

SPIRITUAL MATURITY

Spiritual maturity is the objective of the spiritual life

FALLACY ABOUT SPIRITUAL MATURITY

For many Christians spiritual maturity is the length of time they are involved in local church activities, program and the financial support they give. Others believe that it is the religious functions they perform such as their lengthy prayer and fasting, the generous tithes or offerings they give, and the endless sacrifices they made for men in the name of God. Religions created their own norms, standards and basis of spirituality and maturity which is easily possible to reach by human power and ability. Pseudo-spiritual maturity is achieved by means of human power inspired by the old sinful nature that produces arrogance and self-glorification.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY

The spiritually mature believer is a winner in life. He has developed the capacity to receive the conveyance of every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ (Ephesians 1:3), all of which were tailor-made for him "before the foundation of the world" (Ephesians 1:4). The following is a categorical description of spiritual maturity which indicates the following characteristics:

1. Maximum contentment is the mature believer's capacity for sharing the inner happiness of God upon entering spiritual adulthood. Inner happiness is a mental attitude which equates adversity and prosperity, suffering and happiness, living and dying (John 15:11, Phil. 4:4-5). Maximum contentment is the capacity for happiness which enables the mature believer to face every challenge in his experience with poise and confidence. Spiritual poise is the capacity of the mature believer to think and apply Bible doctrine under intense pressure and terrible condition.

2. Maximum Mental Stability is the capacity of the spiritually mature believer to apply Bible doctrine stored in his soul in every experience. Mental stability comes from Bible doctrine the Christian knows and not allowing his soul to be destabilized by the circumstances in life. The mature believer views his life in the light of God's plan, purpose and will for his life, giving him confidence regarding time and eternity under the divine definition of hope (Romans 8:24-25). He is spiritually stable in both prosperity and adversity.

3. Maximum application of virtue love (both personal and impersonal). Virtue love includes personal love for God and impersonal love for mankind. The mature believer's virtue love is the problem-solving device directed toward God, self and others which becomes the dynamic basis for resolving all kinds of problems. Only the mature believer has the capacity to love God (Deuteronomy 6:5) and men (Matthew 5:43) according to God's given standard and principles (1 John 3:10). He loves without hypocrisy (Romans 12:9).

4. Maximum Independence is the mature believer's capacity to think and apply Bible doctrine for himself from the (Bible doctrine) epignosis stored within his soul free from the pressure, dictate and manipulation of others. The mature believer has a clear understanding of God's plan and purpose for his life and can face his problems with poise, clarity of thought, free from fear or anxiety.

He does not seek counsel from so called Christian counselor or advice from others knowing that he alone is accountable for his own decision. He does not accept the counsel and words of people without Bible doctrine no matter how educated and intelligent they are. He uses Bible doctrine to solve his own problems. He acknowledges the Holy Spirit as his Teacher who enlightens his soul. He is totally dependent on God and independent from men yet he unselfishly serves and gives without expecting anything in return.

5. Maximum Grace Orientation to life is the mature believer's capacity to live under the policy of grace being saved under the principles of grace. The mature believer is delighted to do things in God's way without superimposing his own opinions on God's wisdom. He is free from the fanaticism, legalism, dogmatism, asceticism, emotionalism, self-sacrifice, and self-glorification that lead to spiritual ignorance, arrogance and habitual cosmic involvement. He is totally dependent on the grace of God while respecting the volition of others to make their own decisions.

6. Maximum Doctrinal Orientation to Reality is the mature believer spiritual prosperity and ability to apply doctrine in his day to day experiences through spiritual common sense. Spiritual common sense is an astute outlook on life that can penetrate confusing, complicated situations and discern the key issues. The mature believer is realistic, not easily deceived, and has the wisdom to synthesize the situation and able to identify the best course of action and the courage to do the right thing in the right way.

7. Maximum Capacity To Make Good Decisions is the mature believer's capacity that comes from full Bible doctrine stored in his soul. The mature believer has a full, practical understanding of the mechanics of God's protocol plan, being able to relate his personal decisions to the invisible but real assets that God has provided. He has established the right scale of values and right priority in life, motivating him to consistently make right decisions. No person can make good decision if he is not thinking right. He makes decisions with the full understanding that he bears the responsibility for their consequences.

8. Maximum Control Of One's Life is the mature believer's capacity to control his own life to do the will and purpose of God. No person who tampers with the lives of others can at the same time control his own life. The mature believer is not possessive with those whom he loves (being free from jealousy) and he does not give expression to the power of lust, but utilizes the privacy of his priesthood.

God is the focus of his life as it is motivated by his personal love for God; he exercises impersonal love for others. The mature believer has no competitiveness from arrogance, no point of comparativeness from subjectivity, no conspiracy from inordinate ambition. He neither demands superiority over everyone else, nor derives his self-esteem from comparisons with others, nor degrades others in order to elevate himself. He controls his own life by faithfulness in the execution of God's protocol plan. God is in total control over his life. His thoughts, motives, decisions, and actions are consistent with God's plan and purpose.

9. Maximum Dynamics in Living is the mature believer's unwavering personal sense of destiny which establishes self-command, spiritual poise, and self-control. The mature believer applies his clear understanding of God's plan to the particular circumstances of his life, whether good or bad with clear recognition that he continues to fulfill his destiny by executing the protocol plan of God. This results to maximum spiritual production in shorter period of time than a legalistic believer over a long futile Christian life. He knows his position in Christ which nobody can change, alter or render void (Rom. 8: 35-39) from which he confidently focuses his objective to do the will of God in God's way.

10. Escrow Blessings in Time and Eternity is the maximum glorification of God through the distribution of blessings upon the spiritually mature believers. The escrow blessings are the eternal rewards in time and eternity (Eph. 1:3, 3:14, 1 Peter 1:4). The believer gains capacity to receive, utilize and enjoy his eternal blessings through the execution of the protocol plan of God (residence and function inside the divine dynasphere).

11. The Qualification for Evidence Testing is the mature believer's highest privilege to suffer with Christ (Phil. 3:10) under the highest level of undeserved suffering.

12. Attainment of the Final Phase of the Unique Life is reached after the mature believer received the blessings in time and passed the battery of evidence testing. It is the highest point in the life of the spiritually mature Christians where Jesus Christ can be glorified while they are in the physical bodies (Phil. 1:20-21). However, it is only the beginning of the normal Christian life.

There is no spiritual maturity apart from the maximum Bible doctrine resident in the soul of the believer. True spiritual maturity is measured by the amount of Bible doctrine in the soul called epignosis or full knowledge. Academic knowledge or gnosis cannot benefit the believers in anyway but leads only to arrogance.

Satan has successfully deceived the majority of believers by despising Bible doctrine and by disgracing believers who faithfully study Bible doctrine. Many nominal believers agreed with Satan and work as his agents mocking those growing and mature believers. The Christian life has one primary objective and that is to reach spiritual maturity. Religious office or function, involvement and activities are not sign of spiritual maturity. Spiritual maturity is the highest objective of the Christian life set by Jesus Christ.

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