

Baby Clothes and Growing Pains

By Elizabeth Richardson

Growing in faith is like growing out of your baby clothes. There are things you think you need forever, or things God even provides when you need them, that will no longer fit you as you grow. When you mature in Christ, God leads you on a different path than you were on before.

Conviction kicks in. When you abandon the things that hinder your relationship with Christ or cause you to sin, your desire for them lessens. The music you once listened to no longer appeals to you. Or maybe, the movies you once watched no longer seem OK. You stop enjoying the things that never brought glory to God in the first place. Then, suddenly, the friends you have don't fit. It's like you don't have anything in common anymore. You don't do the same things they do anymore. It feels strange. You're not able to get past "hello" with those you could once talk to for hours.

And you wonder why.

These were your baby clothes--and you've grown! Your baby clothes were comfortable, one-size-fits-all, but God is putting you on a unique path. Not everything will fit you anymore. It will be a lonely path, because it's a path that is made for you alone. Believe it or not, there are others who are following God, too, on their own unique paths. Nevertheless, you will be placed in situations where you are the only one following the Lord, looking for Him. But remember, the God you've trusted all along has not abandoned you on this path.

As you keep walking with Him, you'll find how limited your baby clothes were. They begin to be restricting, because they are too small. You'll find new clothes. You'll find that God has more variety for you. Clothes come in different shapes, sizes, cuts, and fabrics. He knows your style. He knows who will fit in your life, and He will guide you to those relationships. He knows your future spouse, and He will supply that in His time. He knows the career you need, and He will arrange that for you. He knows which city, state, or country you need to be in, and He will get you there.

Your job is to walk behind Him on this path, because you don't know what's up ahead. If you walk in front of God, you'll most likely veer off, trying on clothes that don't belong to you. It might be scary to leave them behind, but these things which are no longer for you will only toss you to and fro and bring confusion.

Your job is to not turn back to your baby clothes. They're not for you anymore. In fact, if you look at them, they're too tiny for you now. If you even tried to put them on, you'd rip them. However, you've changed, and it's beautiful. You've followed God, and you've transformed. If you ask God for direction, He will give it to you. And it will hurt at times. Many times. These are growing pains. You'll have to turn away from the things you love. But if they're not God-approved, they were never for you in the first place. If you try to keep fitting into old, ill-fitting clothes without God, you'll have to keep mending the rips on your own.

This is the good news: Even if you veer off onto your own path, His path for you still remains. It's waiting for you, so come back.

If you say God is Lord of your life, let Him be Lord. Ask Him to lead you. Ask Him for the eyes to see what He wants in your life. Ask Him for the strength to respond to His calling. If God leads you to abandon something, trust Him. He has variety for you. He has plans for you that are way bigger than your baby clothes.

Then we 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 people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

(Ephesians 4:14-15 NIV)

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