

A Sure Sign You Are Spiritually Maturing

Recently I felt like God gave me a simple definition of what spiritual maturity is. I'm sure it involves more than what's in this sentence, but I want you to think about it: Spiritual maturity is asking God what you can do for *Him*, not only asking God what He can do for *you*.

I wonder how many of us, every day, when we say our prayers, ask God, "What can I do for You today? Who can I bless? Who can I help? I want to serve You."

I started doing this on a daily basis about three or four years ago, and it's amazing what happens when you ask God to show you someone to bless—He does. In the process, I've learned that if you form a habit of simply listening to people, they'll tell you what they need, where they're hurting or what they might like to have.

I think sometimes we feel like someone has to be desperate for us to help them. But everyone has times when they simply need to feel blessed. They may even have more money than you, but they still need the love and encouragement that comes with someone else doing something nice for them.

Luke 6:38 (NIV) says, "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

Giving to others is one of the greatest things that you can do. If you want joy in your life, then become a giver! Our natural tendency is to think about ourselves—all of our own needs and wants. But the thing that really makes us happy is to give of ourselves and focus on helping other people. When we do, it gives us a joy that we can never achieve on our own.

I encourage you to make giving a lifestyle. You can certainly give money, but you can also give others your time, talents, and friendship.

I used to be miserable, focused solely on what I wanted and how people could do things for me. But as I began to shift my focus onto loving others, I became happier than I'd ever been. I challenge you to do the same. Each day, begin to think of ways you can bless someone else. Ask God what you can do for Him and see how it changes your life.

That's what spiritual maturity really is—it's getting yourself off your mind. This kind of maturity is what the apostle Paul meant when he said, "...It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God" (Gal. 2:20 NKJV). Or when he said, "In Him we live and move and have our being..." (Acts 17:28 AMPC).

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In 1 Corinthians 15:31 (NKJV), Paul also said, "...I die daily." He didn't mean that he died physically every day. He meant that he died to "self" and being selfish every day.

I want to tell you a funny story. We have a 4-year-old grandson named Brody and he's quite a little character, and he can sometimes lose his temper. About a month ago, he was having kind of a cranky, rough, I'm-going-to-have-a-fit-every-time-I-don't-get-my-way day, and he was out with his mother. She was doing some shopping and he wasn't acting very nice.

She said, "Brody, we're going to pray about the way you're behaving." So, she wrapped her arms around him and prayed, "Lord, we just ask you to help Brody be a good boy today and help him feel better and not feel so cranky. Help him smile and listen to what I tell him." She finished with her prayer

and said “Amen.” But Brody said, “Not Amen!” He didn’t agree with that prayer!

When God gives us some instruction that’s good for us, I think this can sometimes be our attitude as well: “Not Amen!” Because Amen means, “Yes, let it be so,” and we’re not sure if we want to do what He is asking.

The truth is, we can sometimes behave like spiritual babies—we want our own way! But the good news is God never gives up on helping us grow. After we begin a relationship with Him, we begin a wonderful process of becoming more like Jesus, and it’s a process that goes on all of our lives.

Whenever we spend time in God’s Word and begin to do what it says, we grow. Every time we talk to God in prayer, it makes a difference, and we make progress. And in the process, He never stops showing us ways that we can improve and have an even greater life.

I’m so grateful that God doesn’t leave me alone and let me stay the way I am. Instead, He keeps nudging me and showing me ways that I can improve. And He does this for every single one of us. He slowly but surely transforms us and makes us more like Him.

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