

Signs of Spiritual Maturity

1 Cor. 14:20

Introduction:

- A. Immaturity is at the root of many church problems.
 - 1. Newborn babes in Christ is not the problem – need time to grow.
 - 2. General immaturity -- not babes in Christ, just plain babies.
 - 3. Spiritually immature after time for development (cf. Heb. 5:12)
- B. Spiritual maturity, as taught in N.T., can be recognized by certain signs..

Discussion:

- I. The Ability To Be Reasonable And Consistent. (Matt. 11:16-19)**
 - A. Immature children in the market place.
 - 1. Played happy game - others did not like it.
 - 2. Played sad game - others did not like it.
 - B. Immature generation criticized both John and Jesus -- they did opposite.
- II. The Ability To Fully Appreciate The Wisdom Of God (1 Cor. 2:6)**
 - A. Mature Christians are more impressed by simple gospel message.
 - 1. Understand and appreciate its power. (1:18)
 - 2. Understand and appreciate its sufficiency. (2:2)
 - 3. Understand and appreciate its presentation. (2:4,5)
 - 4. Understand and appreciate its source. (2:7-13)
 - B. Immature Christians are more impressed by other things.
 - 1. The sensationalism and novelty of signs. (1:22)
 - 2. The sophistry and oratory of human wisdom. (1:22; 2:1-4)
 - 3. The advantages of social, economic, and/or physical power. (1:23-29)
- III. The Ability To Evaluate Man's Role In God's Plan (1 Cor. 3:1-5)**
 - A. Immature Christians tend to have distorted view of gospel servants.
 - 1. Often think of them as competitors. (3:3).
 - a. Generates envy, strife and division between devotees to each man.
 - b. Causes arrogance on behalf of "favorites". (4:6)
 - 2. Often think must either idolize them or completely despise them.
 - B. Mature Christians are able to view God's servants in proper light.
 - 1. They can love and honor them as God's servants without being "of" them.
 - 2. They can receive and appreciate them gifts from God. (3:5-10, 21-23; 4:1)
- IV. The Ability To Understand What Edifies The Church. (1 Cor. 14:20)**
 - A. Immature Corinthians seemed 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. Mature Christians 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 Digest And Use Strong Spiritual Food (Heb. 5:12-14)**
 - A. Immature Christians desire only the most elementary teaching.
 - 1. Do not like to have to think (discern) - wants things overly simplified.
 - 2. Will always remain unskilled in word of righteousness.
 - B. Mature Christians appreciate teaching that challenges his thinking beyond first principles.
 - 1. So they can scripturally improve their study skills.
 - 2. So they can scripturally improve their discerning skills.
 - 3. So they can scripturally improve their teaching skills.

Conclusion:

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