



Lecture 2

Developing Maturity for Life

PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS OF A PERSON WITH IMMATURITY & LIFE-CONTROLLING PROBLEMS

1 Corinthians 13:11

“When I was a child I was accustomed to speak as a child. I used to understand as a child. I was accustomed to reason as a child. When I have become a man and have the status of an adult, I have permanently put away the things of a child.”

1 Corinthians 3:1

“As for myself, I also, brethren, was not able to speak to you as I would to those dominated by the Holy Spirit, but as I would to those dominated by the evil nature, as I would to those in Christ who are still immature spiritually.”

Ephesians 4:14

“in order that we no longer may be immature ones, tossed to and from and carried around in circles by every wind of teaching in the cunning adroitness of men, in craftiness which furthers the scheming deceitful art of error.”

EMOTIONAL IMMATURITY

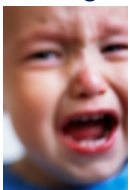
This is the most obvious personality trait of “adult children”. This characteristic will result in inner conflicts which will have repercussions in relationships. “Adult children” create problems for themselves and for others. They are suspicious, distrustful and insecure and instinctively develop defence mechanisms to “protect themselves”. They don’t avail themselves of the Holy Spirit’s power, love and wisdom.

Some defence mechanisms due to insecurity and fear:

Denial	Used to refuse to accept the reality of the situation.
Projection	Blames others for their own feelings, attitudes, values, impulses and thoughts.
Repression	Used to push anxiety-producing situations into the sub-conscious. These situations may involve feelings, attitudes, impulses and thoughts.
Controlling	Used to control someone else’s thoughts, feelings and actions to compensate for their own inadequacy, insecurity or powerlessness.
Acting out	Trying to reduce anxiety and tension by negative behaviour. Examples are vandalism, sexual promiscuity, slander, gossip, reviling. etc.

We could also mention: **minimising, rationalising, withdrawing, superiority, joking, justifying, silence, laughing, etc.**

As we grow and develop as individuals, we grow not only physically and intellectually, but emotionally also.



A person of 25 years of age might be perfectly mature in some areas of their life, but in others he might be only 6 to 10 years old emotionally. If a 25-year old man is acting out some of the emotions of a 6-10 year old, it is a real problem. For instance, if a child experienced rejection, as an adult, they might be very clever or smart, but if someone pushes the button of rejection, their reaction will be childish and out of proportion because the pain is still there.

Within a dysfunctional family, there will have been many situations where a child could not cope with rejection, abuse, pain, anger, fear, etc. The next best thing the child does out of helplessness is to internalise it and push it down, in this way starting the process of accumulation of negative, toxic emotions and memories. In time these emotions become “normal” i.e. the child accepts it as “a part of life.”

Some children with extreme abuse choose to escape from reality by “creating another self”. They want to be somebody else who is happy, loved, etc. This can cause fragmentation.

Children and “adult children” have a lot in common:

- 1) They are both emotionally immature
- 2) They feel rejected easily
- 3) They feel hurt easily
- 4) Their emotions are very intense and hypersensitive
- 5) They accumulate pain and hurt
- 6) They don’t know how to manage their emotions
- 7) They develop fear and insecurity, they are easily offended
- 8) They are self-centred. Pride and the ego in action.
- 9) They struggle in communicating their emotions effectively

A child depends on their parents for their wellbeing: they need nurturing, love, acceptance, protection, provision, security. If not nurtured, protected, loved, they will become “adult children”.

A Christian “adult child” needs to depend on the Heavenly Father, the Holy Spirit, God’s Word in order to be healed. The Bible does not allow believers to accumulate guilt, rejection, condemnation, hurt, pain, shame, resentment, fear, worries, insecurity, etc.; these will bring doubt and unbelief and prevent us from leaving the past behind. In fact, the Bible teaches us that Jesus took our pain, sorrow and provided healing at the cross.

Isaiah 53:4-6

“Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him.”

Matthew 11:28-30

“Come here to me, all who are growing weary to the point of exhaustion, and who have been loaded with burdens and are bending beneath their weight, and I alone will cause you to cease from your labour and take away your burdens and thus refresh you with rest. Take at once my yoke upon you and learn from me, because I am meek and lowly in heart, and you will find cessation from labour and refreshment for your souls, for my yoke is mild and pleasant, and my load is light in weight.”

Luke 9:62

“But Jesus said to him, No one having put his hand to a plough and looking to the things he left behind, is fit for the kingdom of God.”

The need for emotional healing

Jesus expects His children to receive ALL He has provided in His Word. Every provision and promise in the Word is ours; we have inherited it. **WE NEED TO JUST RECEIVE IT BY FAITH!!** We need to appropriate healing in obedience to the Word. Also, a sick soul will make the body sick.

If we don’t appropriate the healing Jesus provided through His blood, we will continue to carry “the works of the devil” from the past. This means that we will need to comfort ourselves with something to “ease the pain” or escape. This can be anything, the list is long:

Addictions, drugs, alcohol, religiosity, self-pity, sexual immorality, gambling, rebellion, bitterness, unforgiveness, low self-worth, guilt, condemnation, fear, worries, work-holism, compulsive shopping, deep anger, homosexuality, etc.

The way in which we seek to satisfy our emotional deficit becomes a significant indication of our character and personality. When some of these life-controlling problems are present in our lives, this means we have chosen to respond to our problems by becoming more and more involved in our bad habits and way of life.