

High School Health

Unit 1 - Body Essentials

ADULTHOOD

Overview

By the time you reach **adulthood**, your body has undergone incredible transformations. In previous lessons, we explored the genetics behind how traits are passed down, the stages of fetal development, and the rapid physical, mental, and emotional changes during adolescence. Now, we look at the next stage: adulthood.

Adulthood brings with it new challenges and opportunities. Your body has reached full physical maturity, but this stage isn't just about biological changes. It's also about taking on greater **responsibility**, becoming more emotionally and spiritually mature, and finding your purpose in life. In this lesson, we'll explore the physical and mental changes that occur in adulthood, the responsibilities that come with it, and how you can live with wisdom and purpose as you continue your journey.

OBJECTIVES

- ☐ Define adulthood from both a biological and biblical perspective.
- ☐ Compare the physical, emotional, and spiritual differences between adolescence and adulthood.
- ☐ Reflect on the responsibilities and challenges of adulthood, supported by biblical teachings on maturity and stewardship.

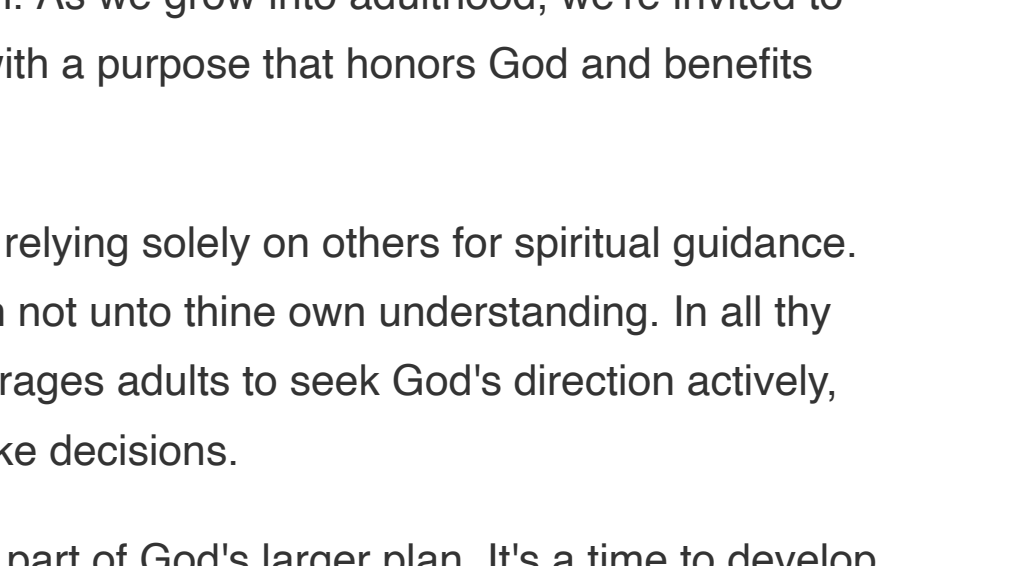
VOCABULARY

 adulthood	stage of life characterized by physical, emotional and spiritual maturity
 bone density	amount of calcium and other minerals present in bone
 faith	trust and confidence in God
 metabolism	body process that converts food into energy
 muscle mass	amount of muscle present in the body
 myelination	process of forming a protective layer of myelin around nerves
 neuroplasticity	brain's ability to change and adapt in response to experiences and learning
 responsibility	being accountable for your actions and decisions
 stewardship	being responsible for caring for something like land, finances, or family, to the best of your ability

When Does Adulthood Begin?

Adulthood is a gradual process that builds on the foundation laid during adolescence. Biologically, adulthood marks the point where your body has completed its growth and reached full maturity. While adolescence is a time of significant physical changes, adulthood focuses more on maintaining the body rather than growing it further.

Adulthood isn't defined by a specific birthday; instead, it's a slow shift from adolescence into full independence—taking responsibility for your life, health, relationships, and decisions. From a biblical perspective, adulthood also involves emotional and spiritual maturity. In 1 Corinthians 13:11, when Paul writes, "When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things," he's highlighting an essential shift from immaturity to maturity. This verse speaks to more than just age; it's about embracing a deeper understanding of life's purpose, marked by wisdom and discernment.



From a Christian perspective, maturity means developing the character traits that reflect God's nature—love, patience, kindness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). It involves seeking God's wisdom in our choices and aligning our lives with His truth. As we grow into adulthood, we're invited to move beyond temporary desires and impulses, learning instead to live with a purpose that honors God and benefits others.

Biblical maturity also means taking responsibility for our **faith**, no longer relying solely on others for spiritual guidance. Proverbs 3:5-6 teaches, "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." This verse encourages adults to seek God's direction actively, trusting that He will guide them as they navigate responsibilities and make decisions.

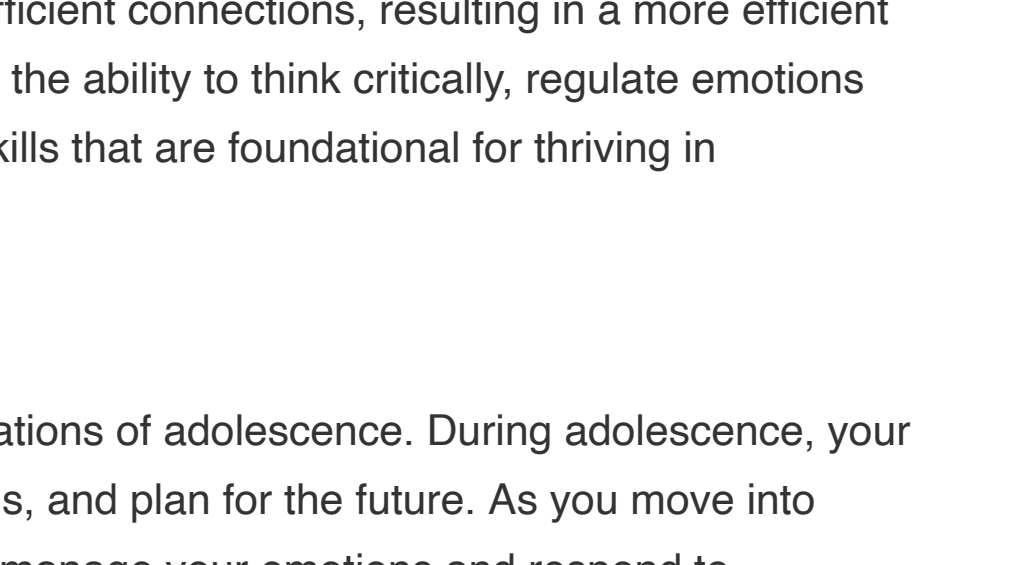
In adulthood, living with wisdom and purpose means seeing our lives as part of God's larger plan. It's a time to develop discernment and a servant's heart, recognizing that our actions can be a testimony of our faith. This perspective transforms daily decisions into opportunities to reflect Christ's love, impacting family, friends, and communities in meaningful ways. In this stage, you begin to take full ownership of your life, faith, and the choices you make. Whether it's managing your health, finances, or spiritual life, adulthood is a time for embracing new independence, as well as the responsibility that comes with it.

Physical Changes in Adulthood

During adolescence, you experienced rapid physical changes as your body prepared for adulthood. Now that you've reached physical maturity, those changes have slowed, but they haven't stopped entirely. Your body continues to adapt and maintain itself, with various functions evolving to support a healthy and active life.

One significant change in adulthood is a gradual slowing of **metabolism**. Metabolism helps convert food into energy, but as it slows, it can become harder to maintain the same weight or energy levels as in your teenage years, especially with a less active lifestyle. Staying physically active and eating a balanced diet are essential to keep your metabolism functioning well.

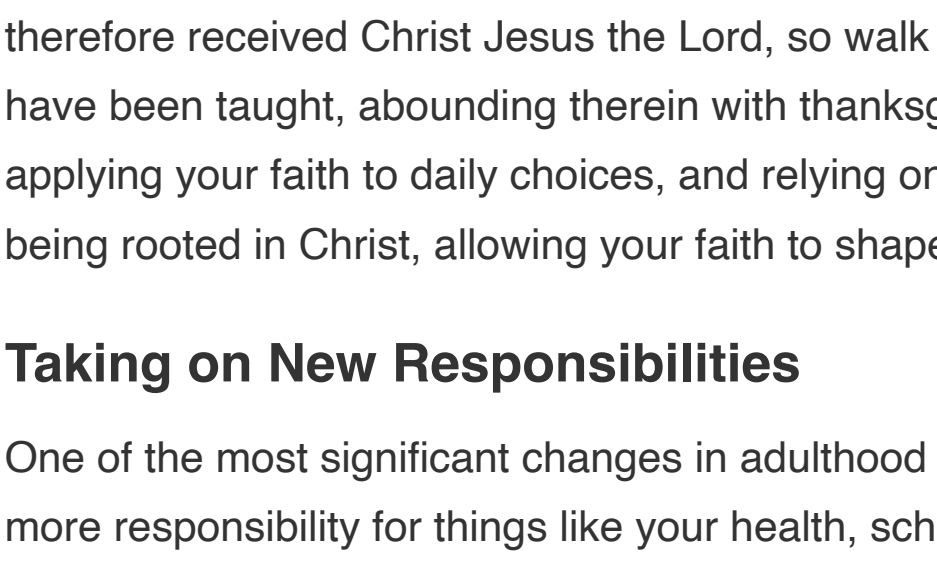
Muscle mass and **bone density** also peak during early adulthood, which is why regular exercise, especially weight-bearing activities, is crucial to maintaining strength and bone health. Without it, muscle mass and bone density can gradually decline, increasing the risk of injury with age.



During adolescence, the brain completes most of its physical growth in size, but its development continues into adulthood through a process called **neuroplasticity**. The prefrontal cortex, the area responsible for executive functions like decision-making, planning, and emotional regulation—undergoes significant refinement. **Myelination** increases the speed of neural communication, while synaptic pruning removes inefficient connections, resulting in a more efficient and specialized brain. This developmental phase equips individuals with the ability to think critically, regulate emotions effectively, and make decisions with long-term consequences in mind, skills that are foundational for thriving in adulthood's diverse opportunities and challenges.

Emotional and Spiritual Maturity

Adulthood brings emotional stability and growth that builds on the foundations of adolescence. During adolescence, your brain was still developing the ability to manage emotions, make decisions, and plan for the future. As you move into adulthood, you become more emotionally grounded. You're expected to manage your emotions and respond to challenges in mature ways, whether that's handling conflict, managing stress, or taking responsibility for your actions.



Emotional maturity doesn't mean avoiding strong feelings, but it does mean learning to handle them in healthy ways. As you mature, you gain the ability to step back, think critically about your choices, and understand how your actions affect others and yourself. This skill of self-regulation is an important part of becoming a thoughtful, responsible adult.

In terms of spiritual maturity, adulthood is a season to grow closer to God and deepen your faith. While adolescence might have been a time of exploring beliefs, adulthood offers the chance to fully commit to your relationship with God. As Colossians 2:6-7 says, "As ye have been rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." This growth involves building a solid understanding of Scripture, applying your faith to daily choices, and relying on God's guidance in every area of your life. Spiritual maturity means being rooted in Christ, allowing your faith to shape who you are and how you live.

Taking on New Responsibilities

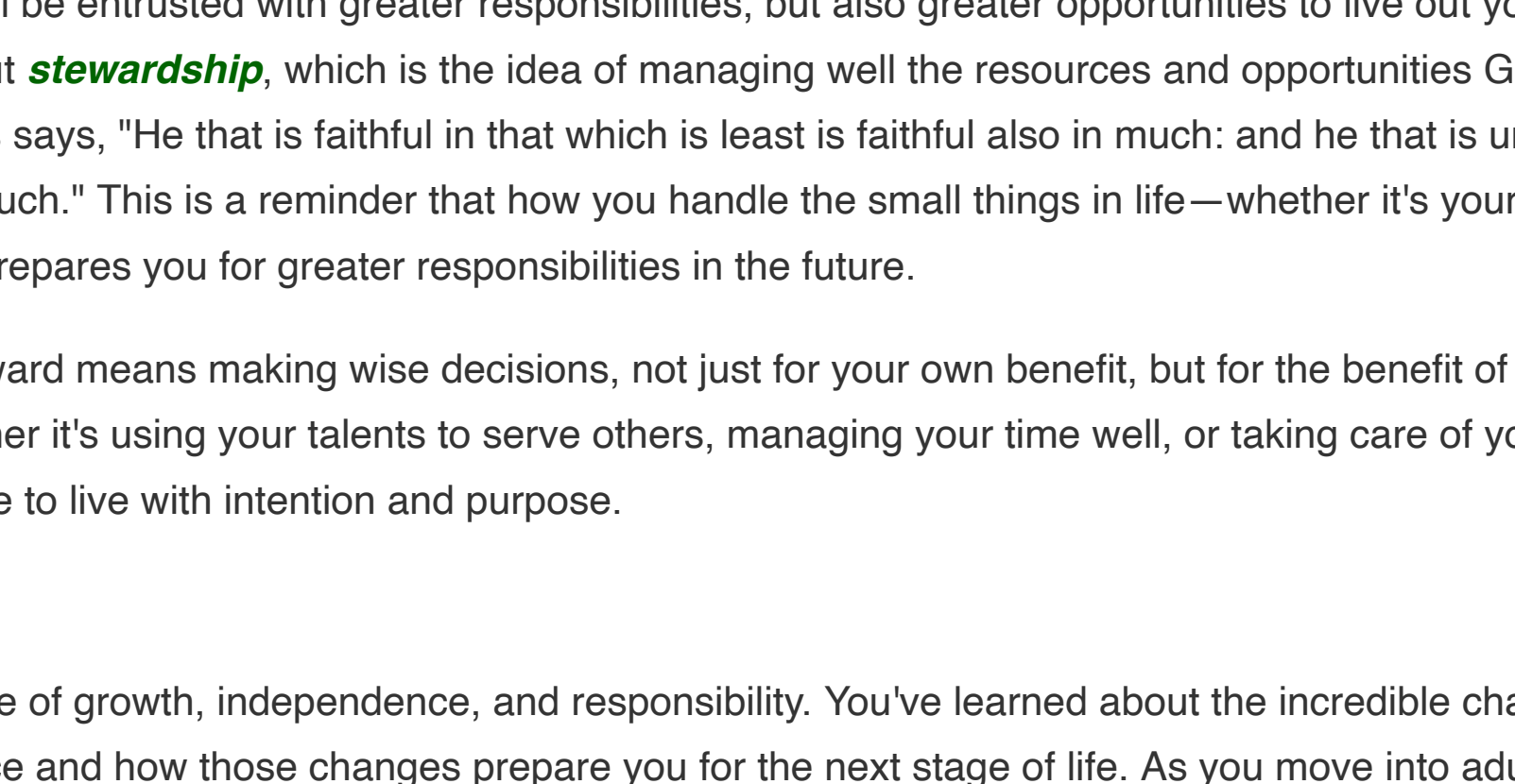
One of the most significant changes in adulthood is the increase in responsibility. In adolescence, you likely began taking more responsibility for things like your health, schoolwork, and friendships, but adulthood brings even more freedom—and with that, more responsibility.

Health and Well-Being

You've also learned about the importance of health in previous lessons—how nutrition, exercise, and rest affect your body. In adulthood, you take full control of your health decisions. This means managing preventive care, making healthy choices, and knowing when to seek medical advice. Adulthood brings greater independence, but it also means that you're responsible for making decisions that protect and promote your health—physically, mentally, and emotionally.

Balancing Freedom with Responsibility

Adulthood gives you more freedom than ever before—you get to make decisions about your career, relationships, and lifestyle. But with that freedom comes the need to balance it with responsibility. You're accountable for the choices you make, whether it's in how you spend your time, who you invest in, or how you care for your body. Being an adult means learning how to manage that balance well.



Reflecting on Stewardship

In adulthood, you'll be entrusted with greater responsibilities, but also greater opportunities to live out your faith. The Bible speaks often about **stewardship**, which is the idea of managing well the resources and opportunities God gives you. In Luke 16:10, Jesus says, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." This is a reminder that how you handle the small things in life—whether it's your health, your time, or your money—prepares you for greater responsibilities in the future.

Being a good steward means making wise decisions, not just for your own benefit, but for the benefit of others and to honor God. Whether it's using your talents to serve others, managing your time well, or taking care of your relationships, adulthood is a time to live with intention and purpose.

Conclusion

Adulthood is a time of growth, independence, and responsibility. You've learned about the incredible changes that happen during adolescence and how those changes prepare you for the next stage of life. As you move into adulthood, you'll continue to grow emotionally, spiritually, and mentally. This stage is an opportunity to embrace new responsibilities, make wise choices, and live out your faith in meaningful ways. Remember that God continues to shape you, guiding you toward the purpose He has for your life.

Question #1 MultipleChoice

Show Answer

Answer Key Show

Which statement best describes adulthood from a biological perspective?

☐ A stage that focuses mainly on social development.

☐ A stage marked by rapid physical growth and development.

☐ A period when the body has reached full physical maturity.

☐ A time of learning basic skills for independence.

Question #2 MultipleChoice

Show Answer

Answer Key Show

According to 1 Corinthians 13:11, what marks the transition to adulthood from a spiritual perspective?

☐ increased knowledge of Scripture

☐ full independence in making decisions

☐ giving up childish ways and embracing maturity

☐ physical strength and health

Question #3 MultipleChoice

Show Answer

Answer Key Show

Which of the following is a significant physical change that occurs during adulthood?

☐ increased bone density throughout life

☐ slowing metabolism

☐ rapid brain growth and development

☐ rapid increase in muscle mass

Question #4 MultipleChoice

Show Answer

Answer Key Show

What does the prefrontal cortex help adults do more effectively than adolescents?

☐ increase muscle strength

☐ understand basic emotions

☐ grow physically

☐ make long-term decisions and regulate emotions

Question #5 MultipleChoice

Show Answer

Answer Key Show

Why is neuroplasticity important in adulthood?

☐ prevents emotional stress

☐ strengthens bones and muscles

☐ allows adults to grow physically

☐ enables the brain to adapt and refine skills

Question #6 MultipleChoice

Show Answer

Answer Key Show

How can adults practice good stewardship with their health?

☐ making preventive choices that protect and improve well-being

☐ avoiding regular health checkups

☐ relying on others to make health decisions

☐ ignoring diet and exercise until a health problem arises

Question #7 MultipleChoice

Show Answer

Answer Key Show

In adulthood, why is exercise, especially weight-bearing activities, important?

☐ improves eyesight

☐ increases growth in height

☐ decreases metabolism

☐ maintains muscle mass and bone density

Question #8 MultipleChoice

Show Answer

Answer Key Show

Which of the following is a sign of emotional maturity in adulthood?

☐ avoiding strong emotions

☐ relying on others to make decisions

☐ self-regulation and handling emotions healthily

☐ acting on impulses without considering consequences.

Question #9 MultipleChoice

Show Answer

Answer Key Show

From a Christian perspective, which of the following traits is most important to develop as part of spiritual maturity?

☐ dependence on others for decisions

☐ higher physical strength

☐ independence from all guidance

☐ traits like love, patience, and self-control

Question #10 MultipleSelect

Show Answer

Answer Key Show

In adulthood, which areas require responsible decision-making? Select all that apply.

☐ health choices

☐ relationships

☐ personal finance

☐ career and lifestyle choices

☐ ignoring spiritual growth

Question #11 MultipleChoice

Show Answer

Answer Key Show

How does adulthood provide opportunities to live out one's faith?

☐ focus only on personal success.

☐ make every decision independently of God

☐ through daily decisions that reflect Christ's love

☐ avoid responsibilities

Question #12 MultipleSelect

Show Answer

Answer Key Show

Which of the following are characteristics of spiritual maturity in adulthood? Select all that apply.

☐ reflecting Christ's love through actions

☐ relying completely on others for spiritual guidance

☐ growing in love, patience, and kindness

☐ avoiding personal responsibility for faith

☐ becoming rooted in faith and Scripture

Question #13 MultipleSelect

Show Answer

Answer Key Show

According to the lesson, what are ways adults can demonstrate good stewardship? Select all that apply.

☐ making wise decisions with time and money

☐ serving others with talents

☐ avoiding preventive health

☐ ignoring responsibilities when difficult

☐ caretaking care of relationships

Question #14 MultipleSelect

Show Answer

Answer Key Show

What are key aspects of living with wisdom and purpose in adulthood according to the Christian perspective? Select all that apply.

☐ seeking guidance from God in decision-making

☐ prioritizing short-term satisfaction over long-term goals

☐ reflecting God's love in interactions with others

☐ developing a servant's heart

☐ practicing self-control and discernment

Question #15 MultipleSelect

Show Answer

Answer Key Show

What are important practices for maintaining physical health in adulthood? Select all that apply.

☐ getting sufficient rest and sleep

☐ engaging in regular exercise, especially weight-bearing activities

☐ avoiding preventive health care unless necessary

☐ making healthy dietary choices

☐ relying solely on a fast metabolism for weight control