

Spiritual Maturity (#2)

Ponder: Being a well-equipped, Christ-like servant

Scripture: “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:11-12, NKJV).

I was a young preacher fresh out of school. A dear lady in the congregation I was serving commented: “I’m so glad we have a young preacher to do our visiting for us!” I didn’t have the nerve to correct her then, but I would now! (Gently, of course.)

Your preacher isn’t there to do your work for you. Neither are your elders. Not even the inspired apostles and prophets of the New Testament era did everything themselves. God designed the church, not so that these men would do all the work, but so that they would equip the saints for the work of ministry (service). It’s your job to serve! The Lord wants each one of us to “come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect (mature) man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:13).

Immature people are content to let others do their work for them. In fact, they expect it. Let’s be honest – they demand it! We expect that from our babies; but as they grow up, we train them to clean their rooms, help with the chores, etc. When it comes to church, immature members say, “I don’t want to do that job. Let Bill do it – that’s what we’re paying him for!”

Perhaps you’ve seen the cartoon where a preacher is visiting a church member in the hospital. “Nice of you to come,” the member says. “Oh,” replies the preacher, “I’m not here just as me; I’m representing the church.” After the preacher leaves, the member says to himself, “Wow, I’ve just been visited by an entire congregation!”

Jesus said He didn’t “come to be served, but to serve” (Matt. 20:28). And serve He did! But He also trained His disciples and sent them out to serve. Your preacher has plenty of work to do. So do your elders. But a key part of their job is to equip you to serve. Please give them your complete cooperation. It’s the mature thing to do.

Song: “Make Me A Servant”

Prayer: Glorious Father, we thank and praise You for the gift of Your beloved Son who served You faithfully and served us in ways nobody else could. Help us, we pray, to grow up and to serve; and bless those who equip us to do so. In Jesus’ name, Amen.