

Bridgeway Community Church
Pastor Dr. David Anderson
September 12, 2021

VISION SUNDAY 2021

Mature & Might in Christ

INTRODUCTION

“For Christ’s sake, GROW UP!”

“As a church we enter into our 30th year anniversary. We can no longer be called a ‘church plant.’ We are a bona fide, adult church!”

The number 30 is quite significant when you think about it.

- By 30, you should know what you want to do in life.
- By 30, you should truly know what you don’t want to do in life.
- Young people think about marriage, kids, family, and such squarely by the time they are 30.

In your 20s you can get away with stuff; figure out work, relationships, schooling, etc.

But 30 is that age where you truly need to be what they call “Adulthood”!

30 is a significant number in the Bible.

- At age 30 Joseph became Prime Minister in Egypt (Genesis 41:46)
- At age 30 Saul was anointed the first king of Israel (1 Samuel 13:1)
- At age 30 David began to reign over Israel (2 Samuel 5:4)
- At age 30 Aaronic Priests, from the lineage of Aaron, were initially dedicated to officially serve as priests (Numbers 4:3)
- At age 30 John the Baptist, from the lineage of Aaron, began his ministry
- We all know that at age 30 Jesus was baptized and stepped out into public ministry to preach the gospel (Luke 3:23)
- In 30 AD the New Testament church was born in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost where 3000 people received the gospel, repented, and were baptized! (Acts 2:41)

ADULTING

“This is a year in our church where I want us to focus on growing up in our faith. It is our call, it is our assignment to begin ‘adulting’ as a church.”

Remember that the church is the body of Christ, not a building with 4 walls. In other words, YOU are the church!

Question: Do you know what the Christian word for ‘adulting’ is?

Answer: Maturity

1 Corinthians 13:11 NIV

[Paul said] When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me!

“Bridgeway, it is time to grow up! It’s time to mature in our faith!”

Last year our theme - *Stay in F.O.C.U.S - Followers **Of** Christ **U**nited in the **S**pirit*

Ephesians 4:3 NIV

Maintain the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

As you continue to read in Ephesians 4, verses 11-16 challenge the Ephesians to become mature & mighty in Christ.

Not mighty in a way where they exert power and pride, but mighty in a way where they were strengthening their witness, their walk, their worship, and their work for the Lord Jesus Christ!

I want you to observe four of the following words in this passage that are mentioned twice: “mature,” “build/built,” “grow(s),” and “work(s).”

Ephesians 4:11-16 NIV84

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip his people for **works** of service, so that the body of Christ may be **built up** ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become **mature**, attaining to

the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will **grow** to become in every respect the **mature** body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, **grows** and **builds** itself up in love, as each part does its **work**.

Paul is encouraging the believers in the city of Ephesus to grow up.

Staying young as spiritual babies in the faith will leave believers vulnerable to every wind of doctrine and crafty deception.

God wants us to be mature and mighty in 5 areas according to the passage:

- Mighty in **function** (*"works of service"* - v.11-12, 16)
- Mighty in **faith** (*"unity of the faith"* - v.13)
- Mighty in **fullness** (*"fullness in Christ"* - v.13)
- Mighty in **fortitude** (*"no longer be spiritual infants tossed back and forth"* - v.14)
- Mighty in **fit** (*"love," "joined," "held together," "supporting,"* etc.- v. 15-16)

For the next 5 weeks I will preach a new sermon series called **HIGH FIVE!** I will teach about each of these 5 areas where we can grow mighty!

Therefore, Paul, the writer, reminds us that the offices that help us become mature & mighty in these ways are the offices of apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers are gifts of spiritual leadership given to the church to equip the believers toward their spiritual growth.

- These gifts of spiritual leadership offices (the clergy) are to be deployed so that believers become mature & mighty in Christ.
- The job of those offices is to **EQUIP** you and **PREPARE** you, the body of Christ, to **do the work of the ministry**.
- The church staff and employees are not here to do the spiritual work for you.
- "If there's a clergy member, a minister or a pastor or anyone who works for the church in a supporting role, that group is given to you as a gift from God to help support you so you - YOU - **YOU** - can do the work of the ministry."

We are more than simply **MINISTERS!** We are the **ADMINISTERS!** **YOU**_are ministers!

“Our job is to make each of you better ministers.”

1 Peter 4:10 NIV

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

“Never see a pastor like a hired lawyer or a hired accountant. Sometimes people see church leaders as hired people.”

2 Corinthians 5:18-20 NIV

All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

Allow me to ask you a few questions:

Question: How long have you been a Christian?

“The chronological age and the maturity age are two different things. There are people who have been Christians for 20 years and they're still babies in the faith. Going to church for 10 years doesn't make you somehow a mature Christian.

Question: Do you feel like you are prepared and equipped to do the work of the ministry? If not, why not?

Question: What else do you need to become stronger in your faith and ready to serve as a mature minister of the gospel?

Question: Are you prepared to sustain your spiritual life and grow it up within yourselves and your family?

Question: Have you prepared and equipped those under your influence to grow in Christ and minister for Him?

“Bridgeway, My goal is to help you get there! The goal of our clergy and our ministry leaders is to help you get there! The goal of our Elders Council is to help you get

there!...The goal of all of our ministries and programs is to help you become 'Mature & Mighty in Christ!'"

- We do not want you to be in the same spiritual place you are now, one year from now.
- We are all in different places in our spiritual growth, but wherever you are, we want you to grow from there.
- We love you wherever you are! We receive you wherever you are and we do not judge you in this church not matter where you are.
- We want you to grow from where you are to where you can be in the months to come with a little more focus, prioritization and commitments.

1 Corinthians 3:1-2 NIV84

Brothers, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly—mere infants in Christ. ² I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready.

"You've got to move from the milk of the word to the meat of the word."

Hebrews 5:11 NIV84

We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. ¹² In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! ¹³ Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. ¹⁴ But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

ONE PRACTICAL APPLICATION - Choose 3 ways to grow!

M&M 30 PLAN - 30 different ways for you to grow mature & mighty in Christ

I am inviting you to join me in the MATURE & MIGHTY 30 CHALLENGE!

Choose 3!!

bridgeway.cc/thirty - to see all the options to choose from