

3 'Childish Things' You Must Set Aside to Move Into Real Maturity

God has a plan for your life. It's a plan for you to live an abundant and significant life for His glory. Jesus said that He came so that we might have abundant life (John 10:10). We know that's true, yet many of us settle for far less. Why? I believe our problem is that we have not intentionally put away childish things.

The apostle Paul wrote, "When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me" (1 Cor. 13:11, NIV). Many of us remember the King James Version, which ends with "I put away childish things."

According to Paul, the ways of childhood involved three areas: our words ("I talked like a child"), our thoughts ("I thought like a child") and our reasoning ("I reasoned like a child").

Our Words

Paul's words are part of the famous love chapter (1 Cor. 13). Part of the abundant life Christ has promised us is deep, loving, rich relationships. But we often speak our words impulsively and upend these relationships. Children speak impulsively. They throw fits. They lack the maturity to think before they speak. That's fine for children, but as adults, we need to put away childish things. We need to stop and think before we speak, and we need to consider what's in the best interest of our relationship with this person. A great boundary gate for our words are the three questions: *Is it true? Is it kind? Is it necessary?* We need to express how we feel as adults, but in a loving and gracious way, even when we're angry or hurt.

Our Thoughts

If our words can rob us of the abundant life Jesus promised, then our thoughts sure can as well! Negative thoughts like self-pity and self-doubt can torment our thinking like none other!

1. **Self-pity.** Self-pity prevents us from becoming the person God has called us to be. It wraps us in chains of self-protection. Instead of rejoicing in what God is doing, we become wrapped up in a victim mentality. Thoughts of “poor me,” “I’ve been dealt an unfair blow” or “my circumstances are worse than everyone else’s” trap our thinking and prevent us from seeing the majesty of God’s love and greatness. Here’s the thing—Jesus never promised that life in Him was going to be easy. Instead, He promised that although we would have trouble in this life, He had overcome and that He would be with us in our trials (John 16:33). He promised that through Him we could live a bold and abundant life. Children feel sorry for themselves when they don’t get their own way. Put away childish things and adopt the attitude that if it’s difficult, God will use it in your life to strengthen you.
2. **Self-doubt.** These are the doubts that torture our minds and leave us believing that we cannot be the person God’s created us to be. We wonder, “Can God really use me? I’m too _____ (damaged, distracted, dumb or whatever ... You fill in the blank). Here’s what I know: you have everything you need to become the world changer God has created you to be. He’s given you gifts and talents. He’s given you His Word and His Spirit. He promises that you can do all things through Christ who gives you strength (Phil. 4:13). All you need you have in Him. When you get tangled up in self-limiting beliefs, you end up doubting that God can do what He promised. Children worry about being chosen

last, if they're good enough to make the team and if they're smart enough to make it in school. Don't give in to self-doubt. Stand against it as an adult, claiming the truth, "If God called me, He will empower me."

Our Reasoning

Our reasoning becomes our understanding. Our understanding is the truth we live under. When we reason as a child, we look at situations through the eyes of immaturity. We make assumptions about others' motives and spin stories in our heads that make us paranoid.

Honestly, I have known adults who live in a constant state of paranoia. They don't walk in the freedom Christ promised. They don't enjoy the deep relationships God provides. Instead, they hide behind faulty understanding. Friend, as you reason through situations and circumstances that God allows in your life, ask the Holy Spirit to fill your mind with His thoughts about the situation. Ask Him for wisdom to interpret the circumstances of your life through His eyes. When childish thinking clouds your wisdom, put it away!

You're an adult. It's time to rise up and live like one. {eo}

Becky Harling, an author, certified speaker, leadership coach and trainer with the John Maxwell Team, is an energetic and motivational international speaker inspiring audiences to overcome their greatest life challenges and reach their full God-given potential. Her most recent book is *How to Listen So People Will Talk*. Her husband, Steve Harling, is the president of Reach Beyond, a nonprofit organization seeking to be the voice and hands of Jesus around the world. Connect with Becky at [BeckyHarling.com](#), Facebook or Twitter.

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