

The Marks of Maturity

Introduction

- 1. The process of one growing is as essential in the spiritual realm as it is in the physical realm.**
- 2. The growth "process" is Edification for you and for others.**

1 Corinthians 14:26 How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.

Ephesians 4:11-14 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;** that we should **no longer be children,** tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

- 3. The growth "goal" is Perfection.**
 - A. Perfection is maturity, completeness, to be entire, or fully developed.**
 - B. All Christians are to "press on to perfection" (Hebrews 6:1)**
 - 1) We can measure our growth by the marks of maturity that we can find in scripture.**

The Hebrew Marks

Hebrews 5:11-6:3

1. **The Christian should develop the ability to teach others (Verse 12)**
 - A. **This involves knowledge (all teachers must be learners).**
 - B. **This involves disposition (a willingness to do), and it is serious!**

James 3:1 My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.

2. **The Christian should develop the ability to receive "meaty" teaching (V14).**
 - A. **The means to leave (not to abandon) the first principles and building upon them.**
 - B. **For one to fail in this area is a sign of carnality.**
1 Corinthians 3:1-3
3. **A Christian must develop the ability to discern between good and evil (V14)**
 - A. **Maturity recognizes the difference between what God says and what men say.**
 - B. **The mature Christian will see evil in perspective, even the tendencies and trends.**
Philippians 1:9-10

The Mark of Humility

1. The mature Christian must be humble enough to receive instruction.

Colossians 1:28 Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

A. To be perfect in Christ, men must receive this teaching.

2. A mature Christian is one who is humble enough to be admonished. (Colossians 1:28)

A. To be perfect in Christ, men must also receive admonition.

B. All need reproof, correction, and instruction from the scriptures.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

3. The mature Christian is humble enough to recognize his/her own shortcomings.

A. Being perfect means recognizing our own imperfections

B. We must have the ability to say, "I have sinned" as did David and the prodigal son.

The Mark of Tongue Control

James 3:2 For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.

1. **When we exercise proper tongue control we are showing marks of maturity. Proper tongue control is shown by:**

A. Refraining from speaking against one another.

James 4:11 **Do not speak evil of one another**, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge.

1 Peter 3:10 For "He who would love life and see good days, let him **refrain his tongue from evil**, and his lips from speaking deceit.

B. Refraining from speaking lies **Ephesians 4:25**

C. Refraining from speaking profanity.

James 3:10 Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.

Matthew 12:36 But I say to you that **for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment.**

D. Refraining from murmuring.

Philippians 2:14 Do all things **without complaining** and disputing,

1 Corinthians 10:10 nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

The Mark of Love

1. This is the bond of perfectness in the Christian

A. The love of God, the brethren, and even our enemies will be shown in the mature Christian.

1 John 4:17-21 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us. If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: **that he who loves God must love his brother also.**

John 13:35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, **if you have love for one another.**"

Matthew 5:43-48 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' "But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, **do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,** "that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. "For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? "And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so? "Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

B. We need to go the extra mile. Be sincere. A mature Christian "loves" his fellow man!

The Mark of Steadfastness

1. The mature Christian will show their maturity by being steadfast.

A. In trials.

James 1:2-4 My brethren, **count it all joy when you fall into various trials**, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

B. In Temptations.

James 1:12-15 Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

Conclusion

1. **The mature Christian is the one that reads and studies their Bible daily to find out exactly what it is that they should do.**
2. **Perfection is only gained through maturity and maturity is only gained when we strive to be perfect.**
3. **Where are you standing today when it comes to your Marks of Maturity?**

