



LEADING TOWARDS SPIRITUAL MATURITY

In life it is important to be congruent to the core mission of the church. Jesus has asked us to make disciples of all nations.

In order to obey this we need to become congruent to this mission. Consistency is not the key though it is important.

Jesus didn't say make prophets and apostles etc. these are callings and gifting he chooses to give.

Today the church is losing ground in 3 areas.

Moral ground

Spiritual ground

Biblical ground

Many a leading personalities have fallen. Interesting statics sad though.

Spiritual consumerism – What is in it for me?

Biblical superstitious behaviour creeping into the church. Biblical value is reduced.

Discipleship deficit in the church. Need to focus on intentionally making disciples.

Chronic extended infancy in the church. Not growing deeper. Not stretching the faith.

The attitude of “*above average church*” “we are doing ok”. The mediocrity has crept into the church. We come and do the same things over and over again without being sensitive to what is happening and needed.

Obstacles to cultivating spiritual maturity (5)

1. Preoccupied with the external to the neglect of the internal.
Bodies, bucks and buildings.
This is due to the problem of ignoring the “emotional gauge”.
Spiritual gauge – taking time to pray, meditate read the Word
Physical gauge – sleep, eat healthy, exercise, rest
In other words are you a person with resilience?
Being a Pastor – need to be resilient – people, platforms, programs, philosophy
Living by the external is relatively easy.
2. Fail to aim for transformation.
Holy Spirit and work of God brings the transformation. We fail to recognise the deadness of the spirit? Our comparison has to be with the word not with another person.

3. Modelling is not seen at leadership level.

The changes in within not happening as personally the vision has not changed. Who are your joining? Do you personally hold those values?

Key skills a leader should have to lead to maturity

1. Envisioning – Explain the changes and the components clearly so they can catch the vision and mission.
 2. Decision making – Based on principles and criteria. Not on culture etc.
 3. Changed management – Implement it.
 4. Conflict resolution – expect conflict with change. Be prepared to handle this.
 5. Personal leadership – The change starts with you the leader.
4. We live ungenerated lives, unsolved baggage, uncrossed bridges and unfounded fears. This is a problem of driving with the “hand breaks on”.
The things that cripple us – unhealed words of the past. Unnecessary worries of the future. If we do not address this we will be running from place to place.
- Submit to God’s word -
Surrender to God’s will -
Sacrifice for God’s work - stewardship
5. We fail to see spiritual foundation diachronically through the fears of life.
Synchronic - short term view of life, in time
Diachronically - long term view of life, through time.
This is the problem of short- term discipleship.

Five truths about spiritual maturity

1. Truth acknowledged and applied leads to spiritual maturity.
People – should change, can change, don’t change, won’t change and short change the changes.
But: Pursue the truth. Practice the truth. Ponder over your life and truth. Purified by the truth (wrestle with it).Pass on the truth.
In bible study groups – wrestle with the truth and grasp it. Who cares about your opinion on the passage?
2. Spiritual maturity is not automatic.
Takes time and hard work. Sanctifying work of the word and spirit. God sometimes uses suffering in the process.
How do you process – pivotal events? (? theoretically) To learn how to process. Be in a community to openly share.
3. This is not measured by the spiritual office or spiritual giftedness. These are sometimes given by the calling of God. Some have gifts given to them by the grace of God. Some cultures and churches put leaders on pedestal.
We need to live to the approval of God.

4. Spiritual maturity precedes spiritual multiplication.
The quality of the fruit is determined by the depth of the roots.
5. The defining water-shed of spiritual maturity is Christlikeness.
E.g.: D L Moody was not an eloquent speaker. He was unanimously recommended for an Evangelical rally in Chicago. A young pastor asked – Has Moody got a monopoly on the Holy spirit. The answer by an elderly pastor was “The Holy spirit has the monopoly on Moody”.

The Holy Spirit is promised in full measure. So when you pray and live the question is – how much of you the Holy Spirit has? How much have you yielded? How intimate are you?

Final –

1 Timothy 1:5: the aim of our change the goal – this comes from true teaching.

Love Good conscience Sincere Faith

Vs 1:6 false teaching will introduce – carnality, falsehood and immaturity.

What does Christ-like spiritual maturity look-like?

- Spiritual maturity characterised by love.
Love out of a pure heart.
Loving the whole world is not a chore but loving your neighbour is a chore.
- Spiritual maturity is characterised by a “good conscience”.
Paul in the NT uses the phrase “good conscience” 21 times.
Note it is not clear conscience (some translations use that). It is to have a totally clear conscience. A good conscience is a functioning conscience.
- Spiritual maturity is characterised by sincere faith.
Faith must be sincere (Greek ANUPOKRITOS) without any corruption.
Do not be an “echo”. Be what God has called you to be.

We cannot do anything by ourselves – but only by intimacy with God.

Are we just glancing at Jesus or Gazing at Jesus Christ?

Do you turn to Him or return to Him?