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# CROWN OF GLORY

## SPIRITUAL MATURITY

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Today we are looking at the technique for developing spiritual maturity. When we participate in spiritual maturity we receive the crown of glory. 1 Peter 5:4 is the scripture that introduces the crown of glory.

**Read and write 1 Peter 5:4 here.**

The word 'glory' in 1 Peter 5:4 is translated from the Greek word 'doxes' which means honor resulting from a good opinion. That opinion is based on the character of the person. The way we develop character is through knowledge of bible doctrine and Spiritual Maturity.

In the gospel of John, he tells us that salvation is a new birth experience. When we are born again, we start as spiritual babes in Christ. From that point on we are called to grow spiritually. There are at least three degrees of spiritual maturity according to 1 John 2:13. But how do we mature? Let's look at it.

**Start by reading Ephesians 4:11-13.** It explains that God has given us pastor-teachers to help us become 'perfected.' The Greek word for 'perfected' is used to describe the equipping of a soldier. The pastor-teacher is given to equip us "to a mature man" according to the New American Standard version. This is talking about spiritual maturity. Our spiritual maturity is to

be accomplished in the church under the training of a pastor-teacher by learning Bible doctrine.

Also, in the book of Ephesians is the illustration for the structure of spiritual maturity. It is identified through the erection of a building. It refers to the act of building the structure, the builders and the contract holder. As the building is erected we are becoming spiritually mature. We are the laborers, the builders of the building, and accomplish this with the help of the Holy Spirit.

God is the contract holder. He has the blueprint for each person's life. He provides all the supplies at His expense. He has designed our blueprint as well as designing the framework by which we carry out the fulfillment of our blueprint. When we do this we are carrying out His will for our life. Let's take a look at the building design of spiritual maturity.

### Spiritual Maturity Structure Design

1) The Foundation: Jesus Christ and His teachings. Read 1 Corinthians 2:16 and 3:11. A solid structure relies on a solid foundation. This is true for the building of our spiritual maturity as well. What better foundation could we have than Jesus Christ and His teachings?!

2) The First Floor: Orientation to Grace. The Books of Romans and Galatians are keys to understanding God's grace. In order to become spiritually mature we must have a proper orientation to God's grace. God has provided His righteousness at Christ's expense for our salvation, His Resources at Christ's expense for Christian living and His Realm at Christ's expense for eternity.

Not only must we accept God's grace for ourselves, but we must treat others in grace as well. When we learn to do this, we will be ready to support the second floor.

3) The Second Floor: Relaxed Mental Attitude. The Books of Galatians and Hebrews are keys to understanding a relaxed mental attitude. Having a relaxed mental attitude is a result

of understanding that God provides all the assets and abilities to do what He asks us to do. We relax our expectations for God, for ourselves and for others when we realize that God treats us in grace and wants the best for us at all times. He has no expectations or demands on us and has assumed all the cost Himself through His Son. We should act in the same manner.

4) The Third Floor: Mastery of the Details of Life. The book of Job helps us understand how to master the details of life. Part of our spiritual maturity is learning to be content in all circumstances. Read Philippians 4:11. Paul was content in whatever he endured, but the verse also tells us that he learned to be this way. As I'm sure we already know, contentment isn't a natural state. We must learn to rely on God and His promises to understand that He always wants the best for us. The result is our circumstances working out for our good. Therefore, we can be content. **Read Romans 8:28.**

5) The Fourth Floor: The Capacity to Love: The book of 1 John and also 1 Corinthians 13 are keys to understanding our capacity to love. The type of love we are talking about here is 'agape' or unconditional, self-sacrificial love. Often times when we struggle to love others in a Christ like manner it is because of self-centeredness. We must have an attitude of self-sacrifice in order to unconditionally love others. We need to drop our expectations and demands of others. Having a divine perspective (operation in fellowship) allows us to love self-sacrificially.

6) The Fifth Floor: Inner Happiness. Read the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5. Our goal as Christians is to remain happy and joyful at all times. When we look at life with a divine perspective, we see things differently. Let's take a quick look at the Sermon on the Mount so we can understand what it means to have inner happiness.

~ Inner happiness belongs to those dependent in the sphere of the spirit. Vs. 3

~ Inner happiness belongs to those who mourn. Vs 4

~ Inner happiness belongs to those who understand that they operate in the power of God

and not in their own strength. Vs 5

~ Inner happiness belongs to those who hunger and thirst to know the will of God. Vs 6

~ Inner happiness belongs to those who treat other in grace. Vs 7

~ Inner happiness belongs to those who perpetually confess their sin. Vs 8

~ Inner happiness belongs to those who reconcile men to God. Vs 9

~ Inner happiness belongs to those who are persecuted for righteousness sake. Vs 10-12

7) The Roof: the 7,000 Plus Promises of God. The Bible contains over 7,000 promises of God. Often times we rely on one or two of God's promises, but the more we know and rely on, the more content we can be.

Spiritual Maturity is a process that will never be complete! Don't worry about finishing one floor before moving on to another. Paul tells us that we haven't reached perfection and we won't on this earth. We must continue to strive for maturity by learning more of the Word of God and with the help of the Holy Spirit.

**Write the Foundation and the Seven Floors here. Explain their function in the Spiritual Maturity Process.**

**Foundation:**

**1:**

**2:**

**3:**

**4:**

**5:**

**6:**

**7:**