

Spiritual Maturity

2 Peter 3.18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen.

1. What is spiritual maturity?

“Just as a little child is a perfect human being, but still is far from perfect in all his development as man, so the true child of God is also perfect in all parts, although not yet perfect in all the stages of his development in faith.” (Muller)

["What is spiritual maturity? How can I become more spiritually mature?" \(gotquestions.net\)](http://gotquestions.net)

Spiritual maturity is achieved through becoming more like Jesus Christ. After salvation, every Christian begins the process of spiritual growth, with the intent to become spiritually mature. According to the apostle Paul, **it's an ongoing process that will never end in this life.** In Philippians 3:12–14, speaking of full knowledge of Christ, he tells his readers that he himself has not “already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it.” Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before,” **Like Paul, we must press continually toward deeper knowledge of God in Christ.**

[Laid Hold of and Laying Hold \(Philippians 3:12\) by Alexander MacLaren \(blueletterbible.org\)](http://blueletterbible.org)

'I was laid hold of by Jesus Christ.' That is how Paul thinks of what we call his conversion. He would never have 'turned' unless a hand had been laid upon him. A strong loving grasp had gripped him in the midst of his career of persecution, and all that he had done was to yield to the grip, and not to wriggle out of it. The strong expression suggests, as it seems to me, the suddenness of the incident. Possibly impressions may have been working underground, ever since the martyrdom of Stephen, which were undermining his convictions, and the very insanity of his zeal may have been due to an uneasy consciousness that the ground was yielding beneath his feet. That may have been so, but, whether it were so or not, the crisis came like a bolt out of the blue, and he was checked in full career, as if a voice had spoken to the sea in its wildest storm, and frozen its waves into immobility.

1. What Christ has laid His grip on us for.

Now, the immediate result of that grasp, when it is yielded to, is the sense of the removal of guilt, forgiveness of sins, acceptance with God. But these, the immediate results, are by no means the whole results, although a great many of us live as if we thought that the only thing that Christianity is meant to do to us is that it bars the gates of some future hell and brings to us the message of forgiveness

2. These, then, are the purposes for which Christ laid His hand upon us, Philippians 3.10,” That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the

Spiritual Maturity

fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death”. Notice, again, our laying hold because we have been laid hold of.

Christ's laying hold of me, blessed and powerful as it is, does not of itself secure that I shall reach the end which He had in view in His arresting of me. What more is wanted? My effort. 'I follow after if I may apprehend that for which also, I am apprehended.' Now, notice, in the one case, the Apostle speaks of himself, not as passive, but certainly not as active. 'I was laid hold of.' What did he do? As I have said, **he simply yielded to the grasp**. But 'I may lay hold of' conveys the idea of personal effort; and so these two expressions, 'I was apprehended,' and 'I apprehend,' suggest this consideration, that, for the initial blessings of the Christian life, forgiveness, acceptance, the sense of God's favour, and of reconciliation with him, nothing is needed but the simple faith that yields itself altogether to the grasp of Christ's hand, but that for my possessing what Christ means that I should possess when He lays His hand on me, there is needed not only faith but effort. **I have to put out my hand and tighten my fingers round the thing, if I would make it my own, and keep it.**

2. How can I become more spiritually mature?

“But while the work of Christ for us is perfect, and it were presumption to think of adding to it, the work of the Holy Spirit in us is not perfect, it is continually carried on from day to day, and will need to be continued throughout the whole of our lives.” (Spurgeon)

Christian maturity requires a radical reordering of one's priorities, changing over from pleasing self to pleasing God and learning to obey God. The key to maturity is consistency, perseverance in doing those things we know will bring us closer to God. These practices are referred to as the spiritual disciplines and include things such as Bible reading/study, prayer, fellowship, service, and stewardship. No matter how hard we might work on those things, however, none of this is possible without the enabling of the Holy Spirit within us. Galatians 5:16 tells us that we're to “walk by the Spirit.” The Greek word used here for “walk” actually means “to walk with a purpose in view.” Later in the same chapter, Paul tells us again that we're to “walk by the Spirit.” Here, the word translated “walk” has the idea of taking things “step by step, one step at a time.” It is learning to walk under the instruction of another—the Holy Spirit. Being filled with the Spirit means we walk under the Spirit's control. As we submit more and more to the Spirit's control, we will also see an increase in the fruit of the Spirit in our lives (Galatians 5:22–23). This is characteristic of spiritual maturity.

<https://bible.org/seriespage/7-spiritual-maturity>

Although there are certain characteristics of maturation, everyone will mature a bit uniquely. **The description of a spiritually mature Christian is as follows.**

Spiritual Maturity

1. The spiritually mature believer is one who is growing in his grasp of truth. There is no maturity without becoming more aware of the world, and for a Christian, more aware of his spiritual resources as given in the Word of God.
2. The second characteristic involves a well-defined philosophy of life. This must be clear and concise. The spiritually mature Christian knows who he is and where he is going.
3. A third characteristic is a positive self-concept. He feels relatively positive about himself. This is, of course, related to being obedient to Christ. A positive self-concept is not opposed to true biblical teaching about humility.
4. The ability to handle stress is also important. The spiritually mature believer must understand that true spiritual maturity involves the adequate and efficient handling of stress. In reality, there can be no growth without a personal encounter with difficulty.
5. Spiritual maturity will enable the believer to bear maximum fruit. When he grows up physically, he can reproduce (have babies). The same is true of his spiritual life. He will bear some fruit and perhaps help it remain," [John 15:16](#).
6. Finally, grace in a practical sense is involved with maturation. A mature person does not see himself as "God" in the life of another. The more mature he becomes, the more "acceptance" will be demonstrated in his life. Maturity is not the same as spirituality. The former is connected with growth, and the latter with health.

3. Why Is Spiritual Maturity Important?

We need to grow into eating "solid food" and not only feed ourselves but feed others as well. **The most important reason to mature would be for our lives to reflect the nature of Jesus Christ.**

"The greatest characteristic a Christian can exhibit is this completely unveiled openness before God, which allows that person's life to become a mirror for others. When the Spirit fills us, we are transformed, and by beholding God we become mirrors. You can always tell when someone has been beholding the glory of the Lord, because your inner spirit senses that he mirrors the Lord's own character. Beware of anything that would spot or tarnish that mirror in you." (*My Utmost for His Highest* – January 23rd)

Four things that can help us give a more accurate reflection of God to our world.

Ref: <https://www.joannaweaverbooks.com/2018/01/17/5-ways-reflect-jesus-accurately/>

Spiritual Maturity

1. Spend time with Jesus

Have you noticed how couples begin to resemble one another the longer they're married? Well, the same is true of us. The more time we spend in intimate fellowship with Jesus, the more His likeness will be transferred to our lives.

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.. Acts 4:13

2. Invite the Holy Spirit to change you from the inside out

We cannot change ourselves. If we want to be more like Jesus, we must tend our connection with the Vine. If we do, the Fruit of the Spirit will come as a direct result of the His work in our lives. We won't have to manufacture Christlikeness.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. Galatians 5:22-23a

3. Cultivate a genuine interest in other people

In a world filled with people more interested in themselves and their selfie-interests, ask God to give you a genuine curiosity to know other people better. Talk less about yourself and inquire more about them. Ask God for eyes of grace to see each individual as He sees them. And a heart to love them as He does.

Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? 1 John 3:16-17

4. Give God all the glory

If we want to be more like Jesus, we need to keep God at the center of all we do. When He works in and through our lives, let's be sure to give Him the credit. When we mess up and fail, let's give Him the broken pieces trusting that He will know how to use it all for His glory. In all things and at all times, be quick to give Him praise.

Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way, and published throughout the whole city how great things Jesus had done unto him Luke 8:39

Spiritual maturity puts importance on living holy. Our maturity is a reflection of our relationship with God.

If we are not maturing in our relationship with God, we cannot bear fruit of the Spirit. Our maturity also helps us grow in wisdom, knowledge, and understanding.

Spiritual Maturity

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. Galatians 5.22-23

Many people today who claim to be followers of Jesus have never made a decision to live as the Lord did. Instead, they live comfortably with their flesh — their bad tempers, their character flaws, their bosom sins. And they have never wanted to change, explaining, “That’s just my nature; it’s the way I am.”