

FULL LIFE ESSENTIALS
The Response of Spiritual Growth
OBEDIENCE & MATURITY

God has defined and exemplified how his people are to live.

Obedience to God's way of living is necessary for spiritual growth.

GOD GIVES US THE DESIRE TO OBEY

Jeremiah 31:31-34

"The time is coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. 32 It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. 33 "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. ***"I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts.*** I will be their God, and they will be my people. 34 No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." (NIV)

God has given us new spiritual hearts that know Him and desire to please Him.

- Our old nature wants to sin.
- Our new nature wants to obey.

Philippians 2:12-13

...Work hard to show the results of your salvation, obeying God with deep reverence and fear. 13 For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him. (NLT)

God wants our obedience to come from a "want to" attitude not a "have to" attitude.

Our obedience to God is not meant to be burdensome.

Matthew 11:28-30

Then Jesus said, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light." (NLT)

GODLY OBEDIENCE IS MOTIVATED BY LOVE

**1 John
5:3-4**

Loving God means keeping his commandments, and his commandments are not burdensome. (NLT)

Obedience is the natural overflow of our love for God.

Love lifts the burden of obedience and makes it delightful.

Obedience is the proof of our love for God.

John 14:23-24

Jesus replied, "All who love me will do what I say. My Father will love them, and we will come and make our home with each of them. 24 ***Anyone who doesn't love me will not obey me.*** (NLT)

A decline in obedience is the outgrowth of a decline in love.

Our new nature functions best when it's motivated by relationship, not legislation.

OBEDIENCE LEADS TO GROWTH

1 John 2:3-6

3 We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. 4 The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: 6 Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did. (NIV)

1 John 2:5-6

5 But those who do what Christ tells them to will learn to love God more and more. That is the way to know whether or not you are a Christian. 6 Anyone who says he is a Christian should live as Christ did. (TLB)

As we obey God, our love for God grows.

As our love for God grows, our desire to obey God grows.

GROWTH LEADS TO MATURITY

Complete and perfect maturity is a goal that we will fully attain at Christ's second coming. But it is the goal that all Christians should be progressing towards in this life.

Hebrews 5:11-6:1a

There is much more we would like to say about this, but it is difficult to explain, especially since you are spiritually dull and don't seem to listen. 12 You have been

believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you again the basic things about God's word. You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food. ¹³For someone who lives on milk is still an infant and doesn't know how to do what is right. ¹⁴Solid food is for those who are mature, who through training have the skill to recognize the difference between right and wrong. So let us stop going over the basic teachings about Christ again and again. Let us go on instead and become mature in our understanding.

Maturity is measured by our faithfulness to God's commands.

Ephesians 4:11-16

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹²to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³until 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.

¹⁴Then 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 people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶From 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.

Maturity is measured by our faithfulness to the body of Christ.

James 1:2-4

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, ³because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. ⁴Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.

Maturity is measured by our faithfulness to God during times of testing.