

Spiritual maturity is the maturity of faith. You know about the privileges of maturity in other areas, but do you know the privileges of spiritual maturity? Perhaps you don't because the church hasn't been clear enough about them. What are they? It is the privilege of taking the body and blood of Christ for yourself in the Lord's Supper instead of your parents doing it for you. It is the privilege of speaking your concerns directly to the elders and minister instead of having your parents do it for you. It is the privilege of having your voice and vote heard at congregational meetings. It is the privilege of serving others in the church, visiting the sick, encouraging and admonishing others. It is the privilege of bringing others to church to meet God. It is the privilege of leading church society meetings.

Further, it would seem true as well that spiritual maturity means you can choose a career to follow and choose someone to marry. Why do we say this? If you haven't the spiritual maturity to say publicly that you love Christ and will cling to Him, can you really have the maturity to say publicly that you love and will cling to this man or this woman? If you don't have the spiritual maturity to publicly say you will serve Christ, how can you publicly enter into a career to serve man?

When Do I Reach Maturity?

How can you decide if you are mature enough to make public profession of faith? Is it enough to say you love Jesus? No, for five-year-old children can say they love Jesus and they do love Jesus. We have no good reason to doubt them. But we do have reason to doubt their ability to carry through with their love. With training and growth they will gain the maturity to handle the privileges and responsibilities of loving Christ on their own.

Again, we can illustrate this from the structure God has given life. If you told your dad when you were in fourth grade that you loved the red-haired girl with pig tails who sat in front of you, your dad, we hope, would believe you. If you said you wanted to marry her, your dad would say no. Why? Isn't love a good reason to marry someone? Yes, but your love must be a mature love, a love that can protect and provide. Since you are not mature enough to fulfill the obligations of love, marriage must wait. Since a five-year-old who