

Spiritual Maturity: Child, Parent and Adult Spirituality

Key Scripture Passage: Ephesians 4:11-16

In the Bible, the original Greek word which is translated 'maturity' is 'telios' - which means to have a longer and larger view of a situation or relationship -- *think 'telescope'*
I took a Defensive Driving Course which explained three attitudes toward driving

- Child - I want my way, now!
- Parent - Let me show you the right way
- Adult - Let's figure out a way for all of us to be safe

I was shocked to find out that my 'parent' driving attitude is just as dangerous as the 'child' attitude. Let's look at spiritual maturity from these three perspectives.

'Child' Spiritual Maturity

- Jesus challenged his followers to be 'childlike' in their faith not 'childish'. Childlike faith is sincere, hopeful and willing. A childish mindset assumes that the world revolves around them and everyone exists to serve them.

Childish spiritual mindsets

- What has God done for me lately?
- What can the church do for me?
- God, I want to feel good all the time!
- FEED ME !!!

'Parent' Spiritual Maturity

Parents are supposed to provide direction and correction for their children. Effective parenting comes from a desire for what is best for their child. Ineffective parenting comes from having mixed motives, we say or do things partly because we want to feel good about ourselves, justify ourselves, or be controlling and critical of those in our lives.

Critical Spiritual Mindset

- Let me tell you what God wants you to do.
- The church should be more like me.
- God wants me to fix you
- APPRECIATE ME !!!

'Adult' Spiritual Maturity

Mature adults are supposed to be motivated purely by what is best for others. This is the agapē love Jesus was talking about in John 13:34-35 "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

A mature Christian is focused upon what is best for those God has given us. What we say and do is not motivated by our feelings or wishes. We are asking God to change our actions and reactions to be like His.

Adult Spiritual Mindset

- Holy Spirit, how do you want me to change?
- Father, what can I do for you and for your Church?
- Jesus, you must increase and I must decrease (John 3:30)
- USE ME !!!

“For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.” Romans 12:3

Spiritual maturity cues

- I want what is best for others
- I establish healthy boundaries in my relationships
- I realize that I am serving God by serving others
- I care more about souls than my preferences