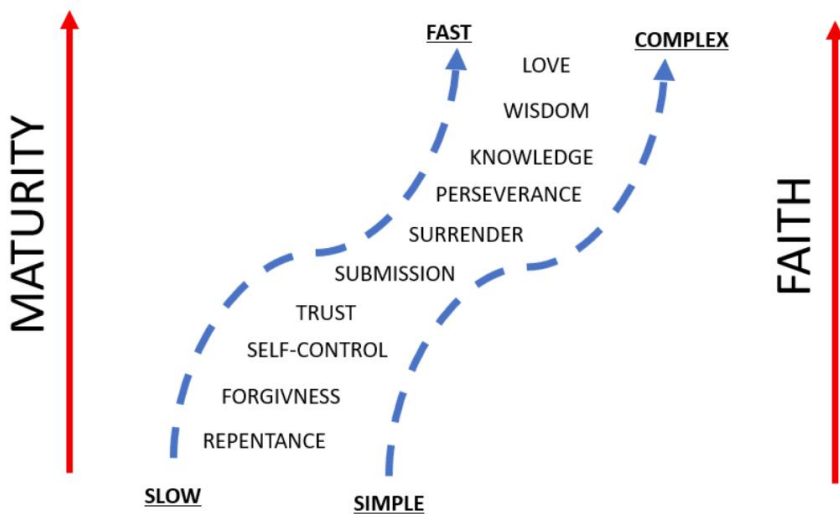




FC GRACE – CORE MESSAGE

MATURING IN GOD



This diagram is one path to assist you in your maturing with God. Like soccer skill development, we first start slow and simple because we do not want to be overwhelmed, and get frustrated and disappointed. As a coach, you understand that players learn skills best in a slow and simple environment. As they acquire the skills, you will place them into practices where speed and complexity come into play. Our maturing in God is a similar process of learning.

So, for example, we start reading the bible in small bites. We learn some basics of prayer, meditation, and worship. In this process, as we are prompted by the Holy Spirit, we confess those sins, forgive those who have hurt us, and surrender those aspects of our lives that need to die for Christ to reign more fully.

Growth and maturity is a process. We must cultivate rich soil so that God's seed may take hold and flourish. Even then, we must be patient because it takes time. There are tangible signs of growth as we change but the final component is the fruit (Mark 4:26-29). This process is seed, time and harvest must be experienced to reach maturity.

None of these practices are done because we should do them; they are done because God has placed a desire in our heart to draw nearer to Him. They are a grace-filled gift from God, not an obligation.



Mark 4:26-29

Then He said, "The kingdom of God is like a man who throws seed on the ground; and he goes to bed at night and gets up every day, and [in the meantime] the seed sprouts and grows; how [it does this], he does not know. The earth produces crops by itself; first the blade, then the head [of grain], then the mature grain in the head. But when the crop ripens, he immediately puts in the sickle [to reap], because [the time for] the harvest has come."

Hebrews 6:1

Therefore, let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God

2 Peter 3:18

But grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. For Him be the glory both now and forever! Amen.

Luke 17:5

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"

James 1:5

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

Colossians 1:28

So we tell others about Christ, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all the wisdom God has given us. We want to present them to God, mature in their relationship to Christ.

2 Peter 1:5-8

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Luke 8:14-15



The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.

Hebrews 5:12-14

You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things about God's word. You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food. For someone who lives on milk is still an infant and doesn't know how to do what is right. Solid food is for those who are mature, who through training have the skill to recognize the difference between right and wrong.

Prayer

Lord, let me not get comfortable where I am, but keep growing me. Help me to see that tests are opportunities for me to grow, learn and change more into your son's image. Lord, help me to be patient with myself, forgiving myself when I make mistakes, knowing that you care most about my heart towards you than my mistakes and successes. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.