

Stepping Into...

“Spiritual Maturity”

# Spiritual Maturity is Not:

1. Perfection/perfect maturity
2. A 'once and reached there' achievement
3. Bible literacy- 'Head' knowledge/Intellectualism
4. Having a good 'Christianeese' language skills
5. Number of years you have been a Christian
6. Your regularity in church meetings or fellowships
7. How firm / strict / disciplined a person is in their looks, dressing and discussions
8. Having the title "Leader"

# Ephesians 4:11-14 NLT

<sup>11</sup> Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. <sup>12</sup> Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and **build up the church**, the body of Christ. <sup>13</sup> This **will continue** until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that **we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.**

<sup>14</sup> Then **we will no longer be immature like children.** We won't be *tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching.* We *will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth.*

<sup>15</sup> Instead, we will speak the truth in love, **growing in every way more and more like Christ**, who is the head of his body, the church.

<sup>16</sup> He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

Hebrews 5:12, 14 NLT

<sup>12</sup> **You have been believers so long now** that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to **teach you again the basic things about God's word...**

<sup>14</sup> Solid food is for those who are mature, **who through training have the skill to recognize the difference between right and wrong.**

# 1. Faith in God Irrespective of Outcome

Dan 3:16-18 NLT

<sup>16</sup> Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, “O Nebuchadnezzar, we do not need to defend ourselves before you. If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, **the God whom we serve is able to save us. He will rescue us from your power, Your Majesty. But even if he doesn't,** we want to make it clear to you, Your Majesty, that we will never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you have set up.”

Heb. 11:13 NLT

<sup>13</sup> All these people died still believing what God had promised them. They did not receive what was promised, but ...

## 2. Self-Worth and Self-Esteem

Based on Christ... His works, His calling and His gifts...

Irrespective of:

Words of men

Praise / approval or lack of approval from / of men

Another's 'shining' / achievements

Not being in the limelight

No 'thank you'

John 3:26-30 NLT

“...And everybody is going to him instead of coming to us. John replied, “No one can receive anything unless God gives it from heaven...Therefore, I am filled with joy at his success. **He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less.**

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# 3. “Hidden Camera” Consciousness

1 Timothy 3:9 NLT

They must be committed to the mystery of the faith now revealed and must live with **a clear conscience**.

Gen 39:8-9 NLT

<sup>8</sup> But Joseph refused. “Look,” he told her, “my master trusts me with everything in his entire household. <sup>9</sup> No one here has more authority than I do. He has held back nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. **How could I do such a wicked thing? It would be a great sin against God.**”

**(God consciousness even in the secret place!)**

What you see is what you get  
Character not Charisma

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# 4. Use of the Tongue

Learning to bridle our tongues is an **important** and **indispensable** mark of spiritual maturity.

James 3:2 NKJ

“For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect (*teleios*) man, able to reign in the whole body as well”

- Control
- Filter
- Hypocrisy
- Flattery
- Lying



# 5. Love and Forgiveness

Matthew 5:43-48 NLT

“You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbour’ and hate your enemy. But I say, **love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!** In that way, you will be acting as **true children of your Father in heaven.** For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike. If you love only those who love you, what reward is there for that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much. If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that. **But you are to be perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.**

# 6. Response to Criticism

## Saul (1 Sam 15)

- Excuses
- Blame others
- Refuse to take responsibility

## David (2 Sam 12)

- Acknowledge wrong is wrong
- Accept your wrongdoing
- Seek forgiveness / say sorry

## Proverbs 15:31-33 NLT

<sup>31</sup>If you listen to **constructive criticism**, you will be at home among the wise.<sup>32</sup> If you reject discipline, you only harm yourself; but if you listen to correction, **you grow in understanding.**

# 7. Time length for spiritual disciplines

Mathew 26: 40-41 NLT

<sup>40</sup> Then he returned to the disciples and found them asleep. He said to Peter, “Couldn’t you watch with me even one hour? <sup>41</sup> **Keep watch and pray**, so that you will not give in to temptation. **For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak!**”

We grow as we study God’s word.

We pray with understanding and fast in obedience – mind renewed, heart made pure, will surrendered (**Maturity in Progress**).

“Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.”

Jesus (John 15:5)

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