

Some Marks of Spiritual Maturity

1 Cor. 14:20

Introduction:

- A. Spiritual maturity solves a lot of problems – for church and personal lives.
- B. Spiritual maturity is God's objective for Christians (Eph. 4:14)
- C. Spiritual maturity is lacking in too many of us.
 - 1. Not that we have not had time, but because we are not applying ourselves.
 - 2. Sadly, the more immature one is the less he recognizes the fact.
- D. Spiritual maturity is identified in N.T. by certain marks.

Discussion:

I. The Ability To Be Above Unreasonable Criticism. (Matt. 11:16-19)

- A. Like children playing in market place.
 - 1. Played happy game - others did not like it.
 - 2. Played sad game - others did not like it.
- B. John and Jesus did opposite - Immature generation criticized them both.

II. The Ability To Appreciate The Wisdom Of God (1 Cor. 2:6)

- A. The immature are impressed by sensationalism.
 - 1. Are impressed by visible signs. (1:22)
 - 2. Are impressed by sophistry of human wisdom. (1:22)
 - 3. Are impressed by oratorical power. (2:4)
- B. The mature are impressed by the power of the gospel.
 - 1. To them the simple gospel is God's power. (1:18)
 - 2. To them the simple preaching of Christ is enough. (1:2)
 - a. Without the persuasive words characteristic of human wisdom. (2:4,5).
 - b. With the wisdom of God revealed by the Spirit of God. (2:7-13)

III. The Ability To Properly Evaluate Man's Role In God's Plan (1 Cor. 3:1-5)

- A. The immature tend to follow God's servants rather than God.
 - 1. Generates envy and strife between devotees to each man. (3:3)
 - 2. Causes arrogance on behalf of "favorites". (4:6)
- B. The mature are able to put God's servants in proper light.
 - 1. They appreciate them as God's workmen. (3:5-10)
 - 2. They receive, love, and honor them as much appreciated gifts from God. (3:21-23; 4:1)

IV. The Ability To Understand What Edifies The Church. (1 Cor. 14:20)

- A. The immature would tend to be overly fascinated with tongue speaking.
 - 1. Did not understand purpose of tongues. (14:22)
 - 2. Did not understand how useless they were for edification. (14:19)
 - 3. All such tend to go more for novel and show rather than substance.
- B. The mature would go for edification value rather than sensational value.
 - 1. If tongues, then an interpreter so people can understand and learn.
 - 2. They put emphasis on understandability more than excitability.

V. The Ability To Spot False Teaching (Eph. 4:13-14)

- A. Well grounded in truth (v. 15)
- B. Not easily deceived.

VI. The Ability To Digest Strong Spiritual Food (Heb. 5:12-14)

- A. The immature only appreciate most elementary teaching.
 - 1. Is unskilled on word of righteousness.
 - 2. Does like to have to think (discern) - wants things overly simplified.
- B. The mature appreciate teaching challenges his thinking beyond first principles.
 - 1. He wants to be skilled in his use of the word of God.
 - 2. He works at increasing his ability to "discern between good and evil".

Conclusion:

- A. How mature are you? More than a year ago?
- B. What are you doing to improve your maturity?