



PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE

SEPTEMBER 17, 2017

BIBLICAL EMPHASIS:

God has given the church everything it needs to grow into maturity.

MAIN POINT:

Believers are to grow up into Christ. Galatians 5:22-23 shows the kind of fruit that should be expected out of mature believers.

INTRODUCTION

- 1 What are some traits of a spiritually mature person?
- 2 What themes do you see from the traits on your list? What can we conclude a spiritually mature person *is not*? Does this list make you feel like spiritual maturity is an easy or a challenging goal? Explain.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

> Read Ephesians 4:11-16.

¹¹ It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹² to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

- In verse 11, Paul listed some specific spiritual gifts God gives to His followers. What do the specific gifts in verse 11 have in common?
- What is God's intention in giving these spiritual gifts to His people (vv. 12-13)?
- What are some of the dangers Paul mentioned that are associated with spiritual immaturity? How, according to the passage, can we avoid these dangers?
- How can being a faithful member of our group help bring about the unity this passage emphasizes and protect us from the chaos mentioned in verse 14?

- How can “speaking the truth in love” (v. 15) help Christians grow up into Christ?
- Why could love be considered the defining mark of maturity?

> Read Galatians 5:22-23.

²² *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,* ²³ *gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*

- What stands out to you about the fruit of the Spirit? What can we conclude about spiritual growth or maturity from this list of Spirit traits?
- What makes this way of life so challenging?
- Which element is the most difficult for you to reflect? Which comes more easily?
- Read Galatians 5:19-21. The fruit of the Spirit stands in direct contrast to the traits mentioned here. How does the fruit of the Spirit compare to the works of the flesh mentioned in verses 19-21?
- What did Paul say will happen to those who gratify the flesh? What warning does this have for us in regard to spiritual maturity?

APPLICATION

- 1 Do you know what your spiritual gifts are? How are you making use of them to build up your church?
- 2 Our character is often most clearly displayed in stressful situations. When placed in stress, is the fruit of the Spirit revealed, or do you respond in the flesh? How can this impact your witness in the world?
- 3 Paul warned believers to avoid being tossed about by every wind and wave (Eph. 4:14). One of the greatest defenses against this is to regularly and systematically read through the Bible. What Bible reading plans have you found most helpful in your own quiet times? How might you become more disciplined in Bible reading?

THIS WEEK

- Memorize Ephesians 4:16.
- Read Philippians 3:1-14 on Monday
- Read Philippians 3:15-21 on Tuesday
- Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 on Wednesday
- Read 1 Peter 2:1-3 on Thursday
- Read 1 John 1:5-10 on Friday
- Read 1 John 2:1-11 on Saturday