

GROWING UP IN GOD'S FAMILY

Adult Talk about “Childish Things”

Isaiah 30:1–2, 8–9



LET'S BEGIN HERE

While writing the Corinthians about the importance of love, Paul inserted a brief comment that speaks volumes to us in this series:

When I was a child, I used to speak as a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. (1 Corinthians 13:11)

Interestingly, he mentions no specific age when he “became a man,” but it is clear that many of the things that characterize childhood were done away with once he grew into adulthood. What would that include? Specifically, which “childish things” have no business lingering once we become mature? Believe it or not, God’s expectation that we grow spiritually is firmly rooted in the Old Testament, where the prophets of old laid down a clear path for knowing God deeply.



READ SCRIPTURE

Childish Saul

One of the most childish adults in the Old Testament is King Saul. Remember when the Philistines were pressing in and he foolishly offered the burnt offering himself instead of waiting for Samuel? Then he tried excusing his mistake, saying to Samuel, “You did not come within the appointed days. . . . So I forced myself and offered the burnt offering” (1 Samuel 13:11, 12).

Then there was the time he spared the Amalekite king, Agag, and the best of the livestock, even though God had told him to “utterly destroy all that he has, and do not spare him” (15:3). When Samuel confronted Saul, Saul put the blame on the people, saying they kept some of the spoil to sacrifice to the Lord. But Samuel replied, “Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice” (15:22), and,

“Because you have rejected the word of the LORD,
He has also rejected you from being king.” (15:23)

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Quotable

*Scripture presents
childishness as
folly, especially
when exhibited in
an adult.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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Saul cried out,

“I have sinned . . . I feared the people and listened to their voice. Now therefore, please pardon my sin and return with me, that I may worship the LORD.” (1 Samuel 15:24–25)

But Saul only wanted his kingdom back and to save face in front of his officials. Samuel did return with him so he could worship the Lord, but it was just a show (15:30–31).

Can you see some of the characteristics of childishness in Saul? Willful defiance? Superficial commitment? Being overly impressed with people? And being easily swayed?



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. The Delightful Part: Childlikeness

- Intellectually: Teachable—eager to learn, curious, exploring, discovering
- Emotionally: Touchable—sense of interdependence, willing to trust, to get close to others
- Spiritually: Tender—hungry, ready to believe, quick to respond, creative

2. The Difficult Part: Childishness (Isaiah 30:1–2, 8–9)

We must curb and control being:

- Willfully defiant
- Superficially committed
- Overly impressed
- Easily swayed



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3. The Diligent Part: Getting Rid of “Childish Things”

- *We dare not remain childish.* We should not be “untamed barbarians.”
- *We must not ignore our responsibility* to press on to maturity.
- *We cannot escape the tension* between our nature (the real) and our need (the ideal).



LET'S LIVE IT

Evaluate your commitment to the Lord. Is it sincere or a little showy? When you sing or pray, do you focus on the Lord or do thoughts of impressing others enter your mind?

Examine your walk, and pray that God preserves the childlike aspects of your faith, while pruning the childishness away so that you may press on to maturity.



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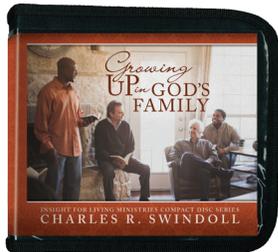
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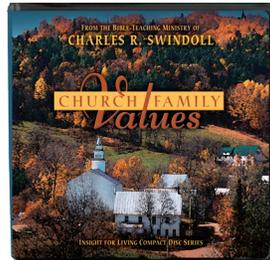
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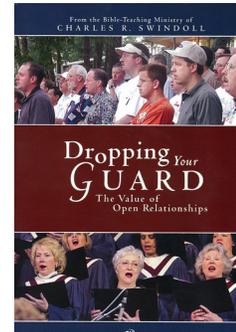
Tools for Digging Deeper



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