
INTERNATIONAL TRAINING AND EQUIPPING MINISTRIES
ITEM Conference on Ministry and Preaching
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MEASURING SPIRITUAL MATURITY

Ministry Lecture #8

Introduction: When someone becomes a follow of Christ he is born again spiritually (John 3:1-5) and he becomes a spiritual baby (1 Pet 2:1-2; 2 Pet 3:18). A follower of Christ grows spiritually by taking in the Word of God (Acts 20:32) and by developing a spiritual appetite so the he will hunger and thirst for righteousness (Matt 5:6). So how can we measure spiritual growth?

I. WE MEASURE MATURITY BY THE QUALITIES THAT ARE ADDED TO OUR FAITH (2 PET 1:5-7)

- A. In order to grow spiritually a follower of Christ must be adding the characteristics listed in these verses to his or her faith.
1. Virtue: This is a commitment to live a good, righteous, moral, honest life.
 2. Knowledge: This is the knowledge of the Word of God because it tells us what is good and right and godly and moral and honest.
 3. Self-control: A person who is self-controlled is applying their knowledge of God's Word to their life (James 1:22).
 4. Perseverance: The follower of Christ should remain committed to the Lord and the Lord's will as it is found in the Bible.
 5. Godliness: A mature follower of Christ should grow in godly quality more and more.
 6. Brotherly kindness: This means you are kind and caring towards other followers of Christ.
 7. Love: This is a devotion towards God, Christ, and other people, and is expressed in obedience to God which leads you to be a servant to all.

- B. If a follower of Christ is maturing then these qualities will be abounding (2 Pet 1:8).
 - 1. If you lack these things you are spiritually blind in regard to what your life should be as a follower of Christ (2 Pet 1:9).
 - 2. These qualities are not added easily, it takes diligence (2 Pet 1:10-11).

II. WE MEASURE MATURITY BY THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT THAT A BELIEVE SHOWS IN HIS LIFE (GAL 5:16-25).

- A. The Holy Spirit works in the life of the person who allows Him to be in control.
 - 1. He produces spiritual fruit .
 - 2. He holds back all of the evil passions and lusts that dwell in the flesh (Gal 5:19-21)
- B. The fruit of the Spirit is:
 - 1. Love: Love for God and your neighbor. Neighbor is defined in the parable of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:26-37).
 - Self-sacrificing, humble service to one with needs.
 - 2. Joy: Rejoicing in the Lord even when circumstances are against you (Phil 4:4).
 - 3. Peace: Calmness knowing that God is always in control (Phil 4:7).
 - 4. Longsuffering: This is the ability to accept the mistakes and wrongs of others that are a result of their weaknesses, sicknesses, and even their evil intentions.
 - 5. Kindness: This is gentleness towards everyone and returning good for evil.
 - 6. Goodness: Activities that are intended to do good for others.
 - 7. Faithfulness: Complete trust and confidence in God.
 - 8. Gentleness (or meekness): This is a quiet, forgiving attitude does not resent someone who does them harm while being completely committed to what is right.
 - 9. Self-control: This is the ability to keep all passions and desires within the limits of God's standards.

III. OTHER SIGNS OF MATURITY THAT ARE FOUND IN SCRIPTURE

- A. The ability to receive the “solid food” of deep biblical teaching (Heb 5:14).
 - 1. The Corinthians were unable to take in deep Bible teaching (1 Cor 3:1-3).
 - 2. The ability to receive this “solid food” comes by studying and applying the truth contained in God’s Word.
- B. The ability to discern good and evil (Heb 5:14).
- C. The ability to control one’s tongue, which means to control what you say about others (James 3:2).
- D. Love for your enemies (Matt 5:48).
- E. Admitting that you are not perfect (Phil 3:11-15).
- F. If you have given all to follow Christ (Matt 19:21).

Conclusion: How are we measuring up? By using these measurements are we growing as a Christian? If we keep reading, studying, and applying these passages with diligence and prayer, we will become complete, mature, and perfect in Christ.