

GROWING UP IN GOD'S FAMILY

When Peter Pan Comes to Church
1 Corinthians 1:4–11; 3:1–4; 5:1–2; 8:1–13



LET'S BEGIN HERE

In the previous message, we were introduced to a syndrome that has plagued our society for years. Thanks to Dr. Dan Kiley, we have a name for it — “Peter Pan Syndrome” — and the more we study it, the more we understand what we are dealing with. Although the name is new, the problem is old. In fact, we can trace its roots all the way back to the fall of humanity in the garden. As we shall see, not even the early church was free of this insidious problem. Because it tends to emerge during the adolescent stage of our existence, it is appropriate that we address it. The details are neither pretty nor positive, but they are relevant. Hopefully, as a result of exposing this syndrome, we shall be alert to it and be better equipped to confront it.



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1. Psychological Syndrome: An Overview

- **Explanation**

Many adolescents fail to grow into adulthood; instead, they exhibit Peter Pan Syndrome. They lament no longer being children, and they are terrified of the responsibility of adulthood.

- **Manifestations**

Knowledge without the experience of wisdom can be a rocky thing. An adolescent may love the fun of sailing through life but lack the wisdom of knowing where the rocks are. This adolescent struggle manifests itself through:

- Irresponsibility
- Anxiety
- Loneliness
- Affluent family of origin
- Self-centeredness
- Mixed-up scale of values
- Conspicuous lack of accountability



Quotable

We're free. We have maximum liberty. But we dare not be a live-and-let-live people.

— Charles R. Swindoll



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2. Biblical Example: A Local Church

- Great Anxiety

I have been informed . . . there are quarrels among you. (1 Corinthians 1:11)

- Personal Immaturity

I . . . could not speak to you as to spiritual . . . but . . . as to infants. (3:1)

- Overt Immorality

There is immorality among you. (5:1)

- Unrestrained Liberty

Take care that this liberty . . . does not somehow become a stumbling block. (8:8)



A CLOSER LOOK *Corinth*

Corinth, estimated population 700,000, was a city of supreme importance and notoriety in Paul's day. Due west of Athens, Corinth stood like a sentry on the narrow isthmus connecting central and southern Greece. Its location made it a premier center of commerce and trade. With its two huge harbors, Corinth was a frequent stop for ships traveling east and west across the Mediterranean. Many sailors, in order to avoid the arduous 200-mile journey around southern Greece, paid to have their ships and cargo transported across the four-mile-wide isthmus.

Such flourishing trade, along with the protection of Rome's military machine (Corinth was a Roman colony) and the attraction of the Isthmian Games (second only to the Olympic Games), made Corinth a prosperous city. And with prosperity came all the attending pleasures and perversions.

Shrines and temples to the gods were everywhere, the most renowned being the temple of Aphrodite, the goddess of love. It stood atop an 1,800-foot precipice and employed hundreds of cult prostitutes who helped "worshippers" pay tribute to the goddess.



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LET'S LIVE IT

Practical Advice: A Personal Analysis

Do you keep stumbling on rocks beneath the surface of your walk with God? Are you trying to sail through life in the *SS Peter Pan*? If so, take some soundings of your heart by asking yourself a couple of pointed questions:

What am I gaining by remaining immature?

Why am I refusing to model purity?

Once you've answered those questions with honesty, take some time to talk to the Lord about where you feel you are in your commitment to growing up in His family. Tell Him you are ready to grow and that you are willing to do whatever it takes to begin that process deliberately and in full accordance to His Word. Make sure you jot down somewhere in your Bible or in a spiritual journal the date you make this commitment to God. Then one year from that date, look back and see how much you've grown!



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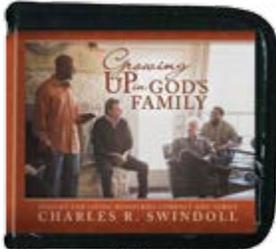
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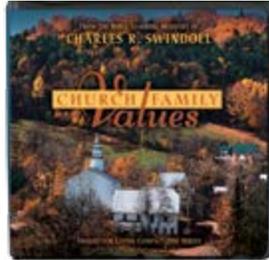
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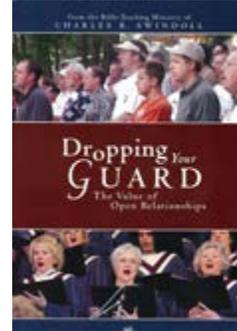
Tools for Digging Deeper



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