

Battle for Growth 1

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Before you can grow naturally, you must first be born!

Before you can grow spiritually, you must be born again!

James 1:18 - In his goodness **He chose** to make us his **own children, giving birth** to us by giving us his true word. And we, out of all creation, became his choice possession.

- We know how long it takes to develop our natural bodies to maturity; do we know how long it should take to develop into spiritually mature people?
- Paul wrote the church at Corinth about his displeasure in their spiritual immaturity.
- The time from when Paul left them to when he wrote the letter was 4 to 7 years.
- This means a person in his or her teens and 20s can be a spiritually mature person!
- You can do this!

What does a “Spiritually Growing” person look like?

1. They develop a desire for spiritual food.

1 Peter 2:2 – As newborn babes, **desire** the sincere milk of the word that you may **grow thereby**.

We eat three or more meals a day and feed ourselves spiritually one cold snack a week.

2. They aren't easily deceived; they keep the main thing, the main thing.

3. They speak the Word of God in everyday life.

Ephesians 4:14-15 – **14** . . . that we should **no longer be children**, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, **15** but, **speaking the truth in love**, may **grow up** in all things into Him who is the head —Christ.

Spiritually mature people align their words with God's Word.

They aren't **easily** deceived, which is a characteristic of children.

4. They teach and care for others.

5. They can discern good and evil in their everyday life.

Hebrews 5:11-14 – **11** 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. But **solid food is for the mature**, who by constant use have **trained themselves** to distinguish good from evil.

Spiritually mature people focus on lifting others.

Spiritually immature people focus on themselves.

6. They know how to live free from strife and offense.

I Corinthians 3:1-3 – **1** However brethren, I could not talk to you as to spiritual [men], but as to nonspiritual [men of the flesh, in whom the carnal nature predominates], as to mere infants [in the new life] in Christ [unable to talk yet!] **2** I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not yet strong enough [to be ready for it]; but even yet you are not strong enough [to be ready for it], **3** for you are still [unspiritual, having the nature] of the flesh [under the control of ordinary impulses]. For as long as [there are] **envying, jealousy, wrangling and factions among you**, are you not unspiritual and of the flesh, behaving yourselves after a human standard and like mere (unchanged) men?