

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Acts 4:12-13**.
- B. Many factors are responsible in our maturing process. As we grow up, we become a product of our family heritage, our environment, our own free will, and hopefully a product of JC.
- C. Tonight's lesson deals with the importance of maturing in X.

I. HEREDITY FACTORS MAKE US WHAT WE ARE.

- A. When it comes to our physical characteristics, the DNA genes given us by our parents largely determine eye and hair color, height, looks, etc.
- B. We have almost no control over these things (Gen. 4:1; 5:1-3).
(Gen 4:1) Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, "I have gotten a manchild with the help of the LORD."
(Gen 5:1-3) This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. 2 He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created. 3 When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth.
- C. Sometimes things change by surgery, diet, accident, etc., but our physical make-up will stay the same to a great degree.
- D. Even as we grow-up and change through puberty physical changes are made without our deciding to or wanting to change.

II. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS MAKE US WHAT WE ARE.

- A. The type of home environment we knew as children will have a great effect on how we function as adults. Some environmental problems are:
 - 1. Poverty.
 - 2. Illiteracy.
 - 3. Broken homes.
 - 4. Racially mixed homes.
 - 5. Religiously mixed or atheistic homes.
- B. Home provider role model both good and bad. These models are usually followed throughout life.
- C. Culture, social regions, climate all have a part to play on the type of person we become.

III. FREE WILL AND ITS CONSEQUENCES MAKE US WHAT WE ARE.

- A. Because man has the power of choice, the choices made shape his/her life.
- B. A father will have to sometimes make some important choices as to job, home, etc., that will affect his family in many ways.
- C. Remember the offerings of Cain and Abel. One was done by faith and one was not. This was a choice that forever altered their lives, especially Cain.
- D. Think of the great consequences of Cain's actions. We must learn to live with the decisions we make.

IV. JESUS CHRIST MAKES US WHAT WE OUGHT TO BE.

- A. Our scripture text was Ac. 4:12-13 which shows that with Jesus we can become very effective and prosperous in life. Education and special training are not always needed.
- B. Jesus changes things about us and this is why He is the best influence we can have. He changes us:
 - 1. Intellectually (Phil. 4:8-9).
Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things. 9 The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things; and the God of peace shall be with you.
 - 2. Socially (Mt. 5:3-8).
"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

- 4 “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
- 5 “Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.
- 6 “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
- 7 “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.
- 8 “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”
- 3. Physically (treat our body with respect), (1Cor. 6:19-20).
Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? **20** For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.
- 4. Spiritually (1Cor. 6:11).
And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.
- C. The reason JC can do this is because He wants all of our being. He does not try to change from the outside-in like other factors, but He changes us from the inside-out (Mt. 16:25).
- D. Peter and John had made a great change which was undeniable to others. This change did not come by education or training per se, but it came by being with Jesus and allowing Him to rule in their life (Rom 8:29; 1Cor. 11:1).
(**Rom 8:29**) For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren;
(**1Cor 11:1**) Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. Having a good, stable home life is a key to maturity as an adult.
- B. Good social, economic backgrounds help too, not to mention education.
- C. How we make our decisions, and live with the consequences is also important in our functioning as adults.
- D. But the most important factor in being a well-rounded, mature, knowledgeable individual is to know JC.
- E. The fact is that we can overcome some of the environmental, economic, and social problems previously encountered by living for X.
- F. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring-Xians.