

STAGES OF CHRISTIAN GROWTH

INTRODUCTION

- Christian growth and development is similar to human growth and development, but is not automatic. One can also slip backward to an earlier stage.
- “Born from above” (Anothen) JN 3:3
Person becomes a new creation in Christ, a spiritual baby—NEPIOS

NEPIOS **Baby 0-2 years** (3516 Strongs, “not speaking,” infant, simple-minded, immature)

- Carnally minded: Defining characteristic 1 COR 3:1
- Tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine EPH 4:14
- Unskilled in the Word of righteousness HEB 5:13
- Can offer praise to God (perfect: to complete or to repair praise) MT 21:16
- Can receive revelation MT 11:25

PAIDION **Little child 2-10 years** (3813 Strongs, “childling,” immature, lad)

- Are humble: Indicates that NEPIOS has begun to grow MT 18:4
- Are to come to their Lord (learn how to pray and listen) MT 19:14
- Have begun to intimately know the Father 1 JN 2:13
- Jesus called his disciples PAIDION JN 21:5
- Should be under the teaching of a spiritual father (PATER)
- Receive and enter the Kingdom of God by simple trust MK 10:15
- Deficient in spiritual understanding: Defining characteristic 1 COR 14:20

TEKNON **Older child 10-17 years** (5043 Strongs, son, daughter) TEKNION (5040 Strongs, “darlings”)

- Learn to mimic their heavenly Father EPH 5:1
- Do righteousness and love their brethren 1 JN 3:10
- Actively seek their Lord: Defining characteristic JN 13:33
- Are commanded not to sin (learn to deal with sin and the world) 1 JN 2:1
- Are not to be deceived by others concerning lifestyle 1 JN 3:7
- Are told to abide in Jesus 1 JN 2:28
- Are told to love in deed and in truth 1 JN 3:18
- Are struggling to have Christ formed in their character GAL 4:19
- Must keep themselves from idols 1 JN 5:21

NEANISKOS **Young man 17-40 years** (3495 Strongs, youth under 40 years)

- Keep the law but lack the spirit of love: Defining characteristic MT 19:20
- See visions ACTS 2:17
- Serve leadership ACTS 5:10
- Have overcome the wicked one 1 JN 2:13
- Are strong, and the Word of God abides in them 1 JN 2:14

HUIOS **Mature son 40+ years** (5207 Strongs, mature relationship with God)

- Are led by the Spirit of God: Defining characteristic ROM 8:14
- Are peacemakers (they end fights) MT 5:9
- Love their enemies and pray for their persecutors MT 5:44-45
- Learn obedience through suffering (putting down the flesh) HEB 5:8
- Are chastised by the Lord HEB 12:5
- Live a separate lifestyle from unbelievers 2 COR 6:14-18

PATER Father (3962 Strongs, father) **MÉTER Mother** (3384 Strongs, mother)

- Has intimate knowledge of God (knows his ways): Defining characteristic
- Charges, exhorts, encourages the believers
- Often works with HUIOS and NEANISKOS as a mentor
- Helps the NEPIOS, PAIDION, TEKNON to grow in Christ

1 JN 2:13-14
1 THESS 2:11
PHIL 2:22

TOOLS FOR GROWTH

1. Daily Bible reading
2. Meditation on the Scriptures
3. Daily quiet time of prayer and listening
4. Corporate praise, worship, prayer, testimony, and fellowship

This study was done by Rev. Kevin Porter of Lyons, OR. It is the best study of the stages of Christian growth that we have seen.