

1 Corinthians 13:11

“When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”

In ordinary life, every human being must pass through two major stages: childhood and adulthood. Each stage requires guidance. For example, a small child cannot lead himself because his mind has not yet matured to distinguish between good and evil or to understand the principles of life. Thus, he must be trained and instructed by his parent or caregiver, whether he likes it or not. Those instructions become laws and commands to him.

For example, when a child reaches around six or seven years old, he is taken to school—not because he wants to, but because it is necessary for his growth. He is forced to wake up every morning, brush his teeth, and go to school. No child naturally likes to be woken up early; a child prefers to play, jump around, and do whatever pleases him.

Likewise, when he returns home, he is forced to take a nap, forced to shower, forced to complete homework, his clothes are chosen for him, and sometimes his parents even choose which friends he can play with. He obeys these rules not because he understands or desires them but simply to meet the expectations of his parents. If he were given full freedom, he would abandon all these responsibilities instantly.

THE BEHAVIOR OF AN ADULT

As the child grows, changes slowly take place inside him. He begins to see the importance of waking up on time, brushing his teeth, going to school, bathing, choosing good friends, and so forth. Why does he do this? Because he has matured and understands these actions benefit him—not his parents. This is the true sign of adulthood: the ability to fulfill duties from the heart without being forced. That is when a parent knows the child is mature enough to be trusted with freedom.

Another example is a student. In primary school, he is forced to attend every lesson, wear a school uniform, write notes, and is punished when he does wrong. But in university, those strict rules are no longer there. Why? Because the university recognizes that

the student now understands his responsibility. Yet even without force, he still studies and passes. This does not mean the university has no rules; it means the student has matured enough to fulfill them willingly.

In the same way, the Church of God also passed through these two stages: childhood and adulthood. The stage of spiritual childhood was when God first birthed Israel in the wilderness. Being spiritually immature, they needed laws to guide them, because they could not yet distinguish good from evil. Thus, the Law was given through Moses—commands that had to be obeyed strictly. These were not requests; they were mandatory. A person could not steal, commit adultery, murder, break the Sabbath, or worship idols. Anyone who disobeyed was punished severely.

They obeyed these laws not because they loved them, but because they wanted to please God and avoid punishment. Had they been given freedom, they would not have kept the commandments.

But when God's people reached the stage of spiritual adulthood, the laws needed to be written inside their hearts so they would be obeyed willingly, not out of external force. This was prophesied

long ago.

Jeremiah 31:31-34

“Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah... I will put My law in their minds and write it on their hearts... and they shall all know Me... for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

This prophecy was fulfilled at Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended upon the believers. At that moment, they transitioned from spiritual childhood to spiritual adulthood. The first work of the Holy Spirit was to write God’s law inside their hearts. That means the believer begins to obey God willingly, not because of external pressure. Just like a university student studies from personal understanding rather than parental force.

From that moment onward, believers stopped committing adultery, not because God forbade it, but because they saw its destructive effect on their own souls. They stopped worshipping

idols, not simply because God commanded it, but because they understood only God deserves worship. They prayed not because it was a ritual but because they recognized their need for communion with God. They did not keep the Sabbath as a strict day, but every day became a Sabbath to them, because they worshiped in spirit and truth.

Thus God set them free from the Law.

Galatians 5:18

“But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.”

Romans 8:2

“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.”

Romans 8:4

“That the righteous requirements of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”

The importance of the Holy Spirit is this: He moves a person from spiritual childhood (bondage) into spiritual adulthood (freedom and maturity). A person who says, “I do not steal because God forbids it,” reveals spiritual childhood. A mature believer says, “I do not steal because I know it destroys my soul.”

Someone who insists on a specific Sabbath day or avoids sin purely because “God said so” is still under the childhood stage of the Law.

But those led by the Spirit see holiness not as a burden but as their joyful responsibility. They avoid adultery, immodesty, worldly entertainment, gossip, drunkenness, and all uncleanness—not because of rules, but because they love purity and understand its benefit to their own souls.

This is the sign of one who has truly received the Holy Spirit: they fulfill holiness by love, not by command.

Romans 8:9

“But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.”

So, my friend, are you in spiritual childhood or adulthood? Are you filled with the Holy Spirit, or are you still led by religion? Seek the Holy Spirit, for He is the seal of God (Ephesians 4:30). Without Him, there is no rapture.

Be blessed.

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Have You Put Away Childish Things?

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