

Measuring Spiritual Maturity

Introduction

1. When one becomes a child of God:
 - a. He is born again spiritually. (John 3:1-5)
 - b. He is thus a spiritual babe who is to grow. (1 Pet. 2:1-2; 2 Pet. 3:18)
2. One grows spiritually by:
 - a. Feeding upon the word of God. (Acts 20:32)
 - b. Developing a spiritual appetite in order to hunger and thirst after righteousness. (Matt. 5:6)
3. How can one accurately measure that growth?
 - a. What standards can be employed to gauge that growth?
 - b. The Bible, as always, supplies those standards and this lesson will consider some of them.

I. The “Christian Graces” (2 Peter 1:5-11)

- A. In order to grow as one should, these must be added to one’s faith.
 1. They must be incorporated into one’s life as a Christian.
 2. To properly add them to your life, you must know what they are and why you need them.
- B. Things to be added to one’s faith (Faith being the foundation upon which to build).
 1. Virtue: the determination to do right.
 2. Knowledge: knowledge of the word of God for it tells you what is right.
 3. Self-control: application of that knowledge to your life.
 4. Perseverance: remaining steadfast to the Lord and His cause.
 5. Godliness: being like God, as He would have you to be.
 6. Brotherly kindness: tender affection toward brethren in Christ.
 7. Love:
 - a. Devotion to God, Christ and your fellow man.
 - b. Expressed in obedience to God which causes you to be of service to all.
- C. If you are maturing as you should, these things are abounding in your life.
 1. If you lack these things you are blind as to what your life in Christ should be about.
 2. These do not come easily, it takes “diligence” on your part.

II. The Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:16-25)

- A. "The Spirit produces fruit by so ruling in and controlling man that it subdues and holds in restraint all the evil passions and lusts that dwell in the flesh, and develops into activity and life the germs of the spiritual life in man." (David Lipscomb, *GA Commentary on 2nd Cor. and Gal.*, p. 270)
- B. The fruit of the Spirit is:
 - 1. Love: God and neighbor (the underlying principle of all).
 - 2. Joy: Not based on externals rather "the delight of love satisfied."
 - 3. Peace: With God that passes all understanding (Phil. 4:7), peace of the soul.
 - 4. Longsuffering: to bear with the mistakes and wrongs which grow out of weaknesses, infirmities and even the evil designs of others.
 - 5. Kindness: gentle toward all, return good for evil.
 - 6. Goodness: kindly activity for the true good of others.
 - 7. Faithfulness: complete trust and confidence in God.
 - 8. Gentleness (meekness): quiet, forbearing spirit that suffers wrong without resentment; but firmness and unyielding devotion to right.
 - 9. Self-control: restraining of all passions and desires within the limits of the divine standard.

III. Other Marks of Maturity Found in Scripture

- A. The ability to take "solid food." (Heb. 5:14)
 - 1. The example of the Corinthians. (1 Cor. 3:1-3)
 - 2. This ability is obtained by study and application.
- B. The ability to discern good and evil. (Heb. 5:14)
- C. The ability to control one's tongue. (Jas. 3:2)
- D. Love for one's enemies. (Matt. 5:48)
- E. A realization of one's own imperfections. (Phil. 3:11-15)
- F. If you have gone, sold and followed: If Christ is your all. (Matt. 19:21)

Conclusion

- 1. How do you measure up? Are you growing as a Christian?
- 2. Keep reading, studying and applying these passages and with diligent effort and a great deal of prayer, you will become complete, mature, perfect in Christ.