

Ephesians 4:15

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 02 May 1993

Preacher: Alex J MacDonald

- [0 : 00] Now let's turn to the first passage of scripture that we read in Ephesians chapter 4, and especially some words in verse 15.
- Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the head, that is Christ. Especially the words, we will in all things grow up.
- I wonder, are you a grown-up Christian, or are you a childish Christian?
- Because this passage brings before us the fact that when you become a Christian, you don't suddenly become completely mature as a Christian.
- And indeed, together, as a group of Christians, as the Church, we are not suddenly a complete or mature or perfect group of people, often very far from it.
- [1 : 11] And so, we've got to think here about this question both individually and collectively. Are we grown-up Christians?
- Is this a grown-up congregation, a mature congregation? Or is it evidence of childishness in us as individuals and perhaps manifest in our congregational life?
- What do we mean by being mature or being childish? I think it's important that we do recognize that childishness is something that is wrong.
- Because in the New Testament, quite often, we're told to emulate children, to be like children. And that is to be childlike, which is the good meaning of being like children.
- In other words, these kind of expressions used by the Lord Jesus, unless you become as little children, you will never enter the kingdom of God, is about how we must begin the Christian life. You've got to begin at the beginning.
- [2 : 29] You can't come fully grown, fully developed into the Christian life. You can't overnight sort of become an expert Christian.
- We all have to come by the same lowly road. We have to come as little children. We have to come acknowledging our own weakness and ignorance.
- And we have to come to the foot of the cross. But it's wrong for us to continue to be childish in the wrong sense of the word.
- To be childish would reflect things like weakness, ignorance, instability, pettiness.
- You know how, when we're children, we're all prone to these things, perhaps in a greater degree than we are when we're grown up. Well, of course, when we're children, we're weaker.
- [3 : 34] We're weaker physically. We're weaker intellectually and emotionally. We're more ignorant. We don't know as much as we do when we get older.
- We're more unstable. We're more prone to swings of moods. From one extreme to the other. We can fly into a fit of rage over something that's perhaps not all that terribly important.
- Or also, we can be petty in our dealings with one another. When we're children or when we're childish, we can sort of react too strongly to what somebody else does against us.

And hold a grudge, perhaps, against that person. Well, of course, as I've been listing all these things, characteristics of childishness, we see that they're not limited to the age when we're children.

They're characteristics that can carry on throughout life. And we see so much of it in the world around us. But we see it too in our own experience as Christians.

[4 : 46] And we see it within the Christian church. But instead of developing as Christians, we've stagnated. And in many aspects, we've underdeveloped.

We're at a stage that is far too far back. We haven't seen the need to mature. To go on to become stronger, more knowledgeable, more stable, and to have a more magnanimous relationship and attitude towards other people in our relationship.

That's the kind of thing I'm meaning by whether we're childish or mature as Christians. Here, the apostle speaks about growing up into Christ.

Growing up in our relationship with Jesus Christ. That's what I want to focus on this evening. Now, the first thing we have to notice is this.

That no one can become mature in isolation. Nobody can grow up as a Christian simply on their own. Well, I suppose we would have to make exceptions for exceptional circumstances.

[6 : 02] Say somebody was shipwrecked on a desert island or whatever on their own. I'm quite sure that God, in his own way, could cause them to mature in their Christian faith.

But generally speaking, the way in which he matures a Christian is not in isolation from other Christians, but together. And that is one of the main thrusts of this passage that we've read here in Ephesians chapter 4.

But it's not only that it's true that we mature together with other Christians, but it's true that we cannot mature in isolation from God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

And here we come to the very heart and basis of it. We need the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. Think of what's said in verse 7.

You see, the source of all of this, the source of our whole Christian life and our Christian living, is not in ourselves.

[7 : 19] It is in the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ. He has given it. Verse 11, the same thing is repeated. It was he who gave some to be apostles.

And so the emphasis brings us round to the very heart of the Christian faith, and that is grace. It's something that God has given.

And we come to the very heart of it in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. In verse 8, this is why it says, When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.

A verse from the psalm we were singing, Psalm 68, which speaks about the work of the Lord Jesus Christ in its completed form.

It doesn't focus on the humiliation of the Lord Jesus. It focuses on his exaltation. But his exaltation comes after his humiliation. He came into this world.

[8 : 23] He lived poorly amongst sinners in this world. And he died that cruel death of the cross for sinners.

But when he completed that work he came to do, he rose again from the dead, and he ascended to heaven. He ascended up on high.

And from there, he poured out gifts upon the church. And the very heart of all these gifts is the gift of the Holy Spirit.

For instance, in Acts chapter 2, and verse 32 and 33, God raised this Jesus to life.

And we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit, and has poured out what you now see and hear.

[9 : 23] Jesus received the Holy Spirit from the Father. It's an amazing expression.

The three persons of the Trinity. But what it's saying is this, that Jesus received the authority to give the Holy Spirit to the church.

And to give the whole ministry and work of the Holy Spirit to the church when he had completed his work. So, the very fact that we are Christians is by the grace of God.

It's because the Lord Jesus Christ completed the work he came to do. That sin is paid for, and that the way to heaven is open. It's because of the grace of God that the Holy Spirit came to you, if you're a Christian, at one particular time, perhaps unknown to you.

You were unconscious of it at the fact. came to you, and opened your mind to begin to receive the word of God. Perhaps that time is mysterious to you.

[10 : 33] Perhaps you look back, and you can see a time, well, yes, when you did come to faith, but even before that, you recognized that the Holy Spirit was working, bringing you round, to begin to listen to what God was saying.

Whereas before, sermons, or going to church, or whatever, it was just a habit, and it just went in one ear and out the other. But suddenly, something began to take hold of you.

And that was the Holy Spirit of God speaking to you through the word of God, through the words of the preacher. You see, it is God's grace at work.

Maybe some of you have perhaps just even recently begun to experience that. You must recognize that it is God's doing, and God is at work in you, to bring you to a knowledge of himself.

So you see, the whole beginning of the Christian life is by the grace of God. And therefore, it is not something that is done in isolation. It is not you with a kind of do-it-yourself religion, with your own personal spiritual experience.

[11 : 38] God is at work within you. And when God is at work within you, that work will proceed according to his grace and the purposes of his grace.

Well, what does that involve? It involves, secondly, the foundation of the apostles and prophets. The first thing we noticed was the work of Jesus Christ.

But then there is the foundation of the apostles and prophets. In verse 11, it was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets.

Now, I select these two from the beginning of the list, not just arbitrarily, but because earlier in this very letter, these two are called together the foundation.

In verses 19 and 20 of chapter 2, Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

[12 : 52] What is the apostle saying here? The apostle is saying here that the Lord Jesus Christ is the chief cornerstone, cornerstone. All the grace of God comes to us through him and he holds the church of Jesus Christ together.

But this church, this building, this edifice, is built upon a foundation. And that foundation has as well been given by the Lord Jesus. It is the foundation of the apostles and prophets.

What was the work of the apostles and prophets? Their work was revealing what God revealed to them. Their work was to tell others what God said.

The prophet of Old Testament times didn't come with his own ideas, his own philosophies. He said, Thus saith the Lord. And the apostles wrote not their own ideas, but they were moved and carried along by the Holy Spirit.

So when we speak of the apostles and prophets, we are speaking of revelation. We are speaking of God's inspiration at work through the minds of men giving to us God's word as we have it in the scripture.

[14 : 13] The Bible is the work of the prophets and apostles. The Old Testament written by the prophets. The New Testament written by the apostles.

So again, you cannot become mature as a Christian unless you are conscious of the fact that you are building upon a foundation.

You've got to reach maturity in the Christian life, building on this foundation of the word of God delivered through the prophets and apostles. Now that has practical implications.

Because we begin to go wrong as Christians, we cease to develop as Christians when, for one reason or another, our interest in God's word and our reading of it, our study of it, goes into decline.

We perhaps reach a point in our Christian experience where we don't perhaps get the same out of reading of the Bible as we did before or of hearing sermons as we did before.

[15 : 21] And perhaps we begin to make excuses for ourselves and say, well, we know it all now, we don't need to bother too much with it. And perhaps we begin to feel, well, we can carry on all right as long as we pray.

And perhaps we say, well, we don't really need set times to pray and have Bible study. We can just pray any time. And that's true, you can pray any time. but the way of making excuses for ourselves leads to a position where we're not really doing it at all.

We're not really listening to God and we're not really speaking to God. The foundation of the apostles and prophets is absolutely essential because this is how the Lord Jesus Christ speaks to us today.

This is how he wants us to know how we are to develop. and there is not one person in the whole history of the church this side of glory who has ceased to need to study God's words.

There's not one person who has come to a perfect knowledge of the scripture so that there's no more need for study. If he thinks he has, then he has more need of study of it than anybody else.

[16 : 41] So, the foundation of the apostles and prophets, absolutely fundamental for our growth and our development. But then there's another stage.

It's here as if it's a river flowing, the river of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ flowing from the Lord Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit through the apostles and prophets, through the scriptures, but then the next stage is some to be evangelists and some to be pastors and teachers.

Now, it doesn't appear that that's three groups, but actually two, evangelists and pastors and teachers, because it's grouped together the way that the language is used here.

So, there's an ongoing role of what we today would call missionaries and ministers, those with the gift of evangelism, that is, reaching out to others outside the church or outside the boundaries of the church and ministers, those preaching, we might say, to the church and in the sphere of the church.

Now, there's an overlap between those two, as we know today. But these are two functions, two roles, that are ongoing in the Christian church. And that distinguishes these two offices from the apostles and prophets.

[18 : 04] The apostles and prophets are the foundation. foundation. Now, you don't go on laying a foundation. You never get the building done if you go on laying a foundation.

The foundation is laid and you build on it. You don't add to the foundation, but you build on it. And the church is built on the foundation of the scripture.

When the apostles and prophets completed their work under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the Bible was complete. and we today have no more need of prophets or apostles, although some think that we do.

We need, rather, to get back to what the real prophets and apostles actually said and begin building the church, if we've not already begun to do so, begin to build the church on this foundation.

But what is this ongoing role of the missionaries and ministers, evangelists and pastors, teachers? It is the equipping of the saints, or as it's put here, to prepare God's people for works of service.

[19 : 14] The other word that's translated here, prepare, is a most interesting word. It's a word that can be translated equipping, but its basic meaning is to restore to usefulness or to make useful.

It's used in ordinary everyday language at that time. For instance, of mending nets. The fishermen mending their nets, that's the word that's used, making something useful again.

Or it's used by doctors of mending broken bones, setting bones. Again, making something useful again. Now, that's the kind of word, that's the word that is used here by the apostle of the kind of activity that is to be done in the Christian church, particularly by the pastors, teachers, in other words, by the ministers of God's word.

Equipping the saints for works of service. Now, in the older translation, in the authorized version, you get the impression when you read it that it's the pastors and teachers that go on to do the work of the ministry.

But actually, the word ministry, of course, just means service. And it seems much more clear that here service is being performed not by the pastors and teachers, but by the people of God or the saints of God.

[20 : 50] In other words, the ordinary Christian. Christian. But the role of the ministry of the words is to equip the ordinary Christian to get on with works of service.

So not only is there an ongoing role here of the missionary and minister, but there is also the ongoing role of the ordinary Christian. In verse 12, to prepare God's people for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up.

This is the next stage in our development as Christians. And so often we don't make that step. We say, yes, we have our Christian life founded upon the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the foundation of the apostles and prophets, the scripture.

And we have the preaching, the ongoing preaching and teaching of the minister. And then we sit back and we listen, we absorb all of this that is given to us.

And so often our Christian thinking and our Christian living stops there. And that's really only where it begins. Because the whole of this stream, the whole of this river of God's grace, is flowing to us and flowing into our hearts, that we may do something.

[22 : 24] We as individuals have got to grow and develop and become mature. And we're not going to do that simply by sitting back, absorbing or thinking we're absorbing things.

It's like, as if you could imagine a baby simply sitting there and all the time just absorbing. Now we know that when a baby is very small, it tends to do just that.

But it's not going to mature, it's not going to develop, it's not going to grow, it's not going to become strong unless it begins to do something. Unless it begins to exercise itself, to move around, unless it begins at a certain stage to start to crawl, to start to walk, and to use this energy that has been given in all the intake of food that's provided for it.

Now in the same way, we as Christians can be like great big babies just sitting there like sponges absorbing all of this and doing nothing.

We're not going to grow if that's our attitude. We've got to start working and exercising ourselves and see what we can do.

[23 : 43] Because you see the whole impact of this passage is that God through the Lord Jesus Christ has given grace as Christ apportioned it to each one. Verse 7, to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.

All of this great process of his grace is so that we as individuals will use the particular gifts he has given to us and all this knowledge and all this grace he's given to us for our own growth and for the growth of the church.

And so in verse 16 he says, From him the whole body joined and held together by every supporting ligament grows and builds itself up in love as each part does its work.

The whole church working together and being built up as it is working together, as each part does its work.

So if we're going to grow as Christians we need all of this background of God's grace and we need to absorb it and we need to feed on it but also we need to start using it, start putting it into practice, start seeing what we can do to help one another as Christians, start seeing what we can do to speak about the Lord Jesus Christ to other people around us or to help others who are in need.

[25 : 10] And when we become active as Christians then we begin to grow and to become mature. So no one can become mature in isolation.

We can't become mature as Christians if we're isolated from the God of all grace, if we've severed our connection with the hand, the Lord Jesus Christ, if we're not living in dependence upon him and upon his word.

And we can't become mature if we try to live in isolation from other people, in isolation from the preaching of God's word, saying, well, we don't need to perhaps go to church or go to church as often as we did in the past.

Or we say, well, I don't need the fellowship of other Christians. I can live my own little life. This whole passage is against that whole idea.

We only grow as we receive from the Lord Jesus Christ his grace and as we work together with other Christians. Well, that's the first thing.

[26 : 22] No one can become mature in isolation. But we've got to look next at, well, what exactly is this maturity? I suppose we've been giving hints of it as we've gone along.

But what is it? Well, in verse 13, we see some of its features. Until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

First there, there is a recognition of our corporate unity. You see, in verse 12 it says, to prepare God's people for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity.

Now, there's a certain sense, of course, in which, and you perhaps have noticed this, that we are one. If we are Christians, we are one in Christ Jesus.

We have a unity. The New Testament stresses that. But there's another sense that is stressed here, that we have to attain unity, or reach unity.

[27 : 36] Now, how do you reconcile these two things? I think it's reconciled by saying, we have to be one, because we are one. We have a unity in Jesus Christ, but we've got to find expression for that, we've got to show it, by how we live and by how we behave.

that's what's really being said here. So, we must have this recognition of our corporate unity, and the desire to express that, and to see it manifest.

It's not enough for us just to recognize, oh yes, there is such a doctrine as the unity of the church, the unity of all believers.

It has got to find expression. We've got to attain this. This is something that we've got to set as a goal, and we've got to see it express, so that the reaction of the world around us will be something akin to the reaction of the pagan world in the first century.

See how these Christians love one another. And that was what the Lord Jesus Christ himself said. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

[28 : 50] So, this maturity that we're talking about will be seen in this recognition of our corporate unity, that we are together as the body of Christ, and we want to love the other members of this body.

Now, that may be often very difficult, because there are all different kinds of members of the body, as the apostle speaks of this in 1 Corinthians chapter 12.

There's the foot and the hand and the eye and so on, and he pictures a little bit amusingly how perhaps these sometimes, these members don't get on with one another or think that they don't need one another.

And that's the way that we can behave towards one another. But we've got to recognize the unity of the body. There's got to be such a thing as hand-eye coordination if the body is going to work properly.

There's got to be the same in the Christian church. We've got to respect one another's gifts. They will be different gifts. But we've got to see that each one has got a part to play in the whole body.

[29 : 56] And we've got to ensure that our gift is being exercised in a way that is edifying and useful to the rest of the body. What use is the body if it's all one big eye, says the apostle Paul.

That's no use. And it's no use if we try to exercise our gift out of all proportion to the rest of the body. It has got to be coordinated with the rest of what people are doing.

So there's a need for us to work together. But also, of course, there is the acceptance of the need for Christian attainment.

You see, this word is used here until we all reach unity or until we all attain to unity. There's this emphasis on achieving something.

now, again, there is a reason why so often we become stunted in our Christian lives and in our congregational life. We lose all sense of Christian ambition to really achieve something in the Christian life and in the life of a Christian community or congregation.

[31 : 04] We've got to be reaching, we've got to be striving forward, we've got to be trying to attain something. now, often, that kind of proper ambition can be stifled.

And if we don't have that proper ambition, that proper desire to really achieve something for the Lord Jesus, our growth can be stunted. We have no ideals, we have no vision, we're just drifting along, we're just plodding along.

We're not like the athlete who has a goal in mind, and so he's training towards that goal. That's the picture used in the New Testament of the Christian. We've got to be like that also.

We've got to try to set goals for ourselves as individuals. Where have I failed in this past year? How am I going to seek to put right those failures? How have I failed in my relationships with others in the Christian church?

How am I going to put that right? What can I achieve? this week, this year, for the Lord Jesus Christ? We've got to think along these lines.

[32 : 19] And then also, we must have a firm grasp of the Christian faith if we are to be mature. This maturity will be expressed in a firm grasp of the Christian faith.

Again in verse 13. Until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature. Now that needs to be stressed because a lot of people in the church today would stress some of the things I've been stressing about the need for recognizing our corporate unity, recognizing the need for Christian attainment, but would become very woolly and wishy-washy about what it says here, about the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God.

You see, the unity of the Christian church is not just a kind of club feeling that we all belong to the same club, a kind of humanistic and man-centered and gendered sense of community.

It is a unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God. it is based upon what the Lord Jesus Christ has done and what we are told in his word.

And this comes back again to what we were saying earlier about the work of the apostles and prophets. This Christian maturity will be expressed in this unity of faith and knowledge.

[33 : 52] Now, it's a unity of faith and knowledge, not only in that it's a unity of various members of the church together in these things, but it's a unity of these two things, faith and knowledge.

And often these can be divorced. You can say, well, it doesn't matter too much about how much you know about the Bible and know about theology and all that.

What matters is that you have faith. Well, in a certain sense, it is true that knowledge by itself cannot save you.

You need to have faith. But faith and knowledge go hand in hand. If you're going to say, I have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that presupposes knowledge. It presupposes that you know who Jesus is, that you know what he has done, that you know what faith is.

And so the two are not to be divorced. The two are to go hand in hand. And if we divorce the two and emphasize one over against the other, we will not be reaching maturity.

[35 : 00] We again will be stunted in our growth. Our faith is based upon the knowledge that God gives to us in his word. Our faith is not a blind faith.

It's not a blind leap in the dark. It's based upon what God has said to us in his word. And we need to grow in that knowledge of it. And in that, we will have a true unity together in the faith.

And we will find that it will be very difficult to express a proper unity with those who don't have that same sense of what God is saying in his word. People who say, well, the Bible isn't important, all it matters is that you know Jesus Christ.

And we've got to say, well, how can you know Jesus Christ? Unless you know the word of God, unless you know the Bible. But then, perhaps most importantly of all, this maturity will be expressed in measuring up to Jesus Christ, or measuring ourselves by Jesus Christ, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Now, there's an expression used here that really suggests the fully grown male. Perhaps the idea of somebody wanting to become an athlete or a footballer or something like this, and they have this ideal in their mind of the perfect footballer, the perfect athlete or whatever, physically.

[36 : 38] Well, if we keep that idea in our mind, what the Apostle is saying here is that our ideal as Christians spiritually is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Perfect manhood is expressed in Jesus Christ. And young men especially have got to have the Lord Jesus Christ as their exemplar, as their ideal, the one that they are going to formulate their manhood on.

Not just young men, but everybody. what the Apostle is saying is this. We tend to compare ourselves with other people, and we tend to measure ourselves in relation to other people.

You know how in a family, as the family is growing up, you may measure each other and see who's grown so much in the last six months or whatever, and who's taller than who, and so on.

We compare ourselves in that way physically to others, but we do it also spiritually. We think of our spiritual development, our spiritual maturity, and we think of it in relation to others, and we think of ourselves, well, I've been a Christian now for ten years, twenty years, thirty years, whatever, and I've seen a lot more of life than these other people, they're much younger in the faith, and more mature than they are.

[38 : 10] And you see, there's a source of spiritual pride. If we're really mature as Christians, we're going to be measuring ourselves up to Jesus Christ.

He's our ideal, he's the standard, and if we come and we stand beside him, we suddenly realize how tiny we are.

We suddenly realize how small and how stunted our growth is as Christians. but if we are becoming mature, we will at least be measuring in the right way and recognizing our own smallness and our own lack of development.

Well, then, the third and final area we need to look at is just this. There are some consequences of this maturity which the Apostle gives in the following verses.

verses 14 to 16. If there is a growing maturity, if you're becoming more mature as a Christian, then there will first of all be a stability.

[39 : 22] There will be a stability in your life. Then you will no longer be infants tossed back and forth by the waves and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.

You will not be deceived by false teaching and false methods. Now, we live at a time when there is tremendous confusion spiritually, both within the Church and outside the Church.

In some ways, there's a growing interest in spirituality in society around us, but tremendous confusion because ideas are coming from here, there, and everywhere.

Very like the situation in the first century that the Apostle Paul had to confront. All sorts of ideas from Eastern religions, from mystery religions, from Gnosticism, from the ancient pagan religions, from Judaism, and all the rest of it.

And some people were making an amalgam, a hodgepodge of all these things. And some people within the Christian Church were being led astray by it. Why? Because they weren't mature enough to be able to distinguish between truth and error.

[40 : 41] They were being tossed back and forth by the waves and blown here and there by every wind of teaching. We need to become mature as Christians, on the basis of the kind of things that we've been saying, on the basis of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, his work, his word, and our relationship with other Christians.

And if these things are developing normally, then we will be able to see where there is false teaching, where there are destructive influences, and be able to stand against it.

If we're growing in the knowledge and in the faith of Jesus Christ, then we'll be able to distinguish between truth and error. But notice that there is an adhering to the truth in love and a speaking of the truth in love.

Literally, it actually means, it's a strange word, it means truthing in love. We don't have a verb like that, but it's actually a verb. Truthing in love.

So it's not only speaking the truth, but everything that we do, it's in truth and in love. Now, again, here, there's two things that often can become divorced.

[42 : 03] We as Christians can lay emphasis on one or the other, and in that we show out immaturity. A sign of immaturity is an extremism, and that we focus on one thing over against the other.

And sometimes as Christians we can do that, and we can say, we must emphasize the truth. And it doesn't matter whether people are hurt by what we say, it doesn't matter whether people are offended by how we say it, all that matters is that we tell the truth.

Well, in a certain sense, of course, we have to tell the truth irrespective of what people think. But in another sense, we have to speak the truth in love. The Apostle Paul, who spoke the truth most boldly, said he would be all things to all men.

He would not give any offense to anyone that was not the offense of the cross. And we today must seek to follow his example. But there are those also of us who would say, well, as long as we express love, as long as we're kind to people, it doesn't matter too much that we point out what's right or wrong, or we point out the truth of the gospel.

Well, again, that's wrong. That's imbalance. That's not the way of our Lord Jesus Christ. He loved people perfectly, yet he was most bold in telling people where they had gone wrong.

[43 : 34] And he did it in a most loving way. He exposed sin, but he did so in a way that showed that he loved people and he was able to help them.

We today must seek to have the same kind of balance. God's life. Another consequence of this maturity will be what we have in verse 15.

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the head, that is Christ. And here, really, we come around almost in a full circle.

We began with the grace of God and Jesus Christ to us. And the whole end result of all this growth and maturity is that we will be growing up into the head.

That is Christ. It is a marvelous expression because he has here in the back of his mind the idea of the body and the head. The Lord Jesus Christ is the head and we are the body, the members of the body, the church of Jesus Christ.

[44 : 33] But it is not a static and a stagnant relationship. It is a dynamic one. It is one that is developing. It is one that is growing. And the growth is towards the head.

Something that we can't really conceive of in physical terms.