

SPIRITUAL MATURITY

Warren Wiersbe once said, "After well over a quarter century of ministry, I am convinced that spiritual immaturity is the number one problem in our churches."

The problem Wiersbe wrote about was present in the early church as well.

Jesus, Peter, Paul and James all taught on the importance of growing up in the faith.

Jesus modeled this principle by feasting on the Word of God. From an early age, Jesus began to consume the Scriptures. At age 12, Luke 2 tells us that He sat listening to the teachers and asking questions about the Scriptures which led to spiritual growth (grew in favor with God and men). In keeping with this theme, He would note later (John 4) that He found nourishment in doing His Father's will.

Peter both began (1 Peter 2:2) and ended (2 Peter 3:18) his letters with the admonition to grow.

Paul prayed that the Colossians (1) would be, "filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God." He added in his first letter to the Corinthians (14), "Brothers, do not be children in your thinking. Be infants in evil, but in your thinking be mature." In Ephesians (4), he noted that the calling of every pastor was to, "equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ," so that we would no longer be as, "children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes."

James (1) encouraged the believers to, "count it all joy whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything."

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