



### The Heart of the Matter

Haven't you ever wondered why God left you on earth once He saved you? Why didn't He simply remove you from the toils and troubles of earth and take you home to be with Him forever? The most obvious answer is so that we might be His ambassadors, His personal witnesses. No one is better qualified to tell the lost how to be found and forgiven than those who were once lost themselves. There is another reason, however. God has left us here that He might shape us into the image of His Son, Jesus Christ . . . to change us from what we are to what He is. This process leads us toward maturity. Because this is true, setting aside the constant demands of everyday living and evaluating our growth is helpful. Peter's words provide us with some "maturity checkpoints" along the way. Let's see how we're doing.



### Discovering the Way

#### 1. A Stated Goal for All God's Children

Peter advised the Christians to leave behind elementary teachings and press on to maturity, rather than continue in immature ways.

#### 2. A Series of Checkpoints to Determine Progress (1 Peter 3:8–12)

Peter set forth eight marks of maturity for Christians: unity, mutual interest, friendship and affection, compassion, humility, forgiveness, a controlled tongue, and purity and peace.

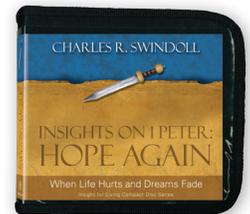


### Starting Your Journey

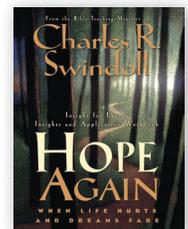
What can you do to move away from infancy and toward adulthood at each checkpoint of maturity? Enrich your spiritual growth through the reading of God's Word, through fellowship with others, and through disciplines that increase your intimacy with God (1 Timothy 4:7–8).



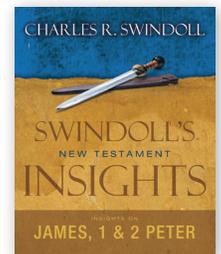
### Tools for Digging Deeper



**Insights on 1 Peter  
Hope Again: When Life Hurts and Dreams Fade**  
by Charles R. Swindoll  
CD Series



**Hope Again: When Life Hurts and Dreams Fade**  
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