1Thess #61

Maturity is recognized in the plan of God.

/1Thes 4:1 Finally then, brothers *and sisters,* we request and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received *instruction* from us as to how you ought to walk and please God (just as you actually do walk), that you excel *even* more.\

The Apostle Paul’s use of the word -*finally* does not mean he is finished. He is pivoting to something else.

It means he is getting ready for the closing section of the introduction portion of the letter. He is getting ready for instruction.

The word *‘finally’* is as if the Apostle Paul wrote - ‘*as for the rest of what I want to say,’* and it serves to mark a transition rather than a conclusion.

/The Apostle Paul was thankful for the growth he saw in the Thessalonians, but still looked for them to growfurtherin a walk that would please God. To excel more, this means, that Christian maturity is never finished on this side of eternity. No matter how far a Christian has come he or she can still get closer to Christ-like application in time. \

Paul writes -  *Just as you received from us*: What the Apostle Paul wrote in the following verses was nothing new to the Thessalonians. In the 5 weeks he was with them prior to this, he instructed them on basic matters of not only the gospel but the filling power of God the HS.

Paul knew it was important to instruct new Believers on basic concepts about mystery doctrine, not overload them but touch on basic principles.

/1Thes 4:1 - *How you ought to walk and to please God*:

The Apostle Paul took it for granted that the Thessalonians understood the purpose *of their walk* (lifestyle). The basic concept was to please God and not themselves. \

When the Christian has this basic understanding, that is following the instruction regarding Biblical walking. Which points to their lifestyle, they can then apply the grace gifts of God to follow the instructions.

When the grace plan of God begins to open up to a Bel they realize there is nothing in their flesh that will please GOD.

They begin to understand the journey is not about perfection but responsibility and participation.

We are all called into duty at salvation.

*/“When a man is saved by the work of Christ for him it does not lie open before him as a matter for his completely free decision whether he will serve God or not. He has been bought with a price. He has become the slave of Christ.”*

*1986 - Australian Theologian,*

*Dr. Leon Morris \*

Just the fact that you are now the legal property of TLJC – you were purchased from the cosmic system by the work on the cross.

It almost appears legalistic on the surface, as to what Dr. Leon Morris wrote but it is actual facts.

That should be motivation enough, yet in God’s grace plan - HE allows you to even reject HIM and ignore HIM after you have been bought by the blood of Christ.

Your free will is still active and in control after salvation. God’s grace and love is so abundant that even though you are now a legal member of HIS royal family. A soldier enlisted in heavenly combat, a Bel priest and an ambassador you can still reject the calling of GOD!

REPEAT

/1Cor 6:19 Or **do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you**, whom you have from God, and *that* you are not your own? 20 For **you have been bought for a price**: therefore glorify God in your body. \

What often gets lost on many people and sadly even BELS, is that God is so abundantly gracious that we can treat HIM like He doesn’t even exist and HE will still consider us HIS children.

The Apostle Paul is saying - *For you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus:*

These were not suggestions from Paul. These are commandments from the Lord Jesus and must be received that way.

The original context of 1Thess 4:1 looks closer to this;

/1Thes 4:1 For the rest then, brothers, we beg you and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, even as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, that you abound more.\

The Apostle Paul recognizes that they are already walking in a certain manner, but now wants them to expand or continue in greater strength.

/1Thes 4:1 – *that you received (paralambanō),*

To receive with obedience, to associate or acknowledge closely with something or someone. Fully accept instruction. \

PARA-LAM-BONO, points to metabolizing BD – being not only available but digesting that which you were taught.

This verse has a strong connotation of almost a military command.

Go over to Ephesians chapter four RF.

Truly what the Apostle Paul is stating is that there is a command to go forward into maturity.

You can ignore that command because of God’s grace plan which enables the free will of mankind.

But none the less the fact is you belong to TLJC after salvation.

Those who do accept the command and calling are the ones who reap the benefits.

/Jas 4:6 But **He gives a greater grace**. Therefore *it* says, “GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.”

God cannot shower HIS power and grace upon you in full abundance if you kick against HIS word.\

The first step to understanding your personal journey toward SM, should be to get a teacher and a system as to where and how you are going to grow in God’s grace and knowledge.

/2Pet 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.

This is the call for all Bels – to move toward maturity.\

Eph 4:11 And He gave some *as* apostles, some *as* prophets, some *as* evangelists, some *as* pastors and teachers,

There is a special ministry inside the plan of GOD for teachers of the word.

There is no excuse not to make yourself available to the teaching of God’s word.

If they are a true pastor-teacher they will do their best to put their teaching out freely into a lost and dying world.

[Eph 4:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/4/12/s_1101012) for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ;

/[Eph 4:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/4/13/s_1101013) until we all attain to the **unity of the faith**, and of the **knowledge of the Son of God**, to a **mature man, to the measure of the stature** (*hēlikia)* which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

Reach a height or greater value of age or higher knowledge – maturity.\

HELL-AH-KEYA- points to spiritual maturity.

EPI-NOSIS - speaks to the knowledge that is digested.

That is knowledge accepted and that is knowledge ready to become wisdom.

That is the knowledge needed to be part of your soul structure, that leads to a higher or greater value which is pointing us to SM.

REPEAT

/[Eph 4:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/4/14/s_1101014) **As a result, we are no longer to be children**, tossed here and there by waves and **carried about by every wind of doctrine,** by the trickery of people, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;

This means spiritual discernment and your spiritual I.Q. are causing you to be stronger and not pushed around by lies or emotions.\

You are no longer an immature Bel.

That should be the goal for all BELS!

[Eph 4:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/4/15/s_1101015) but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, *that is,* Christ,

Speaking and living in BD, with impersonal, unconditional love as our foundation.

/[Eph 4:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/4/16/s_1101016) from whom **the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint**supplies, according to the proper **working of each individual** part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

The maturing Bel realizes they are part of a bigger picture – they are members of the body of Christ. OTHERS - becomes a focus with the SM Bel. \

The SM Bel begins to understand the military correlation of many aspects of spiritual warfare and spiritual growth.

Such as putting on the full armor from God — Ephesians 6:11-13. Once you get it all on, and can function within that armor, that is maturity.

/Eph 6:11 Put on the full armor of God, so that **you will be able to stand firm** against the schemes of the devil.

Mature Bels realize they are not called to rush into the devil’s world looking for righteous battles – they are called to be strong in that which GOD has given them.\

The stumbling blocks and adversity will materialize and when it does – the SM Bel is to be strong and stand firm in the faith.

[Eph 6:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/6/12/s_1103012) For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places.*

The SM Bel now recognizes the unseen battles and the hidden ideologies.

They see evil is really the whole cosmic system itself, how saturated with anti-godly attitudes and false teaching this world really is.

/[Eph 6:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/eph/6/13/s_1103013) Therefore**, take up the full armor of God,** so that you will be able to **resist** on the evil day, and having done everything, to **stand firm**.

Resist and stand firm is the call for a mature Bel. The Bel has to put on the full armor of GOD.\

This means faith-rest, virtue love and all from the filling power of God the HS and application of the WORD!

Jump over to Colossians chapter two.

You cannot stand firm and resist if your life is not in order. You need balance and stability in your life.

Following the lead of men like the Apostles to the high ground — Hebrews 12:1-2, points us to the high ground of maturity.

/Heb 12:1 Therefore, **since we also have such a great cloud of witnesses** surrounding us, **let’s rid ourselves of every obstacle** and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let’s **run with endurance** the race that is set before us,

SM Bel realize how their lives touch others around them. They rid themselves of foolish distractions. Using rebound to stay in the new nature.\

Mature Bels know the importance of the two power options.

/[Heb 12:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/heb/12/2/s_1145002) **looking only at Jesus**, the originator and perfecter of the faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and **has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.**

Mature Bels stay focused on the life of Jesus Christ. They celebrate and live in HIS victory! \

Notice it says JESUS – humanity of Christ.

SM Bels learn to establish a command post in the soul — Colossians 2:5-8.

Col 2:5 For even though I am absent in body, I am nevertheless with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your orderly manner and the stability of your faith in Christ.

Your orderly manner and stability.

The Apostle Paul is telling them they are reaching mature – they have a balanced life they have stability from BD.

[Col 2:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/col/2/6/s_1109006) Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so* walk in Him,

You received TLJC by acknowledging you need a savior!

That same humility and attitude which willingly turns to the justice system of God is what your walk needs to look like.

/[Col 2:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/col/2/7/s_1109007) having been **firmly rooted** and *now* **being built up in Him** and **established in your faith**, just as you were instructed, *and* overflowing with gratitude.

Rooted – balanced and stable, built up - consistent growth and strong faith!\

Built up in CHRIST – HIS MIND!

[Col 2:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/col/2/8/s_1109008) See to it that there is no one who takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception in accordance with human tradition, in accordance with the elementary principles of the world, rather than in accordance with Christ.

**/**Worldly philosophy, empty deception and the tradition of man – this is what the world offers us. We are surrounded by cosmic viewpoint, old sin natures and human solutions. Therefore we had better be washing ourselves clean habitually in the mind of Christ!\