church small group bought her a cheesecake and celebrated with her, and she did bless us by coming later that night to allow us to put some candles into her cheesecake and get a birthday photo!



Even though the manner of celebration has profoundly changed over the years, rest assured that each year we seem to be even more thankful for another year with our children. No more are the large gatherings of family and friends, presents, party favors, games, or even a cake. Often, we just have a quiet evening and a nice dinner together. These changes of life are, of course, as desired for us as we help usher our children into adulthood.

But what does it mean to truly be an *adult*? A sad irony of our culture is the way the word “adult” is used to describe activities (and especially media) that are precisely of the type that a truly mature individual would actively **avoid**. As our children grow, we desire to place more responsibility and freedom into their own hands so they can someday “launch” successfully into the world. However, Scripture specifically tells us that to be mature, a true spiritual adult, that there are ways in which a Christian's growth *should be stunted*. Paul exhorts us, via the church in Corinth, in the passage above to ensure we are infantile and stunted in our understanding and practice of evil. There are ways in which we must reject even knowing of the evil that would attempt to work its way into us and our children, and it does so perniciously and nefariously. Without active growth in relationship with Christ and his people we will not be equipped to handle the spiritual war that rages around us and that knocks on every door in our lives.

But, thankfully, God has provided all we need to mature in the right way and stand against the cultural storms.

And he [God] gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds[c] and teachers,[d] 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, 14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. — *Ephesians 4:13-14 (ESV)*

So, my beloved brothers and sisters, assess yourselves and see; in what ways are you too mature? How can you be more infantile in evil?

Let us confess our inappropriate “maturity” to our Lord, enjoy his grace and forgiveness, cling to Christ and his people, and endeavor to walk together on the true path to spiritual maturity as we see to attain the unity of the faith through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Pastor Aaron