

**A STUDY OF 1 THESSALONIANS 4.9-12**  
***This Is A Big Indicator of Spiritual Maturity***  
**Dr. Larry Lamb – December 2, 2018**

There are indicators when we begin to see ourselves advancing in spiritual maturity. Here are some samples:

1. The length of time between an **INFRACTION** with someone and coming to terms with forgiveness is shortened.
2. The desire to carve off large sections of **SELFISHNESS**.
3. There is no act of service too small to engage in.
4. Giving is viewed as an honor and not seen as a **LOSS**. (One of our CVC values is *Life Changing Generosity*.)

**\* A BIG INDICATOR OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY - *Evangelizing Without Words***

**1 Thessalonians 4.9-10**

*But we don't need to write to you about the importance of loving each other, for God Himself has taught you to love one another. <sup>10</sup> Indeed, you already show your love for all the believers throughout Macedonia. Even so, dear brothers and sisters, we urge you to love them even more.*

**Rom 12:10** *Love each other with genuine affection and take delight in honoring each other.*

**Hebrews 13:1** *Keep on loving each other as brothers and sisters.*

**1 Peter 1:22** *You were cleansed from your sins when you obeyed the truth, so now you must show sincere love to each other as brothers and sisters. Love each other deeply with all your heart.*

**1 John 4.20** *If someone says, "I love God," but hates a fellow believer, that person is a liar; for if we don't love people we can see, how can we love God, whom we cannot see?*

This is why it is vitally important to be connected to a Community Group:

- \* *To love and be loved.*
- \* *To care and be cared for.*
- \* *To serve and be served.*
- \* *To pray and be prayed for.*

*But the nature of Christian love is such that it is always practiced, never mastered.*

**\* A BIG INDICATOR OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY - External Fidelity**

**1 Thessalonians 4.11** *Make it your goal to live a quiet life, minding your own business and working with your hands, just as we instructed you before.*

Few actions repulse non-Christians more than seeing and hearing of Christians within the church fight, argue, display divisions, hate, and despise one another. It does two things:

1. Makes non-Christians glad they are not **DUPED** into believing anything a Christian would say.
2. Gives non-Christians a solid excuse to never believe anything some hypocritical Christian may say. It solidifies their **SKEPTICISM**.

*DEF for Maturity: Having less and less supervision from others and accepting direction from the Holy Spirit, as well as less needing to be told what to do by more mature believers and more of following God's leadership.*

**1 Thessalonians 4.12** *Then people who are not believers will respect the way you live, and you will not need to depend on others.*

- When Relating To Other Christians  
Don't be **PETTY**. Blessed are the flexible for they shall not get bent out of shape.
- When Relating To Non-Christian Friends  
Be aware they are observing, listening, and **CAPTURING** images of the Savior from our lives.

**1 Thessalonians 4.12** *Then people who are not believers will respect the way you live...*

Heavenly Father,

I know that I have broken Your laws and my sins have separated me from you. I am truly sorry, and now I want to turn away from my past sinful life toward You. Please forgive me. I believe that Your Son Jesus Christ died for my sins, was resurrected from the dead, is alive, and hears my prayer. I invite Jesus to become the Lord of my life, to rule and reign in my heart from this day forward. Please send your Holy Spirit to help me obey You and to do Your will for the rest of my life. In Jesus' Name I pray. Amen.