



GUIDELINES DAILY COMMENTARY ON LIVING
WITH DR. HAROLD J. SALA

Subject: Personal Development

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ARE YOU MATURE?

The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge; the ears of the wise seek it out.
Proverbs 18:15

"Maturity," says the Merriam-Webster dictionary, "is the condition, or state, of being fully developed." However, the word is often used so loosely that it flaps like a kid's shirttail in the breeze. Michael Drury says, "If you are mature, you are presumed to be happy, secure, married, well-liked and something called "adjusted." If you aren't mature, you are incorrigible, defective or warped—and heaven help you." A newspaper columnist defined maturity as follows:

"Maturity is patience. It is the willingness to give up immediate pleasure in favor of the long term gain. Maturity is perseverance, the ability to sweat out a project or a situation in spite of heavy opposition and discouraging setbacks.

"Maturity is the capacity to face unpleasantness and frustration, discomfort and defeat, without complaint or collapse. Maturity is humility. It is being big enough to say, 'I was wrong.' And when right, the mature person need not experience the satisfaction of saying, 'I told you so.'

"Maturity is the ability to make a decision and stand by it. The immature spend their lives exploring endless possibilities, then they do nothing. Maturity means dependability--keeping one's word--coming through in a crisis. The immature are masters of the alibi. They are the confused and disorganized. Their lives are a maze of broken promises, former friends, unfinished business and good intentions that somehow never seem to materialize. Maturity is the art of living in peace with that which we cannot change."

And there you have it. Contrary to popular thought, maturity and age are not synonymous. There are some faulty barometers of maturity often associated with marriage or position. A man can be either married or in an important position and



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at times display great immaturity. If a person's body continues to grow while his brain has an injury which stops interaction or communication, we view that as a tragedy. A man may function normally and take his place in society and yet possess the immaturity of a child.

If physical, emotional, and spiritual maturity is a goal, it would be a good idea to know how to develop this sterling quality of life. How do you learn to be aware of others? How do you learn to make decisions and then move forward? How do you stay with a goal in the face of adversity? Difficulty does not necessarily produce maturity. We respond to trouble either with maturity or else fail to meet the challenge in immaturity.

However you define it, maturity is not a state you suddenly arrive at. It is a continuous development which is achieved less by age than by insight. The Bible speaks of maturity in terms of a Greek word often translated "perfect," but the meaning is "fully formed" or "brought to completion," and that takes time.

Maturity is not so much a destination as it is a journey or road full of twists and turns. A part of maturity is the determination to finish the journey and to complete the course. Maturity is looking back at the end of life's journey and saying, "I have fought a good fight. I have finished the course." But few of us are at that place in life because the road ahead is full of challenges.

You can recognize some of the indications that you are making progress when you face disappointments and realize that life will go on. You are learning when you are denied something that you really wanted and can take it in stride. You are making progress when you realize that maturity is a journey and not a destination. Be sure you are on that path.

Resource reading: Proverbs 18