

## Spiritual Maturity

Ponder: Being a spiritual grownup

Scripture: “For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe” (Hebrews 6:13, NKJV).

Everyone gets older. Not everyone matures. When a baby doesn't grow and develop, we consult medical professionals to determine the issue and how to resolve it. But what about our own spiritual growth, development, and maturity? Scripture provides several guidelines for assessing spiritual maturity.

One of those criteria deals with our ability to learn and understand God's word. No one expects a newborn baby to chow down on a t-bone steak. Nor do we expect one whose hair is still wet from baptism to comprehend the complicated teachings in Romans or Revelation.

But if a child isn't eating at least some solid food by age two, we become concerned. And a milk-only diet at age ten spells big trouble! Just so, a Christian who obeyed the gospel several years ago certainly ought to know and understand more of God's word than they did back then.

God hasn't revealed a specific time table for determining how much a Christian should know and understand a year, two years, or five years after obeying the gospel. Just as some children learn to walk before reaching their first birthday, but others take longer, so some Christians grow and develop faster than others. We certainly can, however, monitor and check ourselves. Do I still need someone to bottle-feed me the word of God, or spoon it into my mouth? Or have I developed to the point that I can teach others? Do I have a better grasp of the Scriptures than I had last year? Five years ago? Ten?

“Solid food belongs to those who are of full age (those who are mature, j.a.s.), that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil” (Hebrews 5:14). Children grow by exercising their bodies and their minds. They may weave and totter when they first learn to walk, but before long they are running so quickly we can scarcely keep up!

We must also exercise our senses in order to become spiritually mature. Senses are our abilities to understand, especially concerning spiritual things. The more we exercise those senses, the stronger they will become, just as muscles become stronger when we exercise them.

Are you maturing in Christ? (More to follow!)

Song: “O To Be Like Thee”

Prayer: Righteous Father, we thank You for accepting us as Your children in Christ. May we not be content to stand still, but rather grow and mature into the likeness of Jesus, We pray in His name, Amen.