

**Sermon: When I was a Child...**

**Speaker: Nelson Nyman**

**Intro:**

Yesterday we had Donna and Clyde's wedding here at the church. They chose 1 Corinthians 13 as their passage. It covers the biblical description of love. (Love is... patient, kind, keeps no record of wrongs, etc.)

Interestingly, the following verse is this one:

"When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways."

1 Corinthians 13:11

Life is full of transitions... as believers, God is always nudging us to leave childish ways and become adults.

What is spiritual childhood?

Not the quality of being a child in the sense of having the faith of a child.

"When I was a child..."

Paul speaks about himself in the past tense.

Spoke like...

1. Children speak without thinking. Adults hold their tongue.

Temper Tantrum: Letting anger and frustration come out immediately.

"Fools give full vent to their rage, but the wise bring calm in the end." Proverbs 29:11

"Restraint of pen and tongue." You can't take it back.

Example: How many times have you put your foot in your mouth? needed....

2. Children blame others. Adults take responsibility.

Example: Lars and I and the toilet brush

Adam and Eve after eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

God asked them...

"Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?" The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.

Genesis 3:11b-12

The difference between Adam's response and David's.

"Wash away all my iniquity  
and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is always before me.

Against you, you only, have I sinned  
and done what is evil in your sight."

Psalms 51:2-4a

More specifically, immaturity blames God.

Isn't it refreshing when you hear an adult say, "I was wrong. I'm sorry."

Ask yourself that.

Thought like...

3. Children fight. Adults make peace.

“Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly?” 1 Corinthians 3:1-3a

The test of immaturity is whether or not there is jealousy and fighting.

**Application:**

What is your response when someone close to you tells you about something good that happened to them?

What's your response if they get the very thing you hoped to get?

Paul is telling them (in the same book written to the same people) that they are children (infants) and not ready for real food.

Example: Tamara and Sophie

4. Children want it NOW! Adults wait on the Lord.

Remember the choice Esau made.

He was not willing to wait for the promise of God.

Make sure none of you...

“...is godless like Esau, who for a single meal sold his inheritance rights as the oldest son. Afterward, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. Even though he sought the blessing with tears, he could not change what he had done.” Hebrews 12:16b-17

Lust says, “I must have it now!”

There is the temptation to want things now and fast especially in our instant culture.

Maybe you are waiting for God to do a work in you and it's taking what seems like forever.

A man rests in the process and trusts God with his sanctification

Jesus...said, “What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it. It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade.” Mark 4:30-32

Contrast between the smallest seed and the biggest plant.

Does a plant grow overnight?

Does it grow because we understand now it grows?

“We need longevity because our destiny and potential cannot be attained in a few years; they extend to the end of our lifetime here on earth.”

- Bill Johnson

5. Children get identity from temporary things.  
Adults put identity in Christ.

“Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God.” Colossians 3:1-3

Paul reminds them that they are not of the world, but new creations in Christ.

That’s one of my goals as pastor and one of the points of coming to church.

All week long, we are inundated by the world. We come to refocus on God.

Did you know it’s possible to have a master’s degree, a doctorate, a high level job, a huge income, and be an immature, child spiritually?

Listen to what Paul who wrote our scripture this morning says about himself.

“If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.”

Philippians 4:4-7

Example: It would be like a person today saying, “I was born into the Kennedy family, I inherited millions, I graduated from Harvard medical school, then got a law degree from Cambridge, I’ve donated millions to stop world hunger, I never did drugs, got drunk, or broke any laws. But I consider it all a loss compared with knowing Christ.

“...how naturally do men, when reason is ripened and matured, despise and relinquish their infant thoughts, put them away, reject them, esteem as nothing! Thus shall we think of our most valued gifts and acquisitions in this world, when we come to heaven. We shall despise our childish folly, in priding ourselves in such things when we are grown up to men in Christ.” - Matthew Henry  
An Adult knows the true value of things.

Reasoned like...

6. Children are indecisive. Adults make commitments.

Saying “yes” and “no” at the same time.

Was I fickle when I intended to do this? Or do I make my plans in a worldly manner so that in the same breath I say both “Yes, yes” and “No, no”? But as surely as God is faithful, our message to you is not “Yes” and “No.” For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us —by me and Silas and Timothy—was not “Yes” and “No,” but in him it has always been “Yes.” 2 Corinthians 1:17-19

“The more you commit, the more benefit you get.”

Saying yes to one thing (in marriage) means saying no to everything else.

Example: Little Tom and the banana.

7. Children look at others. Adults look at God.

When David was raiding, all the women and children were taken.

“David was greatly distressed because the men were talking of stoning him; each one was bitter in spirit because of his sons and daughters. But David found strength in the Lord his God.” 1 Samuel 30:6

David strengthened himself in the Lord instead of looking to his men

By going after the women and children, he avoided the battle that killed both Jonathan and Saul.

Where does your strength come from?

**Transition:**

People are not meant to stay children forever.

“When I became a man, I gave up childish ways.”  
It's time to let go of our childhood.

Many of us are in transition:  
Some are moving  
New Job  
Wilderness  
Loss of a loved one  
or getting married

Many things in life, we cannot control.  
We only have a choice about how we respond to what happens.

We can respond like children or we can respond like adults.

**Closer:**

Thus, God, in His mercy, gives you His favour in the measure your character can handle, taking you from glory to glory, faith to faith, and strength to strength. - Johnson, Bill

It is a transitory period.  
“...For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. 1 Corinthians 13:12