

The Christian Arsenal

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THE MARKS OF A MATURE PERSON Developing a Faith That Works

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Part 1 of 7 Overview of James

INTRO: Without a doubt, the number one cause of problems in the world is immaturity.

God's will for every person is personal growth and maturity.

"Let us go on to maturity." Hebrews 6:1

WHAT MATURITY IS NOT:

- Maturity is not age.
- Maturity is not appearance.
- Maturity is not achievement.
- Maturity is not academics.

GOD SAYS MATURITY IS ATTITUDE!

D.L. Moody: "Character is what you are in the dark."

HOW DO YOU MEASURE SPIRITUAL MATURITY?

- Not by comparing yourself to other people but by comparing yourself to the word of God.

Greek word: "*teleaos*" – mature, complete, perfect – used 5 times in James.

FIVE MARKS OF MATURITY

1. A MATURE PERSON IS POSITIVE UNDER PRESSURE

"Consider it pure joy, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know the testing of your faith develops perseverance and perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete not lacking anything." James 1:2-4

The first test of maturity is how do you react to problems?
Christianity is a life not a religion.

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"I've come that you might have life ..." John 10:10

"Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love Him." James 1:12

2. A MATURE PERSON IS SENSITIVE TO PEOPLE.

"If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, 'Love your neighbor as yourself' you are doing right." James 2:8

He doesn't just see his own needs; he sees other people's needs.

"At that judgment they will stand before the Lord and they'll say, 'I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and in prison and you visited me.' We'll say, 'When, Lord, when did we do that? When were you sick and we visited you? When were you in prison and when were you thirsty and we gave you drink?' Jesus said, 'In as much as you have done it unto the least of these, my brethren, you have done it unto Me.'" Matt. 25:41-45

3. A MATURE PERSON HAS MASTERED HIS MOUTH.

"We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check." James 3:2

The first thing a doctor will say when you go for a check up is "stick out your tongue." He uses your tongue to check your health. God does that spiritually too.

World War II saying: "LOOSE LIPS SINK SHIPS."
I say, "Loose lips destroy lives."

Definition of gossip: hearing something you like about somebody you don't.

Self-control comes from tongue control.

James 3:3-11 says that our tongue is like a:

- Rudder
- Bit in a horse's mouth
- Spark
- Snake
- Spring

Have you ever heard anyone say, "I just say what's on my mind"?

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The Bible says that's not frankness, that's immaturity.

"Do not let any negative talk come out of your mouth but only what is helpful for building up others according to their needs..." Eph. 4:29

"If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless." James 1:26

4. A MATURE PERSON IS A PEACEMAKER NOT A TROUBLEMAKER.

"What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you?" James 4:1

The mark of a mature person is the lack of conflict in his own life.

TWO SOURCES OF CONFLICT:

"When you ask you do not receive. But you ask with the wrong motives that you may spend what you get on your pleasures." James 4:3

- The first cause of conflict is selfishness.

"Brothers, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it ... There is only one lawgiver and judge, one who is able to save and destroy. But you, who are you to judge your neighbor?" James 4:11-12

- The second source of conflict is judging others.

WHY SHOULD I NOT JUDGE?

1. I'm not God.
2. Only God has all the facts, you don't and neither do I.
3. I don't know the motives and you don't either.

5. A MATURE PERSON IS PATIENT AND PRAYERFUL.

"Be patient then, brothers, until the Lord's coming ...As you know, we consider blessed are those who persevere" James 5:7,11

"The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." James 5:16

- Patient is used 4 times in chapter 5
- Prayer is used 7 times in chapter 5

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“Be patient then, brothers, until the Lord’s coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, how patient is he for the fall and spring rain. You too be patient. Stand firm because the Lord’s coming is near. Don’t grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged.” James 5:7

Patience is a mark of maturity.

“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it wouldn’t rain and it didn’t rain on the land for three and a half years. Again he prayed and the heavens gave rain and the earth produced its crop.” James 5:16

WHAT ARE THE TESTS?

1. How do you handle problems?
2. Are you sensitive to other people?
3. Can you manage your mouth?
4. Are you a troublemaker, or are you a peacemaker?
5. How long can you wait for an answer to prayer without giving up?