

# SPIRITUAL MATURITY

## 1CORINTHIANS 3

Text: 1 Cor. 3:1

(1 Cor 3:1 KJV) And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

Introduction:

The church at Corinth was filled with all sorts of problems. However, it wasn't just because the church was located in Corinth; it was because of the maturity level of the believers who made up the local church. It is God's purpose for all of us who have put our faith in Christ, that we become more and more like His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Then, His purpose is that we reproduce His life in the lives of those around us.

(Gal 4:19 KJV) My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

(Col 1:28 KJV) Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

The word 'perfect' signifies having reached its end; complete and mature. The phrase 'present every man

perfect in Christ Jesus' means building the principles of God's Word into a person's life so that he is equipped to respond to any situation with a Christ-like attitude. That is the purpose of God for the local church! Our level of spiritual maturity is directly related to how much we become like Christ.

(Eph 4:11-13 KJV) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; {12} For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: {13} Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

God uses a number of ways to accomplish this task. He allows problems, irritations, and responsibilities to come into our lives so that we are motivated to search out His Word and develop to the full potential that He has for us. He knows that if left to ourselves many of us would only develop a small portion of the abilities, and capacities which He has given us. Spiritual maturity is not something that we can gain overnight! There are many things that hinder us from growing and becoming like Christ.

# 1. THE SOCIETY IN WHICH WE LIVE.

A. We live in an “instant” society.

1. We want what we want, and we want it NOW!

2. We have fast food, money machines, express lanes, etc.

3. We also have the get rich quick syndrome, without having to work.

B. As Christians, we fight the same battles.

1. Our attitudes are formed by the society in which we live rather than by the principles of the Word of God.

2. We look around and see all that this world has to offer and it looks pretty good to us!

3. We forget that there is a price to pay.

4. We cannot violate the principles of God’s Word and then expect Him to bless our lives!

C. We want instant spiritual results.

1. Many time people will come to me with problems and I think they have it in their head that I can sprinkle some magic powder around and all their problems will disappear.
2. People spend years developing poor habits, not living according to the Word of God, and expect a quick and easy remedy.
3. As a result it is difficult for many Christians to devote themselves to the long term work of God in their lives.

## **2. OUR BACKGROUNDS CAN HINDER OUR SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

### **A. Ungodly influences.**

1. Our backgrounds do not make us Christians, but they do have an effect on our maturity.
2. Many people becoming Christians today have never been exposed to the kind of influence in life which help to build character.

3. Even after Salvation they continue to operate under the philosophy of this world.

4. This is why Paul urged the Christians in Rome to be transformed.

(Rom 12:2 KJV) And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

#### B. Improper Christian influences.

1. How ironic and how sad, that the atmosphere that was designed by God to promote Spiritual growth could itself become a hindrance.

2. The influence of churches and individual Christians can hinder a person's spiritual growth.

3. There are a number of reasons why this could happen:

a. When there is more emphasis on entertaining than on edifying.

b. Making the church and its services more appealing and comfortable to the lost.

c. A decrease in the preaching of the Word and an increase in 'feel-good services'.

d. A lack of sound Biblical instruction.

- Some churches are involved in every social cause imaginable.
- Others promote false doctrine and promote the teachings of men rather than of God.
- Others are stuck in a rut...salvation three times a week.

C. God established the church for the purpose of bringing His children to spiritual maturity.

1. God is glorified when we bear fruit, but no one bears fruit until they begin to mature.

(John 15:8 KJV) Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

2. It is our responsibility to mature, and help bring those around us into spiritual maturity.

Close:

Are we growing in Christ? If not is it because of some of these hindrances? There are no excuses, because everyone of these things can be overcome by the power of Christ! However, we need to be honest with ourselves... if we are not growing and becoming more like Christ each day of our lives we are not fulfilling God's purpose for us.

Are we doing all that we can to bring those around us to maturity? Our husband, our wife, our children, our family members, our friends, our neighbors and co-workers. It is truly a great task, and it is not one that will be completed soon...it is a life-long challenge for all of us.