



Lecture 4

Developing Maturity for Life

Psalm 37:4-6

Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He will do it. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light and your judgment (justice) as the noonday.

This Scripture relates to our relationship with Jesus. To be able to delight ourselves in the Lord we need to first consciously receive and embrace God's love, Grace and Mercy. Gratefulness and thanksgiving will bring us to a place where we don't just know about God's love, but we experience God's love. Realise that thanksgiving is the beginning of a conversation with your heavenly Father. To delight ourselves in the Lord we need to be like children, trusting and loving our Heavenly Father.

Grace is what God gives us without us deserving it.
(salvation, healing, deliverance, our inheritance in Christ)

Mercy is what God does not give us that we would deserve without Christ.
(punishment for our sins)

Trusting in God (obedience) brings maturity, purpose, healing:

Proverbs 3:5-8

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your body and refreshment to your bones.”

Hebrews 12:5-8 (not punishment, but correction and encouragement)

“And you have completely forgotten the exhortation which is of such a nature as to speak to you as to sons, Son of mine, stop making light of the Lord's discipline, correction, and guidance. Stop fainting when you are being effectually rebuked by Him. For the one whom the Lord loves, He disciplines, corrects, and guides, and He scourges every son whom He receives and cherishes. It is for the purpose of discipline, correction, and guidance that you are enduring. As those who by nature are sons is God dealing with you. For what son is there whom the Father does not discipline, correct, and guide? But if you are without discipline, correction, and guidance, of which all [sons] have been made partakers, it follows therefore that you are bastards and not sons.”

We need to understand this Scripture in terms of the relationship between father and son. A father who loves his child will have to correct, always with the purpose of protecting, and teaching for the son's benefit.

When we consider the lives of Jesus, the Apostles and many other examples in the Bible, we see how suffering, trials and challenges were used by our Heavenly Father for His purposes. Martyrs (witnesses) sacrificed themselves for the Gospel. Today there are still martyrs in countries where the Gospel is forbidden. We are also witnesses representing Jesus. Therefore our witness needs to reflect Jesus as we imitate Him. We are not to resent trials and tribulations for the sake of Jesus.

Don't create “self-made” trials and tribulations!!

When we make bad decisions and experience bad circumstances because of our own immaturity and by ignoring God's Word, these circumstances are the result of the “works of the flesh”. We will learn our lesson the hard way when we disobey our Lord. We then waste a lot of time, energy and effort in trying to fix the resulting problems, especially in relationships. We also misrepresent Jesus.

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We need to dedicate the rest of our lives to serve and to bring glory to God. If we could all see what God's plan for us looks like, we'd be very excited and would wholeheartedly dedicate our lives to God's purpose, not for ours.

Immaturity means selfishness, this is why it is a matter of urgency that we submit to God and His Word in order to start reflecting Jesus in our lives. **A little light is still a light; we need to avoid darkness because it is the enemy's territory.**

The importance of our thought-life

Thoughts create emotions, emotions create attitudes and attitudes create behaviour.

The key for success is to control our thoughts, because our thoughts will dictate our behaviour. Our thoughts ought to be under the control of the Holy Spirit. According to the Bible, we are the ones who have to take captive every thought and imagination against the knowledge of Christ **by the power of the Holy Spirit.** Immature people can be very emotional and can easily use the tongue for destruction. Immature people will have wrong thoughts, wrong imaginations and consequently wrong actions.

2 Corinthians 10:4-6

"for the weapons of our warfare are not human but mighty in God's sight, resulting in the demolition of fortresses, demolishing reasonings and every haughty mental elevation which lifts itself up against the experiential knowledge [which we believers have] of God, and leading captive every thought into the obedience to the Christ, and being in readiness to discipline every careless, apathetic hearing of and disobedience to the Word [if there remain any still disobedient] when your obedience [to me and my apostolic authority] shall be fulfilled."

The importance of our words

1 Peter 3:10-12

"For he who desires to be loving life and to see good days, let him stop the natural tendency of his tongue from evil, and the natural tendency of his lips to the end that they speak no craftiness, but let him rather at once and once for all turn away from evil and let him do good. Let him seek peace and pursue it, because the Lord's eyes are directed in a favorable attitude towards the righteous, and His ears are inclined unto their petitions, but the Lord's face is against those who practice evil things.

Ephesians 4:29-30

"Every word that is rotten and unfit for use, out of your mouth let it not be proceeding, but whatever is good, suitable for edification with respect to the need, in order that it may impart grace to the hearers. And stop grieving the Spirit, the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed with a view to the day of redemption."

Proverbs 18:21

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.

The spiritual house

1 Peter 2:5

"And you yourselves also as living stones are being built up a spiritual house to be a priesthood that is holy, bringing up to God's altars **spiritual sacrifices which are acceptable to God through the mediatorship of Jesus Christ."**

The Christian life is all about surrendering to God. Too many Christians embrace this reality only 50% or 80% or maybe even only 0%. This is why Christians lack power, spirituality and are caught in their self-made traps in this life. God is challenging us to seek His wisdom, power, love, humility and dependence on Him and the Word. Christ is the foundation of our spiritual house, **the Holy Spirit is the one building, to the extent we surrender our lives to Him.**

Our spiritual life in Christ is the source of maturity, wisdom, stability and will nullify the works of the flesh. This is why it is crucial for every believer to submit to God, seek His ways and depend on the Holy Spirit.