

Spiritual Habits and Maturity

"WE > Me" Series- Part 02

Share/Connect time: When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up? Knowing what you know now, how successful would you be at that career?

We all need to grow up: Life looks differently as we grow older. Experiences, circumstances, and maturity can often change our opinions, values, and goals. For example, can you identify a belief or opinion that you once held, but no longer do so? What was behind the change?

Maturity or growing up is an expected outcome when it comes to our physical life and should also be anticipated in our spiritual life, and even in the life of our church family. This current time of uncertainty and fear during the global Coronavirus outbreak can be an opportunity for spiritual growth for individuals and for churches. In the book of Acts, we find the early, newly established church "sticking together". Within months, this young church would face challenges that would threaten this commitment. The New Testament serves as a historical record of how the early church became a mature church as they faced those challenges.

Book: Acts 2:42-47

Act 2:42 All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer.

Act 2:43 A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders.

Act 2:44 And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had.

Act 2:45 They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need.

Act 2:46 They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity—

Act 2:47 all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

Let's get into the Word:

Good health promotes good growth (maturity)! This can be said about our spiritual life and the life of our church. The early church immediately began to develop healthy practices that pushed them toward growth. Let's review those habits and create a practical modern action plan to model them in our own lives.

1. Devoted to "Apostles' Teaching" – Biblical Discipleship

-In what ways can we apply ourselves to Biblical Teaching?

-What is your own personal plan for spending time in God's word?

-What new action step would you like to take to learn more about God's teaching?

-How can Biblical teaching assist us as a church family to "stick together"?

2. Devoted to “fellowship”. –Biblical Partnership.

The Greek word for fellowship refers to a partnership, or to work with a fellow participant, or to share in a process.

-How do you “fellowship” with other Christians?

-In what ways do you need to partner with others to be a success?

-Can you identify a ministry or need to which God is prompting you to respond? What is it?

3. Devoted to “breaking of bread” – Sharing our resources.

The term “breaking of bread” in the New Testament can and does refer to two different actions: The observance of communion, or the act of sharing a loaf of bread as a meal. There is good evidence that Acts 2:42 refers to the practice of sharing meals with one another.

-What has been your best experience of sharing what you have with others?

-In what ways can our church, as a family, share our resources?

-In this time of social distancing, when creativity is required, how can you share your resources with others in need?

4. Devoted to Prayers – Time of devotion, worship, and communication with God

Many scholars believe that this early church comprised of Jewish converts, still observed the stipulated times of Jewish prayers at the temple. In our time when public worship gatherings are on hold, what extra steps can we take to be intentional in our worship and prayer life?

Homework:

Read Matthew 6:1-18.

Good spiritual habits are very helpful, but there is one important ingredient that must be added. Jesus tells us we can exercise spiritual habits such as praying, fasting, and giving, and be completely WRONG! Our habits must include the right attitude and be done for the right reasons! Simply checking off our list of “spiritual deeds” is not enough!

How is our attitude important to our spiritual life?

In what ways have your spiritual activities been adversely affected by your heart, your attitude, or your relationships not being right?

What changes do you need to make to ensure spiritual health?