

# Four Marks of Mature Christians

1 Cor. 14:20

Introduction:

- A. Babes in Christ are expected to mature (1 Pet. 2:2).
  1. Corinthians remained babes. (1 Cor. 3:1-3).
  2. Hebrews became babes. (Heb. 5:12-14).
- B. Mature in Christ have certain marks that distinguishes them from babes.

Discussion:

## II. Understanding (1 Cor. 14:20).

- A. Understand more than just the first principles. (Heb. 5:12-6:1).
  1. Must understand these to become Christians.
  2. Have not used them enough to retain them. (v. 14).
- B. Understand enough to know they do not know it all. (Phil. 3:12-16).

## III. Discernment (Heb. 5:14).

- A. "Have their senses exercised".
  1. Can sense a little leaven before leavens whole lump. (cf. 1 Cor. 5:8; Jas. 1:14-16).
  2. Can sense a threat while it is still just a threat. (cf. Gal. 2:4-5).
- B. "Discern both good and evil".
  1. Can discern between appearance and reality. (Gal. 2:5; Mt. 7:15; 2 Pet. 2:18).
  2. Can discern between differences among brethren.
    - a. Some cannot be tolerated. (1 Tim. 6:3-5; Gal. 2:5,14ff).
    - b. Some must be tolerated. (Romans 14).
    - c. Some can be worked around without an immediate solution. (Acts 15:36-41).
  3. Can discern between erring brethren. (1 Thess. 5:14; Jude 22,23; cf. Gal. 6:1; Tit. 1:13).

## IV. Spirituality (1 Cor. 3:1-4)

- A. Mature enough to know the meaning of real spirituality.
  1. Not measured by pious look, soft voice, or "spiritual" talk.
  2. But by following the Spirit's words. (1 Cor. 2:12,13;14:37 Col 3:16; Eph. 5:18,19).
- B. Mature enough to produce fruit of Spirit rather than works of flesh. (1 Cor. 3:3; Gal. 5:19ff).
- C. Mature enough to use spiritual rather than carnal weapons. (2 Cor. 10:1-5).
- D. Mature enough to value spiritual interests over fleshly. (2 Cor. 4:17ff).

## V. Stability (Eph. 4:14-15).

- A. Change only for good scriptural reason - not for emotional whim or peer acceptance.
- B. Are neither closed-minded or gullible. (cf. Acts 17:11).
- C. Are stable in all their ways. (Jas. 1:8)
- D. Are rational or reasonable (2 Thess. 3:2).

Conclusion:

- A. Where are you spiritually?
  1. A babe and content to stay there?
  2. One who has gone into "second childhood"?
  3. One who is mature and still growing?
- B. Are you becoming weaker or stronger in these four marks of maturity?