

Faith hungers for maturity

While maturity may not be a welcomed subject in today's world, it is however of great interest to God. Just as the natural order of all living things is that following birth, growth continues until full development is attained. So it is with God's children.



Upon spiritual rebirth, the indwelling Holy Spirit begins His work of growth. In fact, *"because of him (God) you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption"* (1 Corinthians 1:30). From before salvation, it was God's intention for His Spirit to work Christ's salvation in you so that you would grow in *righteousness and sanctification*. Spiritual childhood should not last long, because *"this is the will of God, your sanctification..."* (1 Thessalonians 4:3).

The high cost of would-be faith

Sadly, many appear to begin the life of faith with great promise, yet end their test drive of Jesus quickly. In Jesus parable of the sower and the seed, He explains this sad phenomenon. *"And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature"* (Luke 8:14). The problem was this; the person initiating faith in Christ never chose to prioritise the Lord Jesus over this world's *cares, riches and pleasures*.

Consequently, surrender to worldly stresses and fleshly

desires not only prevents maturing in faith, it takes the would-be believer away from Christ altogether. Had they surrendered to Christ with a greater degree of commitment than to worldliness, their lives would be fruitful and unwavering for Christ as Lord. Therefore, eternal life slips through their fingers and the opportunity for maturing in sanctification for the Lord is lost.

Paul explained to the Colossian believers that *“Epaphras, who is one of you... is always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God”* (Colossians 4:12). Epaphras knew the key areas for personal growth which required the intervention of the King of Kings. The fact is, without the Lord’s strength, we saved sinners would never grow to any degree of maturity in Christ at all.

Epaphras also realised that spiritual adulthood equips the believer to stand firm in Christian faith. Likewise, it’s the mature that experience full assurance of realising the will of God. These are intrinsic desires within genuine believers of Christ; to stand firm, to mature, and to experience assurance. This is the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

Intended from the start

As the foundation builders of the New Testament Church, the apostles taught with the goal of spiritual development for their listeners. They never intended Christians to remain infant-like in their faith.

“Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away” (1 Corinthians 2:6). The apostles were deliberate in training God’s people for growing maturity that would produce wise, Christ-like, God honouring lives.

This breath-taking design for Christians leaves little room for mixed loyalties, little time for wasted opportunities to

serve the Saviour. Your regenerated life in Jesus Christ is not some random hit and miss, give it a go thing. No, it's God's intension for you and I to *"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"* (Ephesians 4:13). Authentic Christ-like character, grown through the Word of God in the energy of His Spirit is the maturity the Lord desires.

I encourage you to focus your faith so that it hungers for maturity in Christ.

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