

Signs Of Spiritual Maturity

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[0 : 00] Welcome. Thank you for choosing to listen to another faith-building message by Pastor David Entry. Faith comes by hearing and by hearing the Word of God.

May your knowledge of Jesus Christ increase as you listen. Be blessed. 1 Peter chapter 3. Last Sunday I ended on the verse 7 and I want to pick it from verse 8.

Finally, finally, be all of one mind, having compassion one of another.

Love as brethren, be pitiful, be cautious, not rendering evil for evil or railing for railing, but contrarywise, blessing.

Knowing that ye are there unto cold, that ye should inherit a blessing. For he that will love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil and his lips, that they speak no guile.

[1 : 12] Let him as do evil and do good. Let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous and his ears are open unto their prayers.

But the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. And who is he that will harm you if you be followers of that which is good?

But, and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye, and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled.

In Jesus' name, amen. Here ends the reading of God's Word. Well, going straight into the text, it said finally. It's interesting how it starts by finally. That means that there has been some conversation that has been going on already.

So we have been having some interactions. And it says that finally, my brethren. So it goes on to say, verse 8, finally, be ye all of one mind.

[2 : 17] Finally. So it started by, in chapter 2, how we should be living our social lives by telling us this is grace, this is charis, right? That as they speak evil from their stove, as they speak evil of us, the kind of lifestyle we live will command, will bring to bear the glory of God in our lives.

And they will be forced to admit that there is something unusual in our life. So a social life. So he goes into social life, and he starts by, there must be some harmony in the world.

In other words, our lifestyle, we must be in subjection to authority, harmony in the world. And then he brings it to masters and servants, and he said that's workplace harmony. So those we are supposed to submit to where we work, he said, let there be harmony.

So harmony in the world, harmony at work. Then in chapter 3, he brings it to harmony at home. He says, so then he starts, likewise, ye wives. Then he comes to verse 7, and he says, likewise, ye husbands.

All right? So ye wives and ye husbands. So he brings it to the family setting. So in the world, generally, workplace, then family, there must be harmony as a believer or as believers.

[3 : 31] In spite of the fact that we go through suffering and we go through marginalization, there must be a certain type of life we live that brings harmony in the world, harmony at work, and harmony at home.

And then he said, finally, after all that, this is how you should also conduct yourself. And generally speaking, this is how you should be with you. Finally, be ye all, all of you.

Can you imagine one mind? What does that mean by we should all be of one mind? What does that mean? All of you be of one mind?

How? How are we going to be of one mind? Are you talking about unity or uniformity?

There's a difference between uniformity and unity. See, in Christianity, we have unity. Unity means that we are all moving in one direction. When I say in Christianity, in the church, we are meant to have unity.

[4 : 33] And so there are quite a few places where scriptures clearly tell us that we should have one mind. There are quite a few places it tells us have one mind, be of one mind. This is one of the places where scriptures tell the believers to be of one mind.

We should have the same minds. In Romans chapter 12, verse 16, and Romans chapter 15, verse 5. Look at 12, 15. Romans 12, 16.

Romans 12, 16 said, be of the same mind one towards another. Be of the same mind one towards another. Romans chapter 15, verse 5.

Romans 15, verse 5. It talks about how now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another, one toward another, according to Christ Jesus.

See, this is the Christian calling, that we should be like-minded one towards another.

Like-mindedness. What is this like-mindedness? In what way are we supposed to be one mind, one in our thinking?

[5 : 39] In 1 Corinthians chapter 1, verse 10. In 1 Corinthians chapter 1, verse 10, it says that, Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing.

And that there be no division amongst you. Talking about the church life. The church life. You see, so those who create confusion, those who bring contentions amongst brethren, that is so unchristian.

It says that, I beseech you, I beseech a strong term of pleading with us in the strongest term. And joining us, admonishing us in the strongest possible term.

I beseech you, brethren, be by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing.

And that there be no division amongst you.

Divisions among you. But that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment. This brother is saying this and this other person is saying that.

[6 : 46] That is what happens when there is a church life and there are fractions. When there are fractions in church. When there is segregation in church.

When there is division in church. When there is racism in church. When there is sexism in church.

When there is class, social, class systems in church. When there are status systems in church.

Well, you don't belong here. You are here. You are here. When that happens in church, it damages the work of God. So every Christian must ensure that we drive out these things from church.

However, the thing is that it is natural with human nature. It comes naturally. I don't, I, I, this, this is not my type.

These people, this is what I'm at. See, it is only in the church where you, you will get the privilege to have a smooth relationship. A brotherly relationship with someone who under normal circumstances, your path will not cross.

[7 : 48] Because you are in different social classes. Different spheres of operation. Different, different, different spheres of operation. And so when you come to church, as I said the other time, we are gloriously heterogeneous.

Different, different backgrounds. But we are one. We, we are so one that we, we can't discriminate against anyone in the church. No. Does that mean it doesn't happen? It does. Because flesh, when flesh gets away.

When, does that mean someone who discriminates against another person is not a Christian? No, no, no, no. The person is still a Christian. But it's, it's hitting below the belt. It's operating below standard.

When it comes to Christian demands or Christian dictates, it's operating below standard. Below standard. And so he says, this, this is a very strong scripture.

Very, very strong scripture. Let's look at it again. First Corinthians chapter one. He says, it says that we, now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing.

[8 : 51] Ye all speak. Brothers and sisters. Brothers, that is why we have to guard against those who create divisions amongst us as a church. Now, okay, pastor, is this just talking about local church or the general church?

Both. Local church first. The local church. Now, how can there be unity in the general church when there is no unity even in the local church? The local church is the, the immediate family unit of the church in any locality.

Local church bodies. And there, there must be. So it's the job of the pastor to make sure that there is oneness in the local church. And then there is oneness as we, as a body of Christ.

And then, but how about denominations? Because pastor, I know some denominations have different differences. They don't speak well. No, listen. The fact that we have unity doesn't mean we, there's a difference between oneness and unity of faith.

Okay. We may have oneness. The fact that you are born again. The fact that you are born again. The fact that, um, Ephesians chapter four, verse three says, endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit. [10:01] That Greek word translated unity means oneness. Keep the unity. Not uniformity. The unity. Okay. Okay. So keep the oneness.

He says that be eager and strive earnestly to God and keep the harmony and oneness of and produce by this. So it is not us who produce it.

Human beings can generate that oneness. It comes naturally, automatically by virtue of the fact that we are born again. We, we share something in common. We share oneness of the spirit.

So endeavor to keep the oneness of the spirit in the bond of peace. And then he goes on to enlist or mention what keeps us one. The seven things that keep us one. In the verse four, it says that there's one body.

Number one, there's one spirit. So it's not like you are a different body and I'm a different body. Once we are Christian, we are all part of the same body. One body. 1 Corinthians 12 to have one body.

[10:58] There's only one body. So as the body one has many members and all the members of that one body being many are one body. So also is Christ.

So Christ is also one body, no different, different body. When we talk about body, we are not talking about a body of electricians, a body of surgeons, a body of taxi drivers, a body of nurses.

No, no, that is not in that sense. But we are talking about an organic union, an organic. There's a difference between, come on. There's a difference between, there's a difference between an organism and an organization.

Okay. We, the church, we are, even though we are an organization, because once it's a group of people, things must be organized and run in a certain way.

So that makes us an organization. But we are something stronger than just being an organization. The church is not just an organization. It's stronger than organization. It's an organism. An organ, the difference between an organization and an organism is, an organization is the assembling, amalgamation of several, several parts, bringing different, different parts together to form one unit.

[12:07] Okay. So assembling plant. So you have car. The engine is manufactured somewhere. And then the body is manufactured. The tires are manufactured here.

The steering wheels are manufactured here. The seats are manufactured. And so you bring them from different, different parts and assemble them to have one body, which is that Peugeot, which is driving or the BMW, which is going.

So by it comes from different parts and assembling of the parts. Now, that is an organization. But the church is not just an organization. It's an organism. What's an organism?

An organism is something that has the same shared life. So an organism, you are talking about life. They are talking about organic life, an organic life. What is the organic life?

The life of Christ that flows through me is the same life that is flowing through you if you are a Christian. And so, for instance, the blood that flows through my finger is the same blood that is flowing in my shoulder.

[13:08] It's the same blood that is flowing in my ear. It's the same blood that is flowing in my ankle. And so, it's the same blood. Because I'm one life. It's one organic entity.

I'm one organic entity. So when I was, let's say, I was seven years old. I looked seven years old. I wasn't as big as this.

But now that I'm at this age and I'm bigger. It's the same life. DNA the same. Everything is the same David entry. The same David entry. I might look different. There was a time ago I had a lot of hair. But now, by nature, see what has happened to me by nature. There was a time, some time ago, I didn't have any sign of gray in my beard. But see, and so you may see somebody, I might look different.

But it's the same person. It's the same person. Because why? I am an organism. In the same way, the church is an organism. So the fact that naturally or physically we don't share the same DNA.

[14:08] Oh, spiritually we share the same DNA. And so that Christian encouraged church, shared the same spiritual DNA with that Christian in Winners Chapel. With that Christian in Church of England.

With that Christian in Redeemed Christian Church of God. With that Christian in First Love Church. With that Christian in the Methodist Church. With that Christian in the Presbyterian Church. With that Christian in the Baptist Church. With that Christian in that other church, in the Action Church. Now, come on. What I'm trying to say is that we may not even have the chance to meet, but we are one.

We are an organism. We are one organism. We share. So it says that we share the same life. So there is one body. One body. Back to the text, please.

There is one body. That's what makes us one. One body, one spirit, even as you are called into one hope, number three. One hope of your calling. So body, spirit, and hope.

[15:05] Three, oneness. Number five. Look at this. One Lord. Hallelujah. There's not a different Jesus in the Church of England from the Jesus in the Carriest Church.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. There's not a different Jesus in that good church, that Christian church down the road from the church. Yes, there might be slight differences in our doctrinal approaches, but if you are Christian, then we are one.

If you are Christian, we are one. If you are Christian, then we are one. And we have to speak with the same. We have to speak the same language. I'm one-minded. Hallelujah.

So one Lord, one baptism, one faith, one baptism, and then the seventh one is one God and Father of all. So the fact that we have oneness does not mean we have uniformity.

But watch this. Verse 13 talks about, so we all come to the unity of faith. Did you see that? So that means that we haven't arrived at the unity of belief yet.

[16:12] We are growing. The church is growing to get there. The unity of faith where everything we believe generally is the same. But it takes time and growth.

However, there will also be fake ones amongst us whose doctrine will show that they are fake. All right. So now, back to the point I am making.

It says that we should be of the same mind. 1 Corinthians 1, verse 10. We should be of the same mind. We should speak the same thing. We should be of the same mind.

He's beseeching us. Be of the same mind. That there be no divisions amongst you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind. 2 Corinthians 13, verse 11.

2 Corinthians 13, verse 11. It says that finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect. Be of good comfort. Be of one mind. Live in peace.

[17:10] And the God of love and peace shall be with you. You know, it's very easy to think, Christianity, I'm just doing my own thing. I'm just believing God for a blessing.

No. Christianity is a corporate life. He said, so you have to be very concerned when you are not connected to other believers in these kinds of descriptions. You must be very concerned.

You are hitting below the belt. You are living below standard if you're a believer. And there is no koinonia. There is no fellowship. There is no interaction with other believers. It's a problem.

It's a problem. It's a problem. A Christian who is not part of a church. What is that? What is that? It's like a baba who doesn't cut hair. Hehehehe. A Christian?

How? It's on head off. You are a student. We need to know which school. You are a student. As long as you are a student, you must have a school. If you are a footballer, you must be part of a team.

[18:10] We must know your team. If you say, I'm a footballer. You know, I play well. Please. That's not the problem. You are playing well. It doesn't matter. There is no Lone Ranger footballer.

No. There is no. There cannot be. It doesn't happen. Football is a teamwork. Christianity is a corporate life. Come on.

Come on. So you see. That's why Satan will do anything to get you hurt. Will get you offended in the company. In the company of believers. Satan will do anything to get you hurt or get you offended.

So you say, I don't even want to relate with anybody again. People don't like me. That's the language of the devil passing through you. Satan is deceiving you. Satan is deceiving you. That people don't like you.

Because when you are a Christian, you put away some things. You put away some things so we can be one in our thinking. Oneness of mind. Oneness of mind. In 1 Peter chapter 3, it said, finally, be of one mind.

[19 : 12] Philippians 2. It said, Philippians 2. It said, fulfill ye my joy that ye be like-minded. Like-minded. Now, what does it mean for a believer to be like-minded?

In other words, we all speak the same language. We all think alike. There are some things when you ask me in the absence of my wife. When I tell you, you go and ask my wife in my absence. It will be the same thing. It will be the same thing. Because we are one in mind. And that's where spiritual maturity comes in. As you are, we are maturing as the church.

When the church is growing, it's not just the numbers. But a growing church begins to see these signs. Oneness. Oneness of mind among the people. We speak the same doctrine.

You won't come to any parish church and you see somebody saying that one person is saying, cohabitation is okay. Another person is saying, no. No. When you hear, you can tell. We all have unity.

[20 : 11] We all have unity in our thinking. Our doctrinal position. What we believe is, let me put it this way. Our worldview. Our worldview.

Oneness. Believers. Believers. It's interesting that when sometimes in the secular world, when something happens, maybe in a company or in an organization and a Christian does something and people are rising against them, sometimes you realize it's even other Christians who are leading it. Other Christians are leading the campaign against Christians. That is why I don't understand those who go and sit on social media and spearhead or lead a campaign against some other Christians. If you want to do it, let's do it behind closed doors. Let's sort out our own issues internally. So that, no. What is going on there? Somebody must speak. Who is that somebody? Do you expect people also to speak about what's going on in your life outside?

But I need to protect. You have that responsibility of protecting people. So I think it's very important. I'm not saying that when people misbehave and do things, we should keep quiet. I'm saying that we have to be careful how we lead.

[21 : 18] We lead in condemning other believers publicly. In condemning. That's the same thing they did to Jesus. They condemned him and they said that, bring us Barabbas. There are times where you will see.

Because the unbelievers, it's hot spot for them. It's hot. It's good. It's hot cake. Then unbelievers are looking for a reason why you claim you're a Christian. You claim you are good, but you are useless. You are nothing. Unbelievers love it. But unfortunately, there are believers who are like Judas. They will lead the unbelievers and they will take a believer and hand him over to unbelievers to butcher you.

It's below Christian descent, biblical Christian behavior. Below. There are some things because of your persuasion to God.

There are things that you won't do because it will not help the church. There are things that you sometimes just leave it. It's okay. I'll just leave it because it will help the church. It will help the church. It will help the church.

[22 : 19] There is a proverb, an African proverb, which says that the truth that destroys a nation is not necessary speaking about it. It's not necessary speaking and displaying the truth that destroys a nation.

The truth that destroys a nation. Let's say the nation is built around the king or the leader. And the leader has been the unifying factor of the nation around other nations.

Everybody looks at that nation because this is the whatever. And then suddenly you find out that the leader is being controlled by a body of people behind.

So whatever he says is not true. Why are you going to save that to destroy the nation we are all part of? We find out, oh, that's a very disappointing discovery. But what? You know what?

We can't talk about. If you find out, if you find out some deep secrets about your family and your dad. Seriously, maybe your dad has a lot of money. But later you find out that he's big fraud.

[23 : 20] He has done a lot of fraud and stuff like that. People respect him and he's done so much. It's, you know, because of your own, you're part of the company. You are part of every, your life is, you don't have to, you have to stop it.

See how you can stop it, how you can support it. But you, some things is not worth talking about it because it's going to destroy more. So there are things that is, that are necessary to keep going in the interest of the organization.

In the, some things are not worth saying. We have to sort it out internally, but it's not worth saying. That's what I'm saying. That, how come we, we go out and lead the campaign against Christians? How can you be a Christian and lead a campaign when the Christian that did something that is not, maybe, it's not even verified. How come another Christian in the same organization, in the same company, at the workplace, be the one who picks up on other Christians and then guard us with unbelievers and planning to destroy the person?

And they do that and feel free. Yeah. Yeah. Me, me, I know. Hallelujah. I'm not supposing that things should be covered when evil, when crime is going on, something wrong is going on, should be covered.

[24 : 37] That's not what I'm supposing. What I'm saying is that as Christians, we owe one another the love to cover one another or to love one another, to protect one another, to help one another, not necessarily to expose one another, but to help one another be in the right.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. So it's a be of the same mind. First, which is chapter eight. Finally, my brethren, be of one mind, having compassion one of another.

Oh, wow. Compassion has come in. Compassion. Compassion. Having compassion one of another. Love as brethren. Be pitiful.

Be cautious. Have compassion. When you are dealing with people, put yourself in their shoes. The one another talks about amongst the Christians. Put yourself in their shoes.

Yes, I know. I know that what they said, they shouldn't have said that it hurts you, but you know what? You might have also, or you could have also said something to offend them. I didn't like what they were saying about me.

[25 : 46] You know what? Oh, so he was, is that what he said about me? Unfortunately, someone came and told you what the other brother or the other sister said about you, which was not so nice.

But they have been having chats with you. And they never said, and behind your back, is that what they are saying? All of us sometimes, you know, we think differently about people. And so what I'm saying is that we have to be sympathetic.

Compassion with, stringing towards one another. In what sense? I know the brother offended you, but you could have also offended somebody. So just, just, just, just let him go. Let him off the hook. Let him off the hook. Let's learn to forgive one another. Hallelujah, hallelujah. Praise God, praise God. Thank you, Lord Jesus.

Oh, hallelujah. Glory to Jesus. So be tender, tenderhearted. Have compassion towards one another. Finally, be of one mind, having compassion one of another.

[26 : 45] Love as brethren. If you remember in 1 Peter 1, verse 22, we spoke about a mask love. Remove the mask. Let love be without dissimulation. Let love be the real thing.

Let, let our love be real. It says that love one another. The Bible keeps telling us how we should love. We should love. We should love. Love as brethren. That's, that love there is Philadelphia. Love as, love as brethren. Brotherly love. Philadelphia or Philadelphia. Fellow, fellow love. Brotherly love.

Adelphos brothers. So fellow love of brethren. Love of brethren. Philadelphia or fellow Adelphos. So love as brethren.

We should, we should have love. So, you know, there are sometimes, there may be times my sister or my brother might say something I might not like, but you know what? I just have to get over it.

[27 : 41] It's my brother now. That's what he said. Love as brethren. Love as brethren. Because what, in other words, if my brother is in trouble, I'm in trouble. If my sister is in trouble, I'm in trouble.

So let's love as brethren and be compassionate one to another. Hallelujah. Empathize and sympathize with one another. I said, be pitiful. And in the New King James, in the New King James, he said, be tenderhearted.

That pitifulness. Have compassion. And then sometimes your heart is very soft. When you have a tender heart, you are very, you become very vulnerable and susceptible to things.

And he says, let's allow ourselves to have tender heart towards one another as believers. Tender heart, tenderheartedness towards one another. And he used the word catchios.

Some other translations use the word humble. Humble. Catchios. Passionate and humble. Humility is a virtue when it comes to Christianity.

[28 : 41] Humility is a virtue. It's so important. In 1 Peter 5, verse 5, in Ephesians 4, verse 2, 1 Peter 5, verse 5, it says, likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder.

Ye all, ye all, ye, sorry, ye, all of you, be subject one to another and be clothed with humility. In church, bro, let's clothe ourselves with humility.

And when I say in church, not only during church service, but once you're a believer and dealing with other believers. You call somebody, you say, the way you spoke to me, I'm going to prove to you. Oh, come on.

Let's clothe ourselves with some humility. And sometimes let some things go. Let sleeping dogs lie. Ephesians 4, verse 2. Ephesians 4, verse 2 says that with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, bearing one another in love.

Forbearing one another in love. Sometimes you have to bear with people. Yeah, he says, I don't like the way this guy behaves. But you know what? Bear one another in love. With lowliness and meekness.

[29 : 49] The same thing. It's translated meekness here by lowliness and meekness. Humility and being catchers. You can't speak to people anyhow. As a believer, it's very important.

And then he goes on to speak. Wow. He goes on to say that. Then he says, not rendering evil for evil or railing for railing.

And other translations use reviling for reviling. All right? Not rendering evil for what you've done to me, I will do back. Me?

It doesn't matter how long it takes. I'll do back. I will do it. I will do it. No. The Bible says don't. Don't render evil for evil. Don't render evil for evil. Don't render evil for evil.

Romans chapter 12 verse 17. First Thessalonians 5. Romans 12 verse 17 says that recompense to no man evil for evil. Did you see that?

[30 : 50] First Thessalonians chapter 5 verse 15. First Thessalonians chapter 5. See that no man renders evil for evil unto any man.

Even not just Christians. Any man. But ever follow that which is good. Both amongst yourself and to all men. This is Christianity 101.

See that you render. You don't render. Someone has done this. You also do. You do. Some people don't know how to forgive or how to let go. They did this to you. You said I will do it.

Even if it takes 10 years. If it takes 10 years. I'll do it. I'll do it. I'll do it. I'll do it. I'll do it. I'll do it. I said don't render evil for evil.

Two wrongs don't make it right. Don't render evil for evil. Don't render. I think on this note. I would like to actually go to Romans chapter 12 from verse 9.

[31 : 47] Because the same thing is treated in Romans chapter 12 from verse 9. Virtually. Romans chapter 12 verse 9. It says that let love be without dissimulation.

Without hypocrisy. Okay. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil. Cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love.

Did you see that? It's almost the same thing we have written here. But it's interesting that modern day Christians don't see these things. You see a pastor to pastor. Pastor against pastor.

Church leader against another church leader. And a pastor that has left one church against the other one who has been left. It's fight amongst it. It's like. It's like. Look. Watch this.

Watch this. It says that. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil. Cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love.

[32 : 43] In honor preferring one another. Not slothful in business. Fervent in spirit. Serving the Lord. Rejoicing in hope. Patient in tribulations. What are you going to be patient in these troubling times?

Continuing instant in prayer. Continuing instant in prayer. Distributing to the necessity of saints. Giving to hospitality. Learn how to receive people. Give to the need of others. Give to the need of others. When you see someone is in need. It's a distributing to the necessity of the saints.

This brother is in need of something. This sister is in need of. Distribute to their necessity. It is Christianity 101. In Romans. Romans chapter 12. We encourage.

We call it the R12 9 principle. Of fellowship. Of philosophy of fellowship. The R12 9 philosophy of fellowship. We cannot have effective Christian fellowship in the absence of this.

[33 : 44] We have to. This is part of our. If you are a Christian. This is what you have been called into. Excuse me. This is what you have been called into. It's not as for me. I am just. It's Christ. It's Christ. Please. Please.

Please. Please. Please. The Christ in you. Must find an expression. Like this. This can. So if Christ is really in you. This is what invariably. As you grow in Christ.

Is beginning to show. Other than that. You are in the flesh. You are in the flesh. Any time there are problems in church. And Confucius in church. The bottom line is this.

The absence of some of these things. Most problem causes in church. Are not maturing. It is not your quotation. The number of quotations you understand.

Or you are quoting. That shows that you are matured. It is the manifestation of these things. In your living. Your life. The manifestation of biblical patterns. In your life. That is the reflection of true spiritual maturity.

[34 : 38] True spiritual maturity. Has everything to do with. The manifestation of the biblical pattern. In a person's life. The manifestation of the biblical patterns. The biblical dictates.

The biblical injunctions. The biblical directions. When they manifest in a person's life. That is what shows. That a person is a true Christian. Or sorry.

Not true. That a person is spiritually maturing. It is not how many tongues you speak. Per second. Please.

It is not a sign that you are matured. It is not a gift. The spiritual. I can have visions. I can have dreams. I have word of knowledge. Word of wisdom. I have discernment of spirit. Interpretation of tongue.

Thoubless kind of tongue. Gift of healing. I have the working of miracles. I have the gift of faith.

Please. It is not a sign of maturity. It is not a sign of maturity. There are a lot of people.

[35 : 33] Who are putting in gifts. And because of the gifts. They think they are spiritually matured. Spiritual maturity is not based on gifts. Spiritual maturity is based on the expression of biblical dictates in your life.

It must be seen. It must be seen and noticed. And it starts not based by action. It starts in the heart. So that even when you are caught on a ways. It is actually a natural flow from what is in your heart. Not a pose. Some of us have the pose. So in church you look so decent. You look so good. But listen. It's a facade. It's a facade. When you are with the believers.

You look so cool externally. Your reputation is so impeccable. But guess what? Deep in your heart. You are like a whitewashed tool in Jesus' own very ways.

In Jesus' own very ways. In whitewashed tombs. You are white. You look white on the outside. But full of dead man's bones.

[36 : 30] That's what Jesus said to the Pharisees. Hallelujah. And so Matthew chapter 23. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites. For you are like whitewashed tombs.

Which indeed appear beautiful outwardly. But inside are full of dead man's bones. And all uncleanness. That's a serious word.

What? But that's not your story. You are a different person. You are not a Pharisee. You are not a hypocrite. You are not a hypocrite. But what I'm saying is that when I talk about spiritual maturity, I'm not talking about personal bent.

Some people are personally, by nature, temperament. By their temperament. They are very calm people. But don't mistake that to mean that is a mature Christian. Some people are very forgiving by nature.

Even before they became born again. They are forgiving by nature. They will forgive you. It doesn't mean you are a maturing believer. Some people are forgiving by nature.

[37 : 36] But can't have one mind. Some people are, they have one mind. But they can't laugh without, without phoniness. You know.

So these things are what all of us, pastors included. The fact that I'm preaching doesn't mean I'm so matured. Okay. You can preach. You can, you can explain it.

You can be theologically deep. It doesn't mean you are biblically sound. Or you are biblically witty. The word of God dwells in you richly.

That is where spiritual maturity comes from. Spiritual maturity is not necessarily hinged. Watch this. Spiritual maturity is not hinged on rectification of your behavior. So your behavior is changing.

No. Even though it will affect your behavior. Spiritual maturity is first hinged on your identity in Christ. Discovery of your identity. When you know who you are in Christ. When you understand from scriptures.

[38 : 32] And you begin to let that become your expression. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling. Then you are talking about someone is maturing. And I'm saying that these are some of the signs of genuine maturity.

Don't be using it to look in others for your own self. Okay. I have to use this to judge my own self. And to assess my life. Whether I'm maturing spiritually. Because of the way these things play out in my life.

Let me go back to it. It says that distributing to the necessity of sins. Giving to hospitality. Bless them that persecute you. Bless and cares not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice.

Weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind. Did you see that? Be of the same mind. One towards another. Mind not high things. But condescend to men of lowliness.

It's like for me. I don't. These are not. These type of people are not my class. You have. When you join a church. You only befriend people of a certain status. These are your cronies in the church.

[39 : 33] If they are not of a certain color. Or a certain status. You are not interested. When you hear that this one. Oh. He owns the company. He lives here. Certainly they become your friend. It's not.

You are not growing. You. You are not growing spiritually. No, no, no, no. You are not growing. It says. Be of the same mind.

Verse 16 again. Be of the same mind. One towards another. Mind not high things. But condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

Verse 17. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. You cannot be lying and not know. You cannot be lying and not know.

Please. And you cannot be speaking the truth and not know it. And not know that I'm speaking the truth. Oh, I didn't know I was speaking the truth. I didn't know I was lying. No. You cannot be lying and not know.

[40 : 34] And you cannot be speaking the truth and not know. May God help us all. And it says that. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

If it's possible, as much as lies in you. Do you see that? As much as lies in you. Live peaceably with all men.

Including your wife. Your husband. Your cousin. Your neighbors. Live peaceably with all men. Your mom. Your dad. Live peaceably with all men.

Live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved. Avenge not yourselves. But rather give place unto wrath.

For it is written. Vengeance is mine. That's God saying. Vengeance is mine. I will repay. Says the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger. Feed him.

[41 : 30] If he thirsts. Give him drink. For in so doing. Thou shall heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil. But overcome. Overcome evil with good.

How do you overcome evil with good? How do you overcome evil with good? There's an African adage. We say that. If good doesn't matter. Then evil doesn't matter. Please. It's not the Bible. If doing good doesn't matter.

Then doing evil should be also matter. Please. It's not the Bible. It says. Overcome evil with good. Overcome evil with good. Wow.

The Bible is sweet. You know. It's sweet to the taste of the believer. Of the regenerated. Hallelujah. All right. Let me just add one more. And then we can draw the curtain on it.

Verse. So. Verse. Verse nine. Going back to first Peter chapter three. Verse eight. Finally brethren. Finally. Be ye all of one mind.

[42 : 30] Having compassion one. One of another. Love as brethren. Be pitiful. Be catchers. Not rendering evil for evil. Or railing for railing. All right. Railing. There.

As I said. In some translation. Is reviling. What's reviling? To be angrily accused. Violently. Or in a very rude way.

Be accused. You. You. Sometimes you know. You don't even know what you're talking about. It's like you. You're full of that. Oh. And it's being violently accused.

Being violently insulted. And in an unjustifiable way. He says that don't return it. Don't return it. Bro, bro, bro. No. Don't do it back. Don't do it back to her. Don't do it back to him. Don't return it. Not returning evil for evil. Or reviling for reviling. Don't do that. But on the contrary. [43 : 26] Blessing. What? Blessing? Yes. On the contrary. Blessing. Knowing that you were called to this. To what? That you also inherit a blessing.

So as you bless. You are also stepping in blessing. Wow. They are doing things but blessing. Bless you. Bless you. It's okay. Just walk away.

Bless you. Christian maturity. Luke chapter 6 verse 28. It addresses the issue of the blessing. Bless them that curse you.

And pray for them which despisefully use you. Romans chapter 12 verse 14. We've read it already. But let's look at it again. Romans chapter 12 verse 14. It says that. Bless them which persecute you.

Bless and curse not. Wow. This is raising a kind of interesting issues here. For the charismatics. And then. In 1 Corinthians chapter 4 verse 12.

[44 : 24] Look at 1 Corinthians chapter 4 verse 12. It says that. And labor. Working with your own hands. Being reviled. Be blessed. Working with our own hands. Being reviled.

We bless. Being persecuted. We're suffering. When they revile us. We bless them. So it says that. Don't render evil for evil. Reviling for reviling.

But contrary. Blessing. Knowing that. As you are blessed. Knowing that this is what you have been called for. You've been called. We are called. In 1 Peter chapter 1 verse 15.

It talks about how we have been called. All right. It talks about how we have been. He has called us. He's holy. So we have to live. Be holy in all manner of your conversation.

So he has called us to be holy. 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 verse 14. So called to be holy. 2 Thessalonians 2 verse 14. Where until he called you by our gospel.

[45 : 19] To obtain. To the obtaining of the glory of our Lord. So you have been called to be holy. You have been called to obtain glory. Glory. Glory.

I see it coming for you. In the mighty name of Jesus. We have been called to obtain glory. Someone shall glory. And not only that. We have also been called into fellowship.

So we've been called to live holy. We have been called to obtain glory. In 1 Corinthians chapter 1 verse 9. It said God who has called us into fellowship of his dear son.

Hallelujah. He has called us. So God is faithful. By whom you were called into the fellowship of his son. Jesus Christ. So we have been called to bless so as to inherit blessings.

We have been called to be holy. We have been called to partake or obtain the glory of God. And we have been called into fellowship. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

[46 : 17] Hallelujah. We are the called one. You are a chosen generation. A royal priesthood. Call forth to show. Call to show forth the praise of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

We have been called. We have been called to obtain blessing. Amen. Hallelujah. I pray you have received something and your eyes have been enlightened by the power of God.

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Be blessed.