

Our journey through 1 John has covered many aspects of our Christian life and proved to be very practical regarding our **standing** and **state/status** with God. If we are in Jesus Christ, we are in God's family which is a fixed reality. Walking obediently with God perfects our love relationship with Him and brings us an assurance of our standing with Him (2:3-6). How we love the brethren is another measure of the depth of our love for God (2:7-11). John now introduces us to three main stages of _____ growth as we mature with God in this present world: Little Children, Young Men, and Fathers. Today, consider where you are in God's spiritual growth process which mirrors the human physical growth process (Jer. 6:11).

Stages of Spiritual Growth and Maturity (part 1) – 1 John 2:12-14

1. Little Children – v. 12-13

- The little children spiritual phase is the early stages of being _____ again and somewhat unknowing in the faith – Matt. 18:1-6; Lk. 18:16; Jonah 4:11.

Your sins are forgiven you...ye have known the Father (John 14:6-9) =

- A few Bible stories illustrate some _____ understandings about this age/stage of spiritual growth – 1 Kings 3:7-9; 2 Kings 2:23-25, 5:14.
- Children who do not grow up are prone to be _____ and more easily offended – Eph. 4:14-15; 1 Cor. 13:11; Rom 14-15:1.
- John speaks to "little children" _____X throughout this short book illustrating what little children can know and do – 1 John 2:1, 12-13, 18, 28; 3:7, 18; 4:4; 5:21; John 6:8-9; 2 Kings 11:21, 22:1; Dan. 1.
- Some other observations about the **little children** spiritual stage (Pr. 22:6; Rom. 16:19):

2. Young Men – v. 13-14

- Young men are those who have _____ strong, not lingered forever in some limbo stage the world calls "adolescence" – 1 Sam. 14; Ps. 119:9; Prov. 20:29.

Ye have overcome the wicked one (2X)...ye are _____...the word of God abideth in you

- A few Bible stories illustrate some _____ understandings about this age/stage of spiritual growth – Gen. 41:12; Ex. 33:11; Judges 14:10; 1 Sam. 25; 2 Sam. 18:5, 12, 29, 32; Matt. 19:16-22.
- Young men who do not learn to be sober and use discretion/discernment with the strength they have gained create _____ – John 4:34; Prov. 1:1-4; Titus 2:6.
- Some other observations about the **young man** spiritual stage: