

The Measure of Maturity

February 6th & 7th, 2016

Ephesians 4:13

We are the Body of Christ and God has provided everything that we need to be a healthy, vibrant, unified, and growing church!

The measure of our growth and maturity is “the stature of the fullness of Christ”!

Colossians 2:9-10 “For in Him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in Him, who is the head of all rule and authority.”

“How it must break God’s heart to see us continue in such a poverty stricken condition in light of what He has done, stands ready to do, has the resources to accomplish, and has defined as our calling in Christ.”¹

I. Spiritual maturity comes to us individually as we embrace all that we have in Christ!

❖ First, we learn the foundational truths of ...

... God’s Sovereignty and Election *Ephesians 1:3-5*

... God’s Forgiveness and Redemption *Ephesians 1:7-10*

... God’s Presence and Purpose *Ephesians 1:11-14*

... God’s Love and Grace *Ephesians 2:4-10*

... God’s Provision and Call *Ephesians 4:1-13*

❖ Second, we put these truths to practice.

↳ God desires discipleship!

📖 *Hebrews 5:11-6:3*

♦ Spiritual laziness is one of the greatest hindrances to growth in Christ!

Hebrews 5:11 “About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.”

“Some had become so negligent and careless in their spiritual walk that they had no godly fear about what was at stake in their daily lives... That's what our text suggests in 5:11, ‘About this we have much to say which is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing.’ In their drifting and neglect and carelessness, their spiritual ears had become dull. The Bible was becoming uninteresting. Their desire for the teaching and preaching of God's Word was fading. The energy to think and ask questions about the most important questions in the world was seeping away. And in its place was a kind of spiritual sluggishness and insensitivity. Things of the world were becoming more exciting and attractive than the Word of God the greatness of His salvation.”²

♦ Earnestness in our walk results in seeing the promises of God revealed in our lives!

Hebrews 6:11-12 “And we desire each one of you to show the same earnestness to have the full assurance of hope until the end, so that you may not be sluggish, but imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”

II. Spiritual maturity comes to the church as each of us is involved in discipleship!

↳ God desires His people to teach and disciple others. *Hebrews 5:12*

- ♦ We must be skilled in the Word *Hebrews 5:12-14*

⇒ Milk refers to the elementary truths of God's Word

1 Peter 2:2 "Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation—"

Hebrews 6:1-2

⇒ Solid Food refers to the teaching of right living before God

Hebrews 5:13-14

1 Timothy 6:11-12 "But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses."

"Solid food is for the mature, ...!" Hebrews 5:14a

- ♦ We must constantly put into practice God's truths in order to grow in our ability to distinguish between right and wrong!

Hebrews 5:14

Proverbs 16:25 "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death."

Ezekiel 22:26 "[Israel's] priests have done violence to my law and have profaned my holy things. They have made no distinction between the holy and the common, neither have they taught the difference between the unclean and the clean, and they have disregarded my Sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them."

- ♦ We are to be praying for spiritual growth in others.

Colossians 4:12 "Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God."

God's people will continue to grow...

"Until we all attain ... to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"!

Endnotes:

¹ Sproul, R. C. *The Purpose of God: Ephesians*. Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 1994. Print.

² Piper, John. "The Danger of Dull Hearing." *Desiring God*. © 2016 Desiring God, 10 Apr. 1988. Web.

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