

The Path of Spiritual Maturity: vv. For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, 10 and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.

Hopefully, we all know what faith is. According to the Bible it is what? But, did you know that faith is something that is ever changing? If you are maturing in the Lord as you should be, then the faith you have this evening is far greater than the faith you had the moment you believed. Of course, the ability to exercise faith, as well as the faith to exercise, are already in you. You may not see it, you may not believe it, but it is there nonetheless. You see, faith is like a muscle, the more you exercise it, the larger and stronger it becomes. That is why the Lord leads us through difficult places in our lives. He is helping us to grow in our faith in HIM. In this passage, we are still following the life of Abraham. If you will remember, he is a man who left his home, his family and the country of his birth to follow God. By faith he has journeyed and by faith he has lived. He followed God based on a simple promise. That promise was that he would receive a land and that he would produce heirs. In my opinion, he has exercised great faith. Here, we see him Moving Toward Maturity. As we consider what the Lord is doing in the life of Abram in this passage, let us consider that the Lord wants to grow us too. He wants to move us toward maturity, day by day. Allow me to share a few thoughts that present themselves in this passage. His reminder is three-fold. We have a tendency to forget just who is in control of the events of life. He was here before anything and He will be here after everything. And, He controls all things that happen in between. He is a powerful God, Job He is a present God, Heb. He is a perceptive God, Heb. He is in control of all of life. If we could ever get our souls around that truth, it would revolutionize our lives! Abram did nothing to get where he was, it was all God. You name the area of your life and you can count on the fact that it is all God and not you! I just want to remind you that God has a wonderful plan for your life, Rom. You and I need to be careful lest we hinder that plan and bring pain and hardship upon ourselves. His question is not doubt but curiosity. He is merely asking the Lord for more information. It is doubt that bothers Him, James 1: The contrast is clearly seen in the two responses given by Zacharias, Luke 1: When you hear from the Lord, do you respond by asking for more information, or do you immediately begin to question the truth of what you have heard? This demand served as a challenge to the faith of this man. This whole event was how men in ancient times made a covenant with one another. They would cut animals in half and arrange the pieces several feet apart and walk between the pieces together. Friends, we need to remember that when the Lord makes a requirement of your life or mine, it will often require us to commit to some hard work on our part. The great things of God do not come easy, they do not come cheap, nor do they come to the lazy. What is that price? Prayer, holiness, separation, obedience, etc. Wood, hay, stubble, gold, silver, precious stones, 1 Cor. Abram had to shoo them away to protect the sacrifice from being devoured. When the Lord begins to move in your faith life, you can count on the fact that every vulture in the world will come against you to devour what the Lord is trying to do in your life. If we allow them, many vultures will try to take away our time, our concentration, or commitment to the Lord and His work. We need to be on guard to protect what the Lord wants to do in our lives and allow nothing to hinder it or prevent us from seeing it come to pass. He is in a holding pattern. It was a time that required patience on the part of Abraham. God never runs on our schedule! We try to get ready for Him and line up with what He is doing in our lives. We wait and we wait for Him to show up and move in us and through us. He will, but only when He is ready! Therefore, if the Lord is working in your life, be patient and wait on His timing. God knows the exact timing, we do not! Part of the darkness was due to the time of day, it was night time after all! The rest was due to the work of the Lord in his life. God brought Abram into a dark time so that God might increase and mature his faith. God still does this in the lives of His people. He sends us into the dark times of life so that we might learn to trust Him more. He allows our faith to be matured in the darkness. Therefore, do not fear your darkness, for if you are saved, then the Lord is working out His perfect will in your life and He is growing you into more perfect maturity. No one said it would be fun, but it sure is beneficial! God goes into great detail to let Abram know that which He was about to do. The details must have been as frightening. The birds have a prophetic significance in that they

picture the nations that would attempt to defeat Israel. The grace of God in delaying the blessing on His people to give the Amorites space to repent, v. He wants His children to learn to walk by faith and not by sight. We are reminded of this truth 4 times in the Bible, Hab. God only has to speak one time on any subject for us to know what He thinks about it. But, when He tells us the same thing four times in the Bible, it must mean that He wants us to get a handle on it! Here, the Lord comes down in His glory, the first time it has been seen on earth since man sinned in Eden, and He passes between the sacrifice. He is confirming His covenant with Abram. Usually both parties had to pass through together. However, this covenant is one sided. Irregardless of what Abram, or his descendants do, this covenant is as good as the Name of God. It will be fulfilled! This is a done deal and it cannot be changed! This covenant cemented the faith of Abram in place and gave him a sure promise to hang his hat on. Thank God for the promises of God that make faith possible! However, His greatest promises are cut in stone and they are one sided. Regardless of what we may do, His promises still stand and will stand, Heb. The promises and covenants of the Lord are given to encourage and confirm our faith in Him. As we accept Him at His word and order our lives after His will, we mature in His image! Listen, God is not afraid of your questions. He is not opposed to your asking them. All He is looking for is that person who will come before Him faith. He is looking for that person who will simply take Him at His Word and believe Him, regardless of how things look or how they may personally feel about the matter. He is looking for some people that He can grow up in Him for His Own glory. Are you that person this evening? Do you want all that the Lord has for you? If so, let Him move you toward maturity. It all begins with you taking that first step of faith, so that you can come before Him and ask Him to begin working in your life. Who will do that tonight?

Moving Toward Spiritual Maturity discusses in detail the challenges one must face, including the sustained, in-depth, and faithful attention to psychological wholeness, conversion to the true self, and interpersonal and social responsibility.

Growing up in Christ What does it take to grow up and become spiritually mature? Why do some Christians not grow as they should? People understand the concept of growth in the physical development of humans, and we know why it is important. Babies are immature physically and mentally, but we expect them to develop. My best buddy in high school did not grow and might have been nearly a midget. But in his senior year, doctors gave him shots to make him grow. Spiritual growth is a similar concept but is far more important. Growth is development or improvement toward a goal called "maturity" or, in the Bible, "perfection". When one is "born again" as a child of God, he is spiritually immature. As time passes, he should develop the qualities or abilities which the Bible says characterize the mature. A congregation matures as individual members mature. Many Scriptures describe the need to grow and mature spiritually: Many problems result when members fail to grow: The purpose of this lesson is to study the steps each Christian should take to grow spiritually. Just as a baby needs to do certain things to grow physically, so Christians need certain kinds of activities to grow spiritually. Everyone wants them to develop new abilities. Parents sometimes use this to encourage children. Some seem to like being spiritual babies. Others feed you, clothe you, change your diaper. But being a baby is not the goal of life. We are born babies so we can grow up and be productive and useful. Likewise, we are born again, so we can become mature Christians, actively serving the Lord. Otherwise, we have not accomplished our purpose for becoming children of God. Some members who once wanted to grow, may lose that desire. They may start off on fire for the Lord, but lose their zeal. They develop a spirit of indifference or negligence. Others develop a level of maturity and stagnate. They are satisfied, thinking no more growth is needed. The Scriptures teach that growth is always needed. He forgot past achievements and failures and pressed on to greater accomplishments. But that very night he denied Him three times. Christians never reach the point we are so mature that we cannot fall. They have no desire to work and serve to the full extent of their ability. When people develop a burning hunger and thirst to work for the Lord, then they will develop the other steps they need to grow. Do you have that burning desire to accomplish more for the Lord? Have you set specific goals of work you want to accomplish for God, improvements to make, new levels to reach? A child cannot grow physically without proper food. Good parents are concerned about proper nutrition. They want children to eat what is good, not bad for them. We are touched by pictures of children starving due to poverty. Most children WANT nourishment. Babies cry for food. Once as a child I got so hungry I cried, and my mother felt really bad. We want it every day, regularly, several times a day. Scriptures show the need for regular nourishment. Time and again members fall away or are spiritual midgets because they do not eat properly. Children and adults need physical food regularly, and get very upset without it. I never ceased to be amazed when the church provides a spiritual feast, and members choose to do other things. How often do we miss the regular meals provided for our bellies? Take this test to check your spiritual nourishment. How much time did you spend this week watching TV? How much time watching sports or entertainment, or reading the paper, magazines, etc.? How much time did you spend on some hobby or outside interest, that may not be immoral but is not necessary? How many hours did you spend studying your Bible? How many services of the church did you attend? How many did you miss that you could have attended? Which do you nourish the best: Developing skills requires continual repetition: Athletes run, lift weights, and practice hour after hour in order to grow strong and develop endurance. A man once had an apartment next to a professional cello player. He thought it must be exciting to play in an orchestra. Then he listened as the man practiced the scales, exercises, and songs endlessly. Children practice skills over and over to learn them. Children learning to walk try again and again. They are proud to learn a new word, then they use it till they drive you crazy! They want to play the same thing over and over: Parents encourage children to repeat what they must learn: Growth requires exercise as well as nourishment. Get in and dig. To learn to PRAY, do it over and over. Kids may not be good at activities at first, but parents encourage them to do it over and over.

Likewise, older members must encourage the newer ones to use their talents. They may not be skilled at first, but they learn by doing. We need to encourage teachers, preachers, and song leaders. They need the practice! It is progress and development as time passes. Several important lessons follow: Children do not become full-grown instantaneously. At birth they are so small you can hold them in a little basket. Soon they are outgrowing new clothes every month. But it takes time. Sometimes children become impatient. It will come soon enough. Likewise spiritually, do not expect maturity overnight. Some new-born Christians want to know everything and do everything right away. Yet they want to be just like the mature members - and want other members to treat them with the same respect that they do mature members - before they have taken time to grow. Sometimes older members are impatient with new members. Remember that people who may be mature today did not get that way overnight. It took years of study and practice. And new converts will not become mature overnight. It will take time. New members should not get discouraged and give up. Older members should not be impatient or overly demanding. Remember how our children took time to grow, and how we had to show patience with their immature ways as they grew. But growth will come as long as people are trying and we give them time. Children make many mistakes and must often be told they are wrong. How often does a child fall while learning to walk? They fall again and again, gathering bumps and bruises. Parents are continually correcting, instructing, and punishing, till we almost feel sorry for the kids.

Chapter 3 : Spiritual Maturity: Steps to Growing as a Disciple of Christ

Moving Toward Spiritual Maturity: Psychological, Contemplative, and Moral Challenges in Christian Living explores effective ways in which Christian discipleship can grow in spiritual maturity.

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let Abram know that which He was about to do. The details must have been as frightening. The birds have a prophetic significance in that they picture the nations that would attempt to defeat Israel. The grace of God in delaying the blessing on His people to give the Amorites space to repent, v. He wants His children to learn to walk by faith and not by sight. We are reminded of this truth 4 times in the Bible, Hab. God only has to speak one time on any subject for us to know what He thinks about it. But, when He tells us the same thing four times in the Bible, it must mean that He wants us to get a handle on it! Here, the Lord comes down in His glory, the first time it has been seen on earth since man sinned in Eden, and He passes between the sacrifice. He is confirming His covenant with Abram. Usually both parties had to pass through together. However, this covenant is one sided. Irregardless of what Abram, or his descendants do, this covenant is as good as the Name of God. It will be fulfilled! The change from "I will", Gen. This is a done deal and it cannot be changed! This covenant cemented the faith of Abram in place and gave him a sure promise to hang his hat on. Thank God for the promises of God that make faith possible! Many of His promises are "If you will then I will" in nature, Rom. However, His greatest promises are cut in stone and they are one sided. Regardless of what we may do, His promises still stand and will stand, Heb. The promises and covenants of the Lord are given to encourage and confirm our faith in Him. As we accept Him at His word and order our lives after His will, we mature in His image! Maybe like Abram you are sitting looking at your life and wondering "How? Listen, God is not afraid of your questions. He is not opposed to your asking them. All He is looking for is that person who will come before Him faith. He is looking for that person who will simply take Him at His Word and believe Him, regardless of how things look or how they may personally feel about the matter. He is looking for some people that He can grow up in Him for His Own glory. Are you that person this evening? Do you want all that the Lord has for you? If so, let Him move you toward maturity. It all begins with you taking that first step of faith, so that you can come before Him and ask Him to begin working in your life.

Chapter 4 : Toward Spiritual Maturity - Part 2 Sermon by Scott Kircher, Hebrews - blog.quintoapp.com

Three 'windows' to spiritual maturity How can a faithful Christian avoid stagnating in their spiritual development? Moving Toward Spiritual Maturity: Psychological, Contemplative, and Moral Challenges in Christian Living explores effective ways in which.

The purpose of this session is to give the disciple understanding which will help growth toward maturity. The disciple will understand the key factors in becoming an adult Christian. The disciple will understand the difference between spiritual maturity and spirituality. The disciple will understand the relationship between spiritual maturity and spirituality. The disciple will be able to bring to his life the kind of fellowship with the Father that will produce much fruit that remains, John To him be the honor both now and on that eternal day. Mutual prayer, sharing and accountability. Discuss the session materials. Discuss journaling to monitor growth. Introduction Scripture describes three classifications of man in I Corinthians 2 and 3. There is the natural man who is positionally related to Adam. This man may be good, but what he produces in his life can at the most be human goodnesses. These human goodnesses are totally unacceptable to God, Isaiah The natural man has never experienced new birth. There is the spiritual man who is positionally related to Christ through justification and experientially controlled by the Holy Spirit. Spirituality is an absolute. Only those who have experienced new birth can be spiritual. One who is justified is either spiritual or carnal. This person produces nothing that is pleasing to God, and lives like the natural man lives. This, as spirituality, is an absolute. A believer is either carnal or spiritual. The man of the flesh controls his own life. As a believer in Christ, I make the choice concerning what kind of a person I am. Spirituality requires a commitment to obedience. Disobedience breaks the control of the Holy Spirit in my life. There are two ways of sinning that will break His control. Grieving the Spirit, Ephesians 4: This is breaking a specific or known commandment in the Scripture. Quenching the Spirit, 1 Thessalonians 5: This is failure to follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit which is given in ways other than the Scripture. But the Holy Spirit never leads me to do something contrary to the Word of God. What shall I do when I realize I have sinned? Confess on the run, 1 John 1: Confession means agreement with God that my behavior was sinful. After confession, I am to believe that I am forgiven, Col. This is not as easy as it may seem. At any given moment in time, I am either spiritual or carnal. Not a little bit of each. I am either totally spiritual or totally carnal. No one is any more spiritual than another even though our lives may differ in many ways. The practice of spirituality has great significance in relation to the Bema, the judgment seat of Christ, 2 Corinthians 5: The practice of spirituality, therefore, has great significance not only in quality life today but in differing glories of life to come in eternity. Spiritual Maturity Spirituality deals with my health, while maturity deals with my growth. Maturity is a matter of degrees whereas spirituality is always an absolute. What is involved in my maturation? Doctrine â€” significant accumulation of teachings of Scripture, 1 Peter 2: Stress â€” difficulties, Romans 8: Growth never takes place in a vacuum. See also James 1: Faith â€” being able to develop the proper attitude toward stress, Hebrews Grace â€” not a doctrine but rather an attitude or an action of grace in everyday life. Reproduction â€” When I grow to maturity physically I can have children. When I mature spiritually I can reproduce spiritually. Although any believer can reproduce, maximum reproduction comes with spiritual maturity. Becoming Spiritually Mature I. My involvement with the Scriptures must become comprehensive and systematic. Growth never takes place in a vacuum, James 1: My attitude toward pressure is crucial. We are not fatalists, but it is important that I see that this is just what I need at this present moment in my overall development. Pressure can be corrective, 1 Corinthians Pressure can be directive; Paul and his Macedonians call. Pressure can be productive, John Pressure can be purifying, Job Being able to find meaning is most important, Romans 8: Further meaning and instruction is found in Hebrews 12, which teaches that the Lord disciplines those He loves. I must take responsibility for personal failure and reducing defensive behavior. Typical responses are often called ego defenses. The most common of these are: Rationalization Projection Displacement IV. I must be willing to confess my sins and make restitution as fully and as quickly as possible. How to Know The Father I. Interact with Jehovah on a daily basis in ways that help you learn what He is like.

Know His names – especially the compound names of Jehovah. Learn to love and deepen your love for Him. Love can be reciprocal and absorbing, with gratefulness and adoration. Commit to knowing the Scriptures – going beyond daily devotions. Pray and fellowship with Him. Engage in active fellowship with other believers. Worksheet This is a session on the subject of spiritual maturity. There are some general understandings that are necessary as we begin to investigate the subject of spiritual growth. It is important that these be very clear, and the first part of this study will attempt to make them easily understandable. Physical and emotional maturity can be experienced by any person, whether one is a Christian or not. Spiritual maturity, however, adds a dimension to maturity for the Christian. Because of this, maturity is somewhat more complex for a Christian because of the added dimension of relationship with the Father. This truth brings an additional aspect to the maturing process, and makes Christian maturity more complex. There are several important facts involved in this statement. This means starting at one place and beginning to move toward another. But he is always more or less an infant. Secondly, maturity is always process-oriented. It also involves interaction with things or events in my environment. Interaction involves doing something in relation to what happens to me. Thirdly, it is correct to say that maturity is unique for every individual. God has made each one of us different from the other. We are each intelligent in our own way. We each have grown up in different environments. No one looks just like another. What is a Spiritually Mature Person Like? First we would say that what we know is important in spiritual maturity. It is crucial that we have a growing information pool – information about the world and the life that we are now experiencing.

One cannot move toward maturity without it. A spiritually mature believer is one who knows and understands how to handle and interpret the _____. A second and very important aspect of a spiritually mature person, and one that is foundational to the rest of growth is that which relates to the basic principles by which he governs his life.

A few weekends ago, Neil and Janelle invited my wife and I to their house for lunch. When they bought the house earlier this year, it was in poor repair. They spent the past few months undertaking extensive renovations: They have lovingly renovated the house, respecting its original integrity, and returning it to its former glory. He is writing to us, out of his years of learning and experience as a pastoral theologian, to help bring healing, renewal and restoration to our souls and our lives. He knows that as human beings, we all struggle with our weaknesses and our frailties. On page , Neil offers the following quotation from the Trappist monk, Thomas Merton: The greatest need of our time is to clean out the enormous mass of mental and emotional rubbish that clutters our minds and makes of all political and social life a mass of illness. Without this housecleaning, we cannot begin to see. The world is so much sharper. Education is about making the world so much sharper. If we can see the moments and stay with them we get more from them. We are then attending to our own lives. We are really present. We can become lost in the hurly-burly of modern life. We can submerge ourselves in a pool of chatter and small talk. We can hide from ourselves and 2 from God by allowing ourselves to become busier and busier. In a similar way, the ancient philosopher, Socrates, said that a life lived unreflectively is a life lived in only half-measure. Otherwise, our lives are only half-lived, just touching the surface, rather than attentively present and fully engaged. Nearly all those who think they have this capacity do not possess it. In the Bible we have a picture of compassion according to which a person is in such deep solidarity with the pain of another that she takes that pain into herself. She receives the other in her suffering and distress in her inmost space the heart or the womb. It is, then, as if she hosts the suffering person. It is healing because it seeks to help those in its care realize that we need not be condemned to hatred; love is possible. We need not be condemned to cycles of violence; forgiveness is possible. We need not be condemned to conflict and division; understanding is possible. Our repressions, conflicts, and defense mechanisms cause us to distort inner and outer reality. Neil talks of a battle between goodness and evil that plays itself out in our lives. It is chastening to realize, that as much as I can be a bearer of goodness in the world, I can also be an instigator of conflict and division. Of these two inclinations “ toward evil and toward goodness “ my own Catholic tradition continually affirms that our desire for Goodness is stronger and outweighs our propensity toward evil. In other words, our ability to bring healing into the world outweighs our ability to bring hatred and division. It is not immediately apparent that human beings are drawn by God toward goodness. We need to learn that we are actually good people. While it is deeply spiritual, it is not pietistic. It is these divisions that determine our fault before each other and before God. They injure life; they gather like demons; and they smell like death. Yet we can rise above this inhumanity. We can be brought back to life, to love and friendship, to the sweet fragrance of human fraternity. Paul writes to the Colossians: You have been brought back to life with Christ. You have stripped off your old behaviour with your old self, and you have put on a new self which will progress towards true knowledge the more it is renewed in the image of its creator. Bear with one another; forgive each other. Forgive each other and be thankful. We will never find our identity simply by focussing on our selves as the source and measure of all things, because who we are is innately vocational, called into relationship with each other, with creation, and with God. The sayings of the desert fathers are often misunderstood as the sayings of aesthetics who withdrew to the desert in some sort of heroic monastic existence. To the contrary, as many commentators have noted, their lives and their sayings are intimately “ excruciatingly “ concerned with their own inner struggles and their relations to their neighbour. Like the rabbis of old, these monks knew that the meaning of the scriptures was primarily concerned with the way one should live. The Sayings are typically framed in the context of a dialogue between a monk and an elder: These monks were amazingly sensitive to the all-too-common propensity for human beings to prop themselves up through self-justification, while at the same time exercising knowledge and

judgment of others. For he is sick. Let me conclude with a saying from Abba Neil: As we live and move through the daily round we are connected with a myriad of faces, gestures, words, sights, sounds, values, and ideologies. In attending to this heavily populated world we are confronted with the primordial wrestling of light and shadow. Here we are blessed with goodness, love, and justice; there we are assaulted by evil, aggression, and egoism. Prayerfully, from the quiet inner centre, we ask:

Chapter 6 : What is spiritual maturity? How can I become more spiritually mature?

Spiritual growth is a similar concept but is far more important. Growth is development or improvement toward a goal called "maturity" (or, in the Bible, "perfection"). When one is "born again" as a child of God, he is spiritually immature.

Chapter 7 : Sermons and Outlines

Moving Towards Spiritual Maturity (Introduction) Genesis Rev Corey J. Neal Greater Peace Baptist Church 8th Street Columbus, GA.

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Answer: 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. After salvation, every Christian begins the process of spiritual growth, with the intent to become spiritually mature.

Chapter 9 : moving toward spiritual maturity | Download eBook pdf, epub, tuebl, mobi

Moving toward Maturity First, we have to recognize that maturity is the goal of discipleship. Keeping people spiritually immature is never a stated goal, but we seem to be achieving it.