

Some Signs of Spiritual Strength

Heb. 5:12-6:3

Introduction:

- A. The Christian's life is one of constant spiritual growth.
 - 1. Begin as babes – weak in knowledge, faith and ability.
 - 2. The rest of life is spent in developing a greater degree strength (2 Pet. 3:18; 1:5-8)
- B. Spiritual growth or lack of it can be detected by certain signs of strength or lack of it.

Discussion:

I. The Ability to Digest Solid Food (Heb. 5:12-6:3)

- A. Ability to understand and use more than “first principles” (ASV) or “elementary principles” (NKJ)
- B. Ability that takes time – “when for the time.”
- C. Ability that is lost without use – “Have *become* such as have need of milk”
- D. Some to want meat can't handle it – others who don't want it need it.

II. The Ability to Discern (Heb. 5:12)

- A. Ability to sort out good and evil based on Bible teaching.
 - 1. This increases with study and practice.
 - 2. Babes require everything to be simply and specifically spelled out
 - 3. Mature can take general principles and apply them to specific situations.
- B. Ability to discern between the preacher and his preaching (1 Cor. 3:1-9)
 - 1. Immature Christians often rally more around gospel preachers than gospel preaching.
 - 2. Mature Christians appreciate the gospel preacher for his work, but rally around the preaching.
 - 3. Immature view gospel preachers as competitors – mature view the co-workers for Christ.
- C. Ability to discern between more and lesser important things (Matt. 6:33; 2 Cor. 4:17-18).

III. The Ability to Be Doctrinally Stable (Eph. 4:14-15)

- A. Does not mean one should never change.
 - 1. If there is scriptural evidence that one needs to change – he must change.
 - 2. But, one must not jump at each new novel and great sounding thing.
- B. Does mean one should anchor himself in sound doctrine and stay put unless proven to be unsound.

IV. The Ability to Adjust Without Compromise.

- A. Adjust to our changing external circumstances (Phil. 4:11-12)
- B. Adjust to the needs and weaknesses of others (Rom. 15:1-4; 1 Cor. 9:19-23)
- C. Adjust to preferences of others in matters of judgment for sake of peace (Jas 3:17 NKJ)

V. The Ability to See Duties as Privileges

- A. Paul viewed the duty of preaching as a grace given (Rom. 1:14-15; Eph. 3:8)
- B. Giving is a duty that is to be considered as a grace or privilege (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8:7-8)
- C. Eliminates the “minimum requirement” mentality (2 Pet. 1:8; 1 Cor. 15:58; 2 Cor. 8:17)

Conclusion:

- A. What is your growth rate?
- B. How well are you developing signs of spiritual strength?