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SPIRITUAL MATURITY Mattoon, IL

INTRODUCTION.

A. Scripture text: **Galatians 6:1**.
B. What does it mean to be spiritual, or spiritually mature?
C. Some things that spiritual maturity is not:
   1. Deeply pious, sad faced, foregoing all the pleasures of life, etc.
   2. Holding hands, lighting candles, humming in the dark, etc.
   3. Being worked up emotionally, in a frenzy, or "being in the Spirit."
D. Today's lesson explores the quest of how to become spiritually mature.

I. **NO SHORT CUTS TO SPIRITUAL MATURITY.**

A. There is no "quick fix" to being spiritually mature. It takes time and perseverance to become the complete person God wants you to be. No one verse, or one sermon will instantly make a person spiritually mature.
B. Some have tried some popular short-cuts, but the following doesn't work either:
   1. Legalism.
      This avenue measures growth by what a person doesn't do. "I don't drink, dance, or smoke." This person makes up their own list of rules and thinks this is what it means to be spiritual.
   2. Education.
      This short-cut says to cram all the Bible facts you can into a person and they will become spiritually mature. One must live the scriptures as well as know the scriptures.
   3. Experiences.
      What we experience can make us feel good about our salvation but experiences are always subjective and difficult to interpret as to whether they have revealed any truth to us.
C. It is not understanding a deep, complicated doctrinal issue that makes one mature:
   1. Put away sin, drink the milk of the word (1Pet. 2:2).
   2. To have everyone complete in X is the goal (Col. 1:28,29).
   3. A long reading but very important (Eph. 4:11-16).

II. **SPIRITUAL MATURITY MEANS SAYING NO.**

A. Learn to "say no" to sin:
   1. We are no longer to be in love with sin (1Jn. 2:15-17).
   2. All unrighteousness is sin (1lJn. 5:17).
   3. All things of the world belong to Satan (1Jn. 5:19).
   4. Idols are still present to take our devotion (1Jn. 5:21).
B. Learn to "say no " to selfishness:
   1. Many problems in Corinth were due to selfishness (1Cor. 3:1-3).
   2. Quarrels (1Cor. 1:11).
   3. Immorality (1Cor. 5:1).
   4. Pride (1Cor. 10:12).
   5. Divisions and factions (1Cor. 11:18).
   6. Carnality (Jas. 3:15,16; 4:1-4a).

III. **SPIRITUAL MATURITY MEANS SAYING YES.**

A. Learn to "say yes" to righteousness:
   The Sermon on the Mount is about having the right relationship w/God.
   1. The Beatitudes are about attitude (Mt. 5:3-16).
   2. Requirements of the Law are fulfilled in JC (Mt. 5:17-20).

3. "The thought behind the deed" is crucial (Mt. 5:27-37).
4. How to pray (Mt. 6:1-13).
5. Where is your treasure, that is, your heart? (Mt. 6:19-24).
6. Where are your priorities? (Mt. 6:25-34).
7. Ask, seek, and knock of God (Mt. 7:6-11).
8. Good lifestyle means good fruit, conversely, bad fruit means bad lifestyle (Mt. 7:13-20).
9. Solid, biblical foundations for life (Mt. 7:21-27).

B. Learn to "say yes" to relationships:
This is the real testing ground as to how you are doing spiritually. If you can get along with others, you are getting along with God (1Jn. 4:20,21). The Sermon on the Mount is about having the right relationship with God and others:
1. Mending broken friendships with enemies (Mt. 5:21-26).
2. Going the "extra mile" to make it right (Mt. 5:38-48).
3. Forgive to be forgiven (Mt. 6:14-18).
4. Judge self before judging others (Mt. 7:1-5).
5. The Golden Rule (Mt. 7:12).
6. Other passages to consider: Rom. 12:10,16,18; Heb. 10:24; 1Pet. 1:22,23.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

A. In summary, to achieve spiritual maturity one must:
1. Learn to "say no" to sin.
2. Learn to " say no" to selfishness.
3. Learn to "say yes" to righteousness.
4. Learn to "say yes" to relationships.

B. Paul said to be filled with the Spirit, the spiritual life that brings maturity (Eph. 5:18).
C. Respond to X, and begin your walk toward spiritual maturity today.
D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.