

Christ-Centered



Biblical Training

Matthew 6:33; 1 John 2:6;  
2 Chronicles 16:9

## Keys to Becoming Maximally Experientially Mature in Christ-likeness In Godly Relationship Living

(Needed for Now and in Eternity to Know and to Relate to  
Our Perfect God Toward His Fullness in Depth-Breadth)

by

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## REPORT CONTENTS

This document (as a major theme) presents the principles that must be known and lived out experientially with excellence to become maximally mature in Christ-likeness needed for greatly relating to God in both now, but especially in eternity. ●1 ●2

## ORGANIZATION

Read PART ONE First - Introduction and Orientation (~8 Pages);

PART TWO Follows with Greater Detail, Added Topics, More Scriptures, a Self-Check Analysis, and Characteristics of Being Mature (~31 Pages).

## PART ONE:

## UNDERSTANDING AND BACKGROUND NEEDED TO GAIN MAXIMUM MATURITY IN CHRIST-LIKENESS IN ORDER TO HAVE GOD'S BEST IN ETERNITY ●3

**KEY UNDERSTANDING:** We are to be eternity oriented, living by God's absolute Greatness. We are now on earth to gain a maximum high-skill spiritual ability in Christ-likeness in relationship living as Christ walks with God the Father (and to live

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1. **REFERENCES: KEY DOCUMENTS ON MY WEB SITE TO READ FOR GAINING THE BIG PICTURE (Read them all. There is no short cut to learn the many topics involved):** (1) *God's Plan Over History for Man to Become Mature in Christ Needed to Eternally Know and Relate to Our Perfect God in His Greatness*; (2) *The Greatness of God Must be Central*; (3) *Pursue Spiritual Maturity in Christ-likeness as God Commands With Excellence and Great Commitment*; (4) *Christian-Life Relationship Principles* PPT Charts; and (5) *The Pattern View of Prophecy*. (From these documents we should observe (learn) and, in life, avoid implementing satanic strategies.)

2. **All (printed) Scriptures were taken from the NASB.**

3. **WE MUST BE BOTH "OUTCOME" AND "PROCEDURALLY" ORIENTED:** To become mature in Christ-likeness is the desired "outcome." We need to know the characteristics of a mature person. How to get there is "procedure." We need also to know the procedures to gain this maturity so we will live in Christ-likeness. We must see this difference of outcome versus procedure in how we train. **A mature person will live out the procedures. Thus, we need to search all the Scriptures for what we are to become and for the all the steps we must live out experientially to get there.**

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**this way).** This is needed and required for us in eternity to relate to and know the infinite God the Father toward His maximum in His depth-breadth. Then, we will live by His holiness and righteousness in perfect environment in close fellowship with Him and each other forever. **Apart from this relationship, living by His perfection, there is nothing.** The maturity●4 we have in Christ-likeness at death, we will very likely have forever. God commands us now to pursue maturity. Thus, we need to gain a maximum maturity now in our lifetimes with serious commitment, excellence, and thoroughness. We, being gifted differently, need to help each other in this endeavor. **(This is why I read many books and documents by others. I have read more than 40 books.)**

**KEY INGREDIENTS SUMMARY (A mature high-skill spiritual maturity in Christ-likeness in relationship living directed by God)** - It is founded and based on God's doctrines in the Bible in thought and action as led by the Holy Spirit. God commands us to train and help each other so that we become mature in Christ-likeness in this our lifetime for life in eternity and for whatever other reasons He may have. **The Church's main job in training is to help mature her people in Christ-likeness - present every believer complete in Christ - training in a practical way using a version of God's Whole Counsel.** Then, we will walk with God, greatly knowing and relating to Him, throughout eternity.

**To become mature in Christ, we must as a minimum, in excellence seeking God's best: (1) Appreciate God's absolute infinite Greatness such that we search all the Scriptures for all He wants us to become and do - and then live them out - doing all of God's will, we become a person after God's own heart (Acts 13:22) which will greatly glorify God; (2) We must live in head-subordinate relationships as the Father had with the Son; (3) We must live as Christ lives with everything in thought and action coming from the Father - then when people see us, they see the Father because we, from ourselves, are doing nothing; (4) We must live by faith trusting God to fulfill His promises and activating our faith with the instructions with the promise - then we live without sin and receive revelation of the Scriptures from God; (5) We must live by sacrificial love, keeping (obeying) God's commandments - then we live holy and righteously with the result we come to know God and serve each other; and (6) When filled with Holy Spirit, we obey the Scriptures with the result we sing melody from our hearts to the Lord. These will be discussed.**

**REPORT PURPOSE: Based on the material presented in *Key Understanding* and in *Bottom Line (below)*, this report's purpose is to alert us to ensure we are seeking (pursuing) and being disciplined to maturity (to become mature) with thoroughness and excellence in Christ-likeness (**Outcome**) as**

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4. **MATURITY:** When we use the word: "maturity" in this report, we mean to have a maximum mature "experiential" high-skill spiritual ability and walk in Christ-likeness living in the same manner as He does. It is to live in head-subordinate relationships that He had with the Father with everything for life coming from God the Father as a source. It does not mean having the same capability as Christ does. This is not possible for He, as God, has capability that we cannot and will never have. In practice, we will only obey the Bible, directly or in application, as led of the Holy Spirit. We can take faith-action steps to find God's will. ***The greater experiential maturity we have and live out, the more we can know and glorify God.*** When we are mature, we are living the life experientially, not just from knowledge. People must see Christ in us, not us, as we live out our lives. There are many skill levels and different degrees of maturity at each skill level.

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God commands that we do. ●5 Our purpose is also to describe what constitutes maturity (**Outcome**) and to point much of the way (ways) the Bible teaches for how we can gain this spiritual maturity (become mature) (**Procedure**). (When we are mature, we will experientially live out the procedures.) We do this by sharing aspects or keys to what is involved and needed Bible study topics by which we can (need to) train. **We must know what we are to become (desired Outcome) and how we get there (needed Procedure). We will need trained leaders to help us get there. Of course, none of us know everything involved, but we are sharing what we know and have learned from others to date. We will need to help each other. (I update this report as I learn more, especially from others.)** (Please overlook redundancy. With many aspects to cover, related to each other, it was difficult to keep out.)

**TARGET AUDIENCE:** This report is directed to all Christians, but especially to Church and family heads. Its purpose is to help us (including me) gain more maturity in Christ, needed both for now, but especially that needed and planned for eternity. It was written founded on God-led long-term studies, my family life, teaching-writing experiences, and taking many inputs from others. We welcome your inputs and suggestions. We update this report periodically as we gain more understanding. If you want to become a Christian refer to our web site document under TRAINING: **God Is Reaching out to You to Become a Christian.**

**BOTTOM LINE:** We have a most perfect and infinite God (the God of the Holy Bible) with absolute and infinite Greatness with all the possible perfect attributes, character qualities, truth, and value that exists. We have value when He places His value in us and we live it out. He has chosen to create us so that, when trained in this lifetime, we can live in and by His perfection (in perfect love) by His direction coming from His Greatness and perfection in unity with Him throughout eternity, for ever and ever. Then, we can live in close fellowship with Him (and each other), in His righteousness and holiness, without sin. (By ourselves, as created beings, we are incapable to direct our own lives in righteousness and holiness and without sinning - breaking God's laws.)

**For this purpose, God has designed our lifetime for us to become Christians, and then especially for us to train to become maximally mature in Christ-likeness. For this to happen, all of life in thought and action, must (and will in eternity) come from God the Father as a source.** For us to learn, He must be working in us and drawing us to Himself, revealing His will. He will very likely do this to the degree (He knows in advance) how we will respond to Him. We will walk by faith in Him to direct our paths according to His promises as He is working in us, by what the Bible teaches. We must know the Scriptures and look for His leading and working in us. We need to have much prayer. Our Lord, as the Scriptures teach, lives this we now (as always lived this way) - by only what comes from the Father as a source - written for our purpose so we could understand how we are to live. **Christ is God and our perfect (and only) role model.**

**We are calling this mature life (with all direction coming from God the Father) living in Christ-likeness. The maturity God commands that we pursue then is becoming mature in living by the techniques at maximum skill levels in response to the leading of God the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. This is becoming complete in Christ. The concept is that when people see us, they see God living out through us, because we are only living out what God is working in us. Then, He working in all of us believers, it will be God all in all. (Other people should see a difference in us as we live this way. We are no longer living as the world lives, using our sin natures as a source.)**

**God is not forcing us to live this way (we are not robots). We do so because we love Him for**

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5. **GOOD REVIEW:** I regularly review this report as a reminder of what I need to think and do.

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**who and what He is in His absolute perfection, including Him being love. Loving Him, we want to obey His commandments.** Keeping His commandments, we will live holy and righteously and come to know God in His depth-breadth. This is why it is ultra important to learn to live by love. The Bible teaches that without living by love, we are nothing. (This is because we would not obey our Father in heaven from love to keep His commandments in all that He wants to lead us - we could (would) not have the most perfect life in fellowship with our great and perfect God, living by great righteousness and holiness. We would not come to know Him, as much, in His depth-breadth. We would not serve each other as much sacrificially and our lives would be less God centered.) We, in heaven, will be trusting Him (by faith), not ourselves, to direct life according to His promises (this will most likely include many new (additional) ones). We activate our faith by obeying the instructions (works) with the promises. As we do, we receive revelation from God for what we are to become and do and the meaning of the Scriptures. **Then, we live without sin because everything is coming from Him as a source. This how we, as Christians, will live in eternity.**

**We must carefully remember that God gives us revelation and information for what He wants us to do and to become - and not do, based on our faith-obedient walk.** If we walk by little activated faith (few works), receiving but little revelation, our lives and ministries will (can) plateau. (We must remember that faith without works exists, but is dead. God does not respond to dead faith.) And then, we can go in a multitude of wrong directions now on earth without our realization. In heaven, without knowing how to live by strong faith, God may not, by His own principles, lead us in the many great ways, He desires for us.

*Hebrews 6:1 ..... let us press on to maturity .....*

*1 John 2:6 - the one who says he abides in Him (Christ) ought himself to walk in the same manner as He (Christ) walked. (Comments: Mine)*

*John 5:19-20 - Jesus therefore answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. "For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and greater works than these will He show Him, that you may marvel.*

*John 14:9 - Jesus said to him, " ..... He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how do you say, 'Show us the Father'?"*

*1 Corinthians 13:13 But now faith, hope, love, abide these three ; but the greatest of these is love.*

*Galatians 2:20 - "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.*

*Matthew 24:13 - "But the one who endures to the end, he shall be saved.*

*1 Corinthians 13:2 - And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.*

*James 2:14 - What use is it, my brethren, if a man says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him? James 2:17 - Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.*

This means we should train to become proficient and mature in responding to God using techniques such as living by activated (living) faith and by love, keeping the commandments. We also need to live by the character qualities required of Church leadership and of the Beatitudes. It does not mean we

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will become mature as Christ is. He being God will live by techniques and means-capabilities only available as and inherent to God. But we can live most perfect lives in His holiness and righteousness in unity fellowship with both the Father and Christ. **By obeying Him, we can glorify and enjoy them forever. We will have a most perfect and wonderful life. Thus, the main objective in this lifetime is to become maximally mature in Christ-likeness so under God's moment by moment direction, we can live maximum perfect lives, having maximum unity fellowship with Him, Christ, and each other.**

**The measurement of our maturity can only be done by God the Father.** It is measured by how well we have responded to God, in all aspects of our life, in comparison to how Christ, being perfect and God, would have responded if He had acted in our place. He alone is our perfect role model.●6

**Thus, "the main job" of the Church is to train her people to reach this maximum mature high-skill capability in Christ-likeness. Elders and pastors must clearly understand this and work to mature their people with excellence and thoroughness using a version of God's whole counsel. Maturing their people must be a higher priority than reaching new people, even though both must be done. If we do not mature our own people toward the maximum, our Church life and ministry will plateau and even go in wrong or in incomplete ways. We will be like a lukewarm church and fewer people will want to attend. What purpose is there?**

**In this training, we must train with what to do, how to do things, examples for how to do things, and with personal testimony of the teacher for how he or she lived them out. There must be some form of on-the-job training. Doing less is mainly to pass out information mainly of what to do. Teachers and pastors should not teach unless they have lived out the principles. (Would you take lessons to fly an airplane from a person who knows the principles, but has never flown an airplane?)**

**We can reach greater maturity in God if we greatly appreciate His absolute and infinite Greatness such that we adequately and earnestly pursue and obey everything He has planned for us under the leading of the Holy Spirit. Thus, we need to search the Bible for needed and necessary inputs and look to (for) God's leading. (There may be special sermons, seminars, or books available.) We need to live our lives to glorify Him in all things - doing this, all must come from Him as a source. God does not accept glory from us - things from us or the world as a source.**

We want to emphasize that which will bring great glory to God. We do this by being obedient to what He wants us to do - what comes from Him as a source - never what comes from us as a source.

*John 17:4 - "I (the Lord Jesus Christ) glorified Thee (God the Father) on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou hast given Me to do. (Comments: Mine)*

*John 5:41 - "I do not receive glory from men; (God does not accept things that come from men (us)*

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6. **JUDGMENT:** Thus, we cannot "accurately" (and thus, should not) judge people as persons or their maturity, only what they do, teach, and say they believe.

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as a source. All direction and thoughts for life must come from Him as a source. He has the only value that exists. He only accepts from us what we live out that which He gives us.)

This report, from the Scriptures, helps to lead the way to the degree that we understand to gain this maximum maturity in Christ-likeness. This life with God is experiential built upon Bible doctrine, and thus, we need experiential maturity with God - not just know doctrine about it. ●7

We very likely will not take any of this life's memories (based on the sin nature), goods, and property with us into eternity. As we enter eternity, our sin natures and all of its memories will be removed from us. In eternity, we will live in a perfect environment in a perfect relationship with God, and then with each other. We cannot know much about this perfect environment now. We must now remain faithful to obeying God, following Christ, and doing ministry throughout our lifetimes - enduring to the end. ●8

*Isaiah 65:17 - "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind.*

*Romans 8:18 - For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*

*Matthew 24:13 - "But the one who endures to the end, he shall be saved.*

When we abide in Christ as believers, we will experience the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) and that of Christ's vine (John 15:1-7). We should have much of this fruit in our daily lives. In practice, when we abide in Christ, we will obey the Bible in areas as led of the Holy Spirit.

*Galatians 5:22-23 - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

*Romans 8:14 - For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.*

**GAINING MATURITY:** We gain in spiritual-life proficiency - maturity (Outcome) as led by the Holy Spirit as we train academically and practically in some experiential on-the-job training in at least the following (Procedure): **(1)** Worship and Glorify God; **(2)** Live godly lives in head-subordinate relationships patterned after Christ's walk with the Father, particularly in the family, including by faith and love; **(3)** Helping to accomplish God's work; **(4)** Stand Strong on Christian-Faith Doctrines; and **(5)** Have a regular and strong devotional life of reading our Bibles and in much prayer. A good training curriculum will consist of at least **(1)** Christian-Faith Doctrines with the Attributes and Greatness of

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**7. READ MY DOCUMENT FOR HELP AND TRAINING:** We should encourage people to down load my document (summary of many inputs (teachings) from the Bible): *Living By God's Righteousness* from my web site. People and youth can read several pages each day in their devotions. It contains Psalms (printed out) by which to praise God, promises (printed out) to memorize with which to trust God, three hundred commandments to read shown to obey from our love of God, the principles of love, the attributes of God (by which to know and appreciate God), the spiritual requirements for Church leadership and the Beatitudes, and some key thoughts on personal prayer. I read several pages in my devotions each day. It brings Scripture teachings to mind we need to learn and a reminder of those we learned.

**8. SHIFT IN LIFE:** There needs to be a shift in a Christian's life from mainly going to Church and then living worldly to wanting to live holy and righteously and having the best of God. I believe the latter comes when one loves who and what God is in His Greatness and wants to live under His headship. It begins when we sense God working in us. (E.g. A woman will want to marry a man when she comes to love him for who and what he is - willing to live under his headship.)

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God; **(2)** Christian-Life Head-Subordinate Relationship Principles (encompassing 1-5 above); and **(3)** God's Plan for history including the spiritual warfare and endtimes prophecy.●9

One major key for gaining maturity is to die to self rule and come under God's rule. We must realize that we cannot accomplish under God unless He is working in and leading us. For this to happen (for us to respond), we must be living by strong activated faith in God as He leads us. Thus, we need to recognize His leading and respond in faith-action (obedience).

*Hebrews 11:6 - And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.*

*Romans 8:28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*

**ETERNITY:** God commands that we pursue this maturity (e.g. Hebrews 6:1). Thus, we have no option but to do so. However, the Bible does not directly teach whether or not our spiritual maturity in Christ-likeness that we have at death will be forever throughout eternity or can increase in heaven. In heaven, God may use our maturity and build upon it in a way or ways that we cannot know now.

But, Bible data and doctrines (presented in Section Two) strongly support the concept that the spiritual ability or proficiency we have at death, we can and most likely will have forever without allowance in eternity for improvement.●10 God has left our understanding to be a matter of faith, even though He commands us to pursue it.●11 (E.g. All of Biblical history with the spiritual warfare, the reason we are here, is designed for the purpose, we gain this maturity.)●12 Because most Christians have (and will have) different walks of faith and love etc., thus, most likely we will most likely enter eternity with different skill levels of maturity in Christ-likeness. Thus, in heaven, we should expect to receive different rewards and different depths and breadths of walks with God.

If we believe otherwise (not believing our maturity is fixed forever at death), we should hedge about being wrong such that we pursue maturity with excellence as God commands. (We should want to live by strong activated faith and activated love so we can know and relate to God more in His Greatness now as well as in heaven.) Then, we will have God's best regardless of what happens and how He uses it.

**Regardless whether or not we can fathom this, we should pursue maturity as God commands**

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**9. MY EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING:** I have had long-term committed study in all of these. I have taught most of them before, including the listed curriculum. My wife and I had unity in most everything, and we stood on and practiced these principles in our marriage and family. (Of course, we had to study and learn them.)

**10. WE HAVE QUESTIONS:** We, of course, have many questions about babies, children, and new converts (Christians) dying. However, we believe, from faith and from some Old Testament teachings about entering the promised land, that all people (particularly children) who die, prior to reaching the age of God accountability (regardless of their actual age), will be saved and will have some amount of spiritual maturity.

**11. PURSUING MATURITY:** If He told us directly that our maturity was fixed forever at death, we most likely would pursue by sight instead of by faith.

**12. BIBLICAL HISTORY:** But we should (must) realize that all of Biblical history leads to and is for the purpose that we develop this maturity now. **(So what am I, are you, and are our Churches doing?) See our web site report: God's Plan Over History for Man to Become Mature in Christ Needed to Eternally Know and Relate to Our Perfect God in His Greatness;**

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and with all diligence, excellence, and thoroughness. Otherwise we are (can be) making a most terrible eternal (a for ever and ever) mistake. Thus, we, using the Bible teachings, should make a critical analysis of our lives to see where corrections are needed. And then we should urgently make them.●13 We can help each other. But if it is fixed at death, and we do not adequately pursue it, we pay a most terrible eternal penalty for it effects how well we can know and relate to God toward His fullest throughout eternity - “forever and ever” without possibility for change. And apart from relating closely to Him, there is nothing.

Our leaders must understand most thoroughly, as previously presented, that the main reason we are now here on earth is to gain this maturity so we can know and relate to (walk with) our God “in His absolute perfection” to the maximum. Thus, elders and pastors must clearly understand that “the main job” of the Church is to bring us (their Church people), who will respond, to a maximum maturity in Christ-likeness (They must have both a description of maturity and the steps to get there.). We must learn how to get there (procedure) and obey God with excellence and thoroughness. Our Church elders and pastors by doctrine and example must train their people, or find those who can, to become maximally mature in Christ.

**THE SITUATION FACING US: Signs, especially in the US, now signal loudly that Revelation’s endtimes Tribulation can come at any time.●14 Only God knowing the timing. The Tribulation will bring great persecution and the most difficult of times. We will need to live by the strongest faith and trust in God. Thus, we will need to learn to live by an experiential walk of faith to a large degree before the Tribulation begins. Thus, we must train with much urgency, including especially training our children and youth, using the short remaining time most wisely.**

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13. **KEY COMMENTS:** But, of course, we realize that being in heaven with some maturity is better than not existing or not going there. We should pursue God’s best for our lives as He commands, regardless of our station in life. We, having different gifts and experiences, should and need to help each other in this pursuit. Even though we may know much, none of us know it all. We need to (should) help each other.

If we want to live our lives, in any way we please, even in the Church, believing our maturity can and will (might) increase in heaven (or have never thought about it), then we should find Scripture that teaches this will and can happen. But in my search, there are none. Biblical history teaches that the main reason we are here is to gain this maturity. So not now pursuing maturity as God commands, we will (can) be wasting our lives - not gaining adequate maturity in Christ-likeness needed for eternity. We must obey God and pursue maturity now and trust Him for the outcome.

14. **SIGNS:** The signs now in the United States are similar signs that were in Israel just before Babylon and other world governments invaded. They include extended most severe weather, most terrible inflation, same sex marriages, and a falling away of God’s people from needed obedience to degrees of lukewarmness.

**PART TWO**  
**DETAILED DISCUSSION WITH ADDED TOPICS:**  
**UNDERSTANDING NEEDED TO GAIN MAXIMUM**  
**EXPERIENTIAL MATURITY IN CHRIST-LIKENESS,**  
**WORKING WITH EXCELLENCE, IN ORDER TO HAVE**  
**GOD'S BEST, RELATING TO HIM IN ETERNITY**

(Much More Detail with Scriptural development, with Many More of the Scripture Teachings we must know and live out under God's leading, a Self-Check Analysis, and Signs or Characteristics of Being Mature,)

(Please Read Part One First. Please Overlook Redundancy.)

**ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDING**

**INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW:** As presented (introduced) in Part One, God commands us to pursue becoming mature in Christ-likeness, using the general principles by which Christ lives and works. Our Lord Jesus Christ is our only role model for mature living and by God's holiness and righteousness. He only did what came from the Father as a source. Having and gaining this maturity, God wants our lives lived out founded on Bible doctrine to be an example to others so they will have more incentive to follow God. God wants us mature so we can relate to Him in all eternity deep into His perfection and live at His direction in perfect holy and righteous lives according to His perfect infinite Glory and character qualifies. **Apart from Him, there is no perfection - no perfect living. God has the only truth that exists. We must thoroughly grasp this teaching.** As Christians, we must not live apart from God, apart from living by His principles in excellence.●15

Note: the Scriptures teaching we are to pursue and live out to become maximally mature in Christ-likeness (bolding emphasis mine):

*Hebrews 6:1 - Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ (the a,b,c's of the Christian life and faith), **let us press on to maturity**, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God (not going over the a,b,c's over and over again), (Comments: Mine)*

*Acts 20:26-27 - "Therefore I testify to you this day, that I am innocent of the blood of all men. "For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose (counsel) of God. (Comment: Mine.)"*

*Matthew 28:19-20 - "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, **teaching them to observe all that I commanded you**; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

2 Corinthians 10:5 - We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and **we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,**

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15. **MORE ASPECTS:** This report, especially Part Two, presents many of the needed and very essential aspects to know and live out that help us become mature in Christ-likeness. It also presents signs or characteristics in our lives that mature people live out. Inputs were taken from others, and I added my own. There no doubt are many more aspects that could be added. (See my web site training charts (presentation slides) - *Christian-Life Relationship Principles* and also our paper: *God and His Greatness Must Be Central* for more background and understanding. See the references on page one.) Send us your suggestions for additions and/or needed changes.

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*Ephesians 3:16-19 - that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man; so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints **what is the breadth and length and height and depth**, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, **that you may be filled up to all the fulness of God.***

*Ephesians 4:13 - until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ.***

*Colossians 1:28 - And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, **that we may present every man complete in Christ.***

*James 1:2-4 - Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. **And let endurance have its perfect result, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.***

**VERY IMPORTANT CONCEPT TO GRASP AND UNDERSTAND - THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT (Nothing whatever to do with speaking in tongues.):** As unbelievers, God draws us to Himself, giving us some faith (John 6:44). As we became Christians, we were spiritually placed into Christ, we died (crucified) with Christ, were buried with Christ, and spiritually (not bodily) resurrected with Christ with newness of life. When this happened, our depraved nature died such that they no longer legally represents us. We still have it, and we will sin using it (mistakes made as we pursue maturity). We, in the spiritual resurrection, received a new divine nature that now legally represent us. **The divine nature cannot sin and thus, we are no longer under (or can come under) condemnation before God. God leads us in our divine natures. This gives us eternal security such that we can never lose our eternal-life salvation. This process is the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.**

The process is also called being born again. All of our training to live by love and by faith is learned by the divine nature as God directs our thoughts and actions. The divine nature is what we take into heaven with us. At that time the depraved nature is removed from us. This situation is one reason we believe our maturity in Christ-likeness is fixed for ever at death because we cannot sin in heaven which would be mistakes in our training. There is no sin in heaven.

*Romans 6:1-13 - What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin. Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts, and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.*

*2 Peter 1:3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.*

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*Romans 8:1-2 - There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.*

*Colossians 1:28 - And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ.*

**THE GREATNESS OF GOD** - We will have greater incentive to become mature in Christ-Likeness when we have an appreciation for God's infinite and absolute Greatness. God alone is perfect in every attribute. There is no sin or darkness in Him of any kind or any amount. Even though we may have much insight, God's infinite Greatness is beyond our comprehension. He is perfect, most holy, and infinitely complete in all possible perfect attributes and character qualities. He has always existed (has pre-existence) and has eternal self existence.●16 He lives in a different domain than we do. He has always known everything in all domains that can be known in the past, present, and future (omniscient). In Him, there is nothing new for Him to learn. He has always known everything (that is possible to know in all domains) simultaneously.●17 He interfaces with billions of humans and angels all at the same time. He is everywhere that exists (omnipresent) and has infinite power (omnipotent). He has created a universe so large, we do not know how large it is. There may be no end to it. He is holy, righteous, and truth. Holy, holy, holy is our Lord God almighty. He has mercy, everlasting kindness, grace, and infinite love and glory. He is love and holy. He works with us on an impartial basis. **A listing summary of (of many of) God's Attributes is Faithfulness, Glory, Grace, Holiness, Immensity, Immutability, Light, Long-Suffering, Love, Lovingkindness, Mercy, Omnipotence, Omnipresence, Omniscience, Provider, Righteousness, Self-Existence (Eternal Life), Sovereignty, Spirit, and Truth.**(See our web site study: *The Attributes of God* for details and Scriptures. They are also listed in my web site report: *Living by God's Righteousness.*)

**THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IS GOD: The Lord Jesus Christ (being God and part of the Trinity) has also always existed - had preexistence. He is the visible image of the invisible God. Thus, when we see Christ in how He lives, we see the Father. We are to obey and fellowship with Him. Because He is only doing what comes from the Father, everything He asked us to do we can know came from the Father. Christ and the Father are one. (The Father lives His life through the Son. So when we see the Son, we see the Father. Christ lives His life out through us.) Christ is our mediator between God the Father and man.**

*Galatians 2:20 - "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.*

*1 Timothy 2:5 - For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, (Note: Christ uses His Holy Spirit as He interfaces with us, as the Father, with His Holy Spirit, directs Christ.)*

*Colossians 1:15 - And He is the (visible) image of the invisible God .... Comment: mine.*

*John 10:30 - "I and the Father are one."*

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**16. GOD HAS ALWAYS EXISTED:** Having pre-existence, God has no beginning. This is beyond our comprehension. (E.g. Where did He come from. What was He doing before He created the earth, the universe, angels, and humans. Why did He need or want to create any beings?)

**17 EXAMPLE:** He has always known the millions of conversations going on now world-wide.

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**THE NEED FOR MATURITY (OUTCOME)** - As introduced in Part One, we need a mature high-skill spiritual ability in Christ-likeness in relationship living directed in real time by God (using His Holy Spirit) in order to know and relate to our perfect God toward His fulness in His depth-breadth. It is the way to live by sacrificial love, by faith, in His holiness and righteousness at His direction. This is the only way we can live a perfect life in close fellowship with Him and each other (without sin, without breaking of God's perfect-holy spiritual laws) . (When individually, we have fellowship with God - walking in unity with Him, then we have fellowship with each other.)

*1 John 1:3 - what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.*

*1 John 1:7 - but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.*

In this type life, we serve God and each other sacrificially from a mature love. With the Holy Spirit, He directs every thought-action by which we are to live. We are to learn to live by His direction. Today, His direction for us only (or mainly) comes directly from the Bible and/or the leading of the Holy Spirit in application of the Bible. He alone can direct our lives because He alone is holy, righteous, true, and has the attributes by which it can be done, and then, without sin or error. (If we get leading that is not in the Bible, we can be following a spirit that is not of God. We must discern.) God is the only one who has and knows the true and big picture. We have no inherent capability. We are created beings. All perfect and true value we have came from God or will come from Him. When we try to work all things together for good, without having inherent maturity and inherent righteousness and holiness, we sin. As He works all things together for our good in all of us as believers, He is God all in all. Apart from knowing and relating to the perfect God living holy and righteously at His direction without sin, there is nothing. How can there be anything?

As Christians, if we believe we are gaining the leading of God to accomplish certain tasks, we can take faith-action steps to find, determine, or confirm the will of God.

As Christians, we all know and relate to God to some degree. But we get to know God deeper toward His depth-breadth when we walk with Him in faith, for Him to fulfill His promises, and from love, keeping His commandments. He is inexhaustible in His person. As we walk by faith, He reveals the Gospel and Himself by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:3). **There is nothing apart from knowing and relating to the true and only God. So we should have a great desire to become mature so we can know more of Him and relate to Him at a deeper and mature level. We can have great fellowship also with each other.**

**Then in summary, apart from knowing and relating to our perfect God, there is nothing. Being more mature such that we have greater obedience, we can (will) glorify God much more. We should want this so we can more greatly honor His infinite Greatness. When we live to glorify God with everything we obey coming from God, we live without sin (He is absolutely sinless and without error of any kind or amount). This is because we are living only by what comes from Him, via the Holy Spirit, as a source - nothing from ourselves as a source. (All of what we do, we must believe comes from God as a source - His leading us in all things.)**

*Phillippines 3:8-11 - More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes*

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*from God on the basis of faith, that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.*

*Ephesians 3:16-19 - that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man; so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fulness of God.*

*Romans 8:14 - For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. Galatians 5:18 - But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.*

*1 John 5:20 - And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding, in order that we might know Him who is true, and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.*

**Knowing and relating to God, and fellowshiping with Him and each other according to His perfect ways, is His purpose for us. This, as being stated many times, is all there is for a perfect, holy, and righteous life. But we need to search out His ways in the Bible and carry them out (obey them) with great commitment, thoroughness, and excellence, as He leads us in them. As we obey Him, we glorify Him, doing what comes from Him as a source. We, as stated, will do this if we have some appreciation of His infinite Greatness and greatly love Him for it.**

**We were created for this purpose according to His will and pleasure. What a great privilege we have. We should be very thankful that we exist and can know and relate to our perfect God. Then we can know and relate most wonderfully to each other in eternity. What if we did not exist or remain as unbelievers?**

## THE WAY WE GAIN SPIRITUAL MATURITY IN CHRIST-LIKENESS

**WHAT IS SPIRITUAL MATURITY AND ITS MEASUREMENT (OUTCOME):** Our only role model for maturity, as stated, is our Lord Jesus Christ. We are told to live as He lives. He has perfect maturity. He only did and does what came from the God the Father as a source. He did nothing independently or on His own initiative. Thus, when people saw Him, they saw the Father, because He, from Himself as a source, was doing nothing. We, as stated, are to live this way with every thought and action we are to live out coming from God the Father. When we do, we live as an example to others. We become mature in Christ-Likeness when what we do only what comes from God the Father through our Lord Jesus and to the degree it comes. Then when people see us, they see Christ and God the Father because we, from ourselves as a source, are doing nothing. **This is the testimony that mature Church and family leadership are to, and will (should), live before their people. To what degree is this happening?**

***Learning to live as Christ lives with everything coming from God as a source, including our every thought and action, is the only path to maturity and to know and to relate to God in His depth-breadth. This is the way to perfect living and fellowshiping with our perfect God. This is what our perfect God has planned for us. We must understand (as a theme throughout this report), there is nothing else.***

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*John 2:6 - the one who says he abides in Him (Christ) ought himself to walk in the same manner as He (Christ) walked. (Comments: Mine)*

*John 5:19-20 - Jesus therefore answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. "For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and greater works than these will He show Him, that you may marvel.*

*John 5:30 - "I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.*

*John 12:49 - "For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me commandment, what to say, and what to speak.*

*John 14:9-11 - Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how do you say, 'Show us the Father'? "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. "Believe Me that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me; otherwise believe on account of the works themselves.*

*Galatians 2:20 - "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me. (As the Father works in Christ, He will work through Christ to work in us.)*

God does give latitude in many categories of our lives in decision making for carrying out His direction according to His will, but only according to His Biblical principles. Such latitude was given to the Son so people would honor the Son. When we use it, we must trust God to bring the results. We must believe that what we are doing will honor God and in reality, it came from God directly and/or in obedience to Biblical principles - nothing from us as a source. The Bible, with its principles, came from God as a source. Apart from Christ, we can do nothing. (E.g. From Biblical principles, we can look for a job - God commands us to work. Thus, we should look for a job, trusting God to lead us to the right one. When our wives come home tired, we can take them out to dinner so they do not have to fix dinner - we are to honor our wives.)

*John 5:21-23 - "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes. "For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, in order that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.*

*Proverbs 16:9 - The mind of man plans his way, But the Lord directs his steps.*

*Proverbs 3:5 - Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And do not lean on your own understanding.*

*John 15:5 - "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.*

**ESSENTIAL EIGHT ASPECTS OR INGREDIENTS IN SUMMARY FOR HOW WE BECOME AND LIVE MATURE (OUTCOME AND PROCEDURE); We must live by these principles to become mature, (procedure), and being mature, (outcome) we will live them out.:**

We will pursue maturity in Christ-Likeness when we have an appreciation: **(1)** for God's infinite Greatness and Person; **(2)** for and love Him from our total being such that we will do all things to His infinite Glory (all that comes from Him): and **(3)** for what He has planned for us for now, but especially

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in and for eternity. ***As we live for God, appreciating His Greatness, we will begin our maturity trek when we seek wisdom from a genuine fear of God and live it out under His direction.*** (People who do not have a genuine fear of God may not be (probably are not) Christians - they have no fear, for example, of going to the Lake of Fire. In any case, they will not proceed to having more of God's Greatness in their lives - because they are going more on their own. They do not realize He is in charge.)

*Psalm 111:10 - The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments; His praise endures forever.*

**In summary, to become mature in Christ-Likeness (Outcome), we need experientially to know, have become, and live out at least (Procedure) - the next 8 items (Perhaps you could add some) (When we are mature, we will live them out.):**

**1. LIVE SUCH THAT ALL WE THINK AND DO COMES FROM GOD THE FATHER AS A SOURCE AND ACCORDING TO THE RELATIONSHIP PRINCIPLES THAT OUR LORD HAS WITH HIS FATHER IN HEAD-SUBORDINATE RELATIONSHIPS.** We are to live with everything coming from God (today only from the Bible - nothing from us or the world as a source). Then, when people see us, they see the Father because we, from ourselves, are doing nothing. These head-subordinate principles, we carry over into marriage, families, life, industry, and our churches. In marriage, the husband will (should) love his wife and family and nourish and cherish them. He will meet their needs, hopefully as God sees them. The wife and children will obey from love believing that God is leading and directing them through the husband and father. Doing this, they glorify God. Then the husband becomes like Christ and the family like Christ and the husband in a unity exchange. (In principle, the wife will live to glorify her husband (really also God), obeying his guidance, believing God is working through him. (Thus, with this view, obeying the husband and father, they are really obeying God. Then when people see the wife, as they see God in her, they will also see the husband. Of course, husbands and wives are to seek unity in with each other and with God in all things. This is how my wife and I lived.)

*Ephesians 5:24-25 - But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her;*

*Ephesians 5:28 - So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself;*

**Scriptures for these were presented previously.** The Son lives out what comes from the Father as a source. (See our training ppt charts or slides under MATURITY TRAINING on our web site for more description and understanding.)

**2. BOTTOM LINE CONCEPT FOR LIVING (Having Needed Attitudes):** For God to be God in our lives, He, not us, must work all things together for good in our lives. He must direct every thought and action by which we live. We need to walk by faith in God that He is directing all that we are thinking and doing. We should not believe we are doing things on our own - things from ourselves as a source, not built upon Biblical principles. When we attempt, independent of God, to work all things together for good, we act like the Most High God.●18 And we have no inherent ability to do this without sin and

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18. **CHRISTIAN'S (AND SATAN'S) BIGGEST MISTAKE:** Wanting to be equal with God. was the great sin of  
(continued...)

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making mistakes. (As stated, we are created beings and all the good we have came from God.) Only our perfect God has the ability to work all things together for good. He alone has perfect attributes and sees the big picture.

*Romans 8:28 - And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.*

Those who love God are those that keep His commandments, and those called according to His purpose will do His work and become mature in Christ. We will do both.

*John 14:15 - "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.*

*John 15:10 - "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love.*

*Romana 8:29 - For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, ....*

**For this to occur, we must die to self rule and be humble in attitude, believing only God is and can be great and is capable to direct our lives.** We should serve others from sacrificial love. When we stop doing things from ourselves as a source, then God will (may) act with better results in our lives. We, then, can have greater response to God. We must let Him be in charge. In our depraved natures, we most often want to or take action to be in charge. (When we act - perhaps in ignorance - to be in charge, we act as our own head (as a god), instead of trusting our God to be head and God. We, from our sin natures, do this by default and being untrained in our divine natures.)

*Matthew 5:3 - "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*Matthew 16:24 - Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross (die to himself), and follow Me. (Comment: mine)*

*Luke 14:27 "Whoever does not carry his own cross (dying to self rule in life) and come after Me cannot be My disciple. (Comment: mine)*

*John 12:24-26 - "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. "He who loves his life loses it; and he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal. "If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall My servant also be; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.*

*Mark 9:35 - And sitting down, He called the twelve and said to them, "If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all."*

*Luke 13:30 - "And behold, some are last who will be first and some are first who will be last."*

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18(...continued)

Satan. (This is how we act when we, ourselves, attempt to work all things together for good, perhaps not realizing we are doing it. The Christian's biggest mistake is attempting to work all things together for good.(perhaps by default or in ignorance)). Satan does this believing he can, being enamored with himself. When he does, things are coming from him as a source. Thus, he sins. Satan and people do this using their sin natures. This results from being enamored with themselves (probably without realization), believing they can. When people and Satan live this way, they act as god over their lives - major sin. Most of our other sins flow from this one. We are only do what is in the Bible, then God works all together for good.

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*2 Timothy 2:11-13,15 - It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him; If we endure, we shall also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself. ... Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.*

Christ must live His life out through us. For this to happen, we need to die to self rule, no longer acting to be in charge. We wait upon God. Only Christ and God are in charge. We can take faith-action steps to find or ascertain God's will and direction. They lead us with the Holy Spirit. One way for this to occur, is to live by sacrificial love. Living for the sake of others from love, we die to our own selfish ambitions. See the next section.

*Galatians 2:20 - "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.*

*Isaiah 40:31 - Yet those who wait for the Lord Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary.*

**3. LIVE BY LOVING GOD WITH OUR TOTAL BEINGS AND EACH OTHER AS OURSELVES.** We will have this love if we know and appreciate God's absolute Greatness and character qualities, and we want to fellowship with Him in His Greatness and character qualities. This love is lived in obedience to heads and in sacrificial service to each other. We will live by sacrificial love serving God and others keeping God's commandments. We do this to live holy and righteously and respond to His moment by moment leading of His Holy Spirit. When we do, we accomplish His will and work. **We, living by and from love, will know God's heart and know God. Living by love is essential to getting to know God and is central to living the Christian life and becoming mature in Christ.**

(We must know what the commandments are. See our web site report: *Living by God's Righteousness* presenting of over 300 commandments from the Bible.)

Living by love experientially is essential to the Christian life and becoming mature in Christ.

*Matthew 22:37-40 - And He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' "This is the great and foremost commandment. "The second is like it, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' "On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets." (One cannot truly Biblically love others unless they also love God. They cannot serve others unless they are serving God. There can be exceptions.)*

*John 14:15 "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. (We must know what they are.)*

*John 15:7-11 - "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. "By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. "Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love. "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.*

The greatest demonstration of the Father's love was when Christ, being obedient, died on the Cross for the salvation of mankind (when the Father and Son broke fellowship as Christ's blood was purging and covering our sin - Christ said My God, My God, why has Thou forsaken me). **When Christ became sin on the Cross, the Father had forsaken Him. A most terrible situation. (Being totally rejected by a love one (or a Church member) is one of the worst things that could happen to a person.) Thus, we are to lay down our lives in sacrificially service to others, meeting their needs**

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**(as God would see them).**

*John 3:16 - "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.*

*Ephesians 2:4-5 - But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),*

*Ephesians 5:2 - and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.*

*John 15:12-13 - "This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.*

The characteristics of love we must know and live out experientially and sacrificially:

*1 Corinthians 13:4-8 - Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails; . . . .*

We must love in order to know God. Love is essential to the Christian life. Without love we are nothing, even if we have all knowledge and are a pastor, elder, or teacher.

*1 John 4:8 - The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. (God not only acts in love, He is love.)*

*1 Corinthians 13:1-3 - If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.*

**We are not to love the world or the things in the world - such a life is lived without teachings from God. Doing so, deters, diverts, and impedes our becoming more mature in Christ-Likeness because we are doing wrong things and our time is taken away from pursuing maturity in Christ. Living this way, we can be wasting our lives, even if we attend Church. ( Persons who attend Church, but live their lives centered in the world pursuits, most likely are not (or not becoming) mature (and may not be) Christians. Their lives in some manner must be centered in Christ.)**

*1 John 2:15 - Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (There are some things we enjoy and live out from the world, but they have no eternal purpose.)*

According to the Bible, when we worship the Lord, being filled with the Holy Spirit, we will sing melody from our hearts to the Lord.

*Ephesians 5:18-19 - ..... be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.*

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*Colossians 3:16 - Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.*

*Matthew 26:30 - After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.*

*Acts 16:25 - But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.*

So why do churches use the Devil's (the world's) loud rock-beat music that is not in the Bible (and use mainly only first level training)? (Does this not fall under the categories of not being able to tell the difference between the holy and the profane and/or no longer knowing sound doctrine? Loud rock beat music is profane, not being of God.) However, our churches, in my view, are using the world's rock beat music and low level training to draw the youth that causes people to jump around. Is this being filled with the Holy Spirit? - I doubt it. What is the source of such music - God or Satan? They do this to draw the youth, pleasing man, instead of using God's way of using music that brings maximum worship to God. This is a dumbing down process taking the church to become immature with a loss of Biblical intellect and having only a low plateau of God's Word. **Our churches have lost their excellence before God.** He draws them as He works in them using His Word. Thus, the Church should evangelize using God's Word. (However, unfortunately, we may need to use this music to have the youth come to church to hear God's Word. But how much can they grasp of it? Will it take them into ministry or any level of maturity?)

**4. LIVE BY FAITH IN GOD TO IMPLEMENT HIS PROMISES.** Our faith becomes living faith when it is activated by carrying out the instructions (works) associated with the promise. As we do, we live without sin (all is from God as a source), and we gain more revelation of the Scriptures from God. We believe that God exists. Then God carries out the provisions of His promise to bring the indicated results. He works through our living faith. (2 Peter 1:1-11)

*Hebrews 11:6 - And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.*

*James 2:22; 26 - You see that faith was working with his works (activation), and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; — For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works (activation) is dead. (Comments: Mine)*

*Romans - 1:17 - For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "But the righteous man shall live by faith." (We are declared righteous - the righteousness of God - when we became Christians as we believed in the Cross.)*

*2 Peter 1:4-8 - For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge; and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness; and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

(We must know what the promises are. We should memorize many. (See our web site report: *Living by God's Righteousness* for many promises, all typed out, to memorize - NASB.)

An example for how to live by faith is illustrated in the battle of Jericho (Joshua 6; Hebrews 11:30). God promised the Israelites that He would give Jericho into their hands. But they had to circumferene the city with their people as He required. Doing this, they activated their faith and had living faith. Then

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God, working through their living and activated faith, brought the walls down and allowed them to defeat Jericho's people.

**NOTE:** We will never see God the Father physically with our eyes in a body or hear His voice even in eternity - He is omnipresent (unless life in eternity is totally different than what we know now). Thus, we will need to walk by faith in heaven, as we do now, that He exists. **Thus, it is of high importance if we want more of God's best in heaven that we learn to live by great faith now.** We will live by faith that He exists and will do (carry out) His promises that our Lord will teach us. We will see the Lord Jesus Christ - when we see Him, we see the Father (John 14:6-11). He does nothing but what comes from the Father as a source (John 5:19-20). (Unless we live in an unknown and different format, many of us may not see the Lord Jesus Christ physically on a regular basis because there will be billions of Christians in heaven. The Bible implies that we will have many positions of authority under Christ all being led simultaneously by God the Father.) We can learn more of God and be used of Him in greater, deeper, and wider ways if we have a very mature life of living by faith, trusting God in eternity to fulfill His promises and by sacrificial love, obeying (keeping) His commandments (promises and commandments revealed to us in heaven). So we should pursue maturity as God commands with excellence whether or not our spiritual maturity can (will) be fixed at death is correct. We cannot please God without living by faith because He cannot reveal as much about Himself otherwise as He may desire. **Remember that the righteousness of God is revealed as we walk by faith to faith, as directed in the Bible.**

**5. GAIN AND LIVE BY THE CHARACTER QUALITIES OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP (ELDERS AND DEACONS) TO WALK UPRIGHT WITH INTEGRITY. We are to know, possess, and live by the required character qualities for Church leadership.** The character qualities of Church leadership are (1 Timothy 3:1-10; Titus 1:5-9): Be above reproach, Be a one-woman man, Be temperate and self-controlled, Be prudent, Be respectable and have dignity, Be hospitable, Be able to teach, Be not addicted to wine, Be not pugnacious, Be a gentle person, Be uncontentious, Be free from the love of money and not fond of sordid gain, Be a good manager of his own children and household, keeping his children under control in all dignity, Be not a new convert, and fully tested, Have a good reputation with those outside the Church, Not be self-willed, Not be quick tempered, Love what is good, Be sensible, Be just, Be devout, Hold fast to the faithful Word of God, **Have children who believe, and are not accused of dissipation or rebellion**, Live as an example to others and not lord over others, Not be double-tongued, Not be a malicious gossip, Have a good reputation among those inside the Church, and Be a man full of spirit and wisdom. (See our web site report: *Living by God's Righteousness* for a description of these character qualities.) (We must know what the character qualities are.)

### **6. LIVE BY THE ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS IN THE BEATITUDES.**

We are to know, possess, and live by the character qualities of the Beatitudes:

*Matthew 5:2-11 - And opening His mouth He (the Lord Jesus Christ) began to teach them, saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are you when men cast insults at you, and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, on account of Me.*

**7. BE A PERSON AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART:** Discover and do **ALL** of God's will. This is enacted by searching the **entire** Bible for **ALL** that we are to become and accomplish (outcome) and do

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(procedure - or method). **Then, we will obey all His will with excellence and thoroughness, seeking God's best.●19**

*2 Chronicles 16:9 "For the eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. . . . (one who will do all His will. See next verse.) – Acts 13:22 " . . . I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My heart, who will do ALL My will.' (Emphasis Mine.) (Thus, attempting to do all His will demonstrates we are people after His heart. Thus, we must head in this direction.)*

*2 Timothy 2:15 - Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.*

(This is where many (most) churches are falling short by not searching out **ALL** of God's will and obeying it. Examples are: **(1)** not attempting to evangelize their total local areas and especially the children with the true and complete Gospel; **(2)** not training with God's whole counsel that is necessary to mature their people in Christ-likeness toward the maximum; and **(3)** not warning, briefing, and preparing their people for the soon-coming of Revelation's endtimes Tribulation. Thus, our churches are not searching the entire Bible to find (discover) all that God's wants done and doing it. They are falling short. Is this not sin and/or a lack of spiritual maturity? It at least shows a lack of appreciation for God's absolute infinite Greatness.)

**8. BE A PERSON FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT:** When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we are obeying God's Word (led by the Holy Spirit) with the result we will be doing spiritual things. Then, as previously presented, we make melody as we sing to the Lord from our hearts and be most thankful. (We must (should) be able to do this when listening to Church music.)

*Ephesians 5:18-21 - ..... be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.*

**THERE ARE MANY SPIRITUAL (PROFICIENCY) MATURITY (CAPABILITY) LEVELS** (Resulting from different degrees of training and living out the principles): There are many maturity capability levels of living by faith, sacrificial love, etc. We all have different understandings of doctrine, the walk, and the ministry - we have different experiences in these. **For example, churches, work to do some evangelism without also working together to evangelize complete areas, particularly of the children.●20 They work for spiritual growth (even training with Bible content and doctrine), but do not work also to mature their people to live out the needed principles to the maximum amount they understand (or should understand). They do not even have sufficient curriculums from the Bible that allow it to be accomplished. Thus, not maturing their people with a version of God's Whole Counsel, they can be guilty of the people's blood - they sin. They are more procedure than outcome oriented. Do they establish the outcome that God wants?**

*Acts 20:26-27 "Therefore I testify to you this day, that I am innocent of the blood of all men. "For I did*

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**19. NEXT IMPORTANT STEP:** This is a most important step. We should now summarize our findings on paper (in the computer) and give a presentation of our findings to the congregation. We should let the congregation read the results of our search.

**20. EVANGELIZING THE CHILDREN:** We evangelize many children in our churches when they establish many Vacation Bible Schools (VBS) in the summer. We can greatly augment this by establishing tens and tens of after-school Bible clubs throughout the school year working with Child Evangelism Fellowship.

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*not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose (counsel) of God. (Comment: Mine)*

**REASONS WHY OUR SPIRITUAL MATURITY  
MAY BE FIXED FOREVER AT DEATH**

**There is, in my understanding (as introduced earlier), no direct Bible teaching that states or teaches whether or not our maturity in Christ-likeness will (can) increase in heaven or will remain what it is at our death. We have to go on faith and obey God's command to become mature. ●21**

**However, the Bible implies or signals loudly (does not directly teach) our maturity in Christ-Likeness can and most likely will be fixed at death forever in the following ways (Thus, we should pursue it with excellence):**

1. God commands us to pursue this maturity (Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Corinthians 10:5; Galatians 4:19; Ephesians 3:19; 4:11-13; Colossians 1:28; Hebrews 6:1; 11:35; James 1:2-4. It is important to Him that we pursue it for whatever reason He may have. To us, it includes having the ability to know and relate to God in His Greatness and Great Glory especially in eternity. It allows us now to have a greater ministry using greater love and faith. **Living this way, we can more greatly glorify God.** (Glorifying self is sin because, as created beings, we have no inherent eternal value.)
2. The Biblical events over all Biblical history from Genesis to Revelation, such as salvation in the Cross and growing in discipleship, are designed to lead us to gain this maturity in Christ. (See my web site reports: *God and His Greatness Must be Central*, and *God's Plan Over History for Man to Become Mature in Christ-Likeness Needed to Eternally Know and Relate to Our Perfect God in His Greatness*.)
3. The current developing environment of the world, flesh, and the devil (devil in spiritual warfare) is not allowed in heaven. The devil will not be in heaven. There are no trials and testings in heaven, as we have them now. We can only follow the leading of God using our divine natures that we received at salvation to the degree they have trained in this lifetime to follow God's leading.
4. No sin (no spiritual mistakes) is allowed or will occur in heaven. The spiritual mistakes we make now in our development are sins. When we go to heaven, our depraved natures are removed from us. We are unable to sin. We will live perfect lives without sin with our divine natures at the skill level we gained now on earth as God leads and directs us in all things.
5. God chose to create us immature and a need for this maturity development.
6. We, in analogy, are planted in the ground as a seed that must be planted and then, die, sprout, grow to a mature plant or tree. The more it is watered and fed, the higher and stronger it will become (gaining more maturity). We cannot gain new life without dying to self.

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**21. INCREASE IN MATURITY AFTER DEATH:** There is the most strong implication in the Bible that the spiritual maturity we have at death we can have forever without any increase in heaven. What if it is true? Can one prove from Scripture it is not true? God may use or build upon our maturity in eternity in a way or ways we cannot know now. From all I know from the Bible, the only or main reason we are on the earth is to gain this maturity. **So if our maturity level is fixed forever at death and we do not now maximally pursue it now?**

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7. *1 Timothy 4:8 - but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come. Hebrews 11:35 - Women received back their dead by resurrection; and others were tortured, not accepting their release, in order that they might obtain a better resurrection;*
8. If our maturity could increase in heaven, God could have just created us with some maturity and not have to send anyone to the Lake of Fire. But it appears that we might not learn the greatest sacrificial love there is that was demonstrated by God through Christ on the Cross. (We must hedge about being wrong if we do not believe this to be true and pursue maturity as God commands or we can be making a most terrible eternal (forever) mistake to our people.)

If we will pursue maturity with commitment and excellence as God commands, it most likely does not matter what we believe about whether or not our spiritual maturity is fixed forever at death. We will have the best that God plans for us. But the important thing is to pursue this maturity as God commands. But, if we do not as I observe many (most?) churches are doing today? (Church and family leadership should take action to help train their people so that they indeed become maximally mature in Christ. They should set the example.)

What if our maturity is fixed forever at death? **Not responding to God's command to become mature, then, can be, as previously stated, a most terrible eternal (forever) mistake.** As far as we understand, there is no recovery after death. *Apart from knowing and relating to God, there is nothing.* **We must alert our Church people to this possibility and provide them the needed training and highly encourage them to take it.●22**

**As stated, God may use our maturity in eternity in a way or ways we cannot know now. If we appreciated God's infinite and absolute Greatness and had great love for Him, would we not pursue becoming mature as He now commands with great commitment, excellence, and diligence so we could now know and relate to God in the best (the greatest) that is possible - having all that He has for us? Would we not search for His instructions (commandments) throughout the Bible and obey Him (them), thus glorifying God. This is what I think. What else is there?**

### CONCERNING BEING MATURE

**We should understand that we can only live a righteous and holy life with God directing everything, and we live to glorify Him, and not ourselves. Apart from Him and Christ, we can do nothing holy and righteously.**

*John 15:5 - "... apart from Me (Christ) you can do nothing. (Comment: Mine)*

We are fortunate that as Christians we have a divine nature that cannot sin, even though we do with our depraved natures. Our divine nature needs to be trained because it is the only one we will have in heaven. It is the only one in which we will take memories to heaven. (As stated earlier, our sin or depraved nature with its memories is removed from us Christians when we die and enter heaven. We do not take it into heaven with us.) We have no inherent ability to live righteously and holy. But our divine nature in this life time is to be trained to respond to God. We should by faith believe He will lead us to do what is right even if we do not know or understand all the reasons. We would know that He

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22. **MY HELP:** I am willing to help train to the degree I know.

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has all the perfect and only ways to live that exists - the best and most (only) perfect life that is possible. We take to heaven what maturity with its memories we developed in this lifetime.

Appreciating God's infinite Greatness (including His perfect holiness and righteousness), we would want to know as much as we could about Him and have a most close and intimate fellowship and relationship with Him (and then with each other). Thus, we would pursue the greatest maturity with excellence, aggressiveness, thoroughness, and commitment. We would do this especially realizing He created us to live His ways which are perfect - we would have a perfect life and be in fellowship with our infinite and only God forever. Being in fellowship and unity with God, we will be in fellowship and in unity with each other. (Unity must come first.) We would act to find "everything" in the Bible that defines what constitutes a mature person in Christ-Likeness(Outcome) and how He wants for our direction and procedure to carry it out with commitment and excellence and to His degree and scope (Procedure) so we can mature. We would do nothing else for direction. We would not invent things or attempt to work all things together for good ourselves.

**We should want a life that brings maximum glory to God and that which reflects His Glory. The only value in life is to have the spiritual ability so that we can respond to God's leading to the maximum and bring Him great glory. Doing so, we will greatly glorify God (this is also for our benefit). Then we, with each other, can live a perfect life - fulfilling God's perfect will. Thus, we must pursue maturity and stop going over and over mainly the a,b,c's of the basic Christian life.**

*Hebrews 6:1 - Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,*

**IMPORTANT CONCEPT: Understand carefully as earlier presented, we will live by faith in eternity because we will never physically see the omnipresent God, or hear His voice. Thus, we should pay attention and learn to live by very mature faith now with great efficiency and excellence. Otherwise, we pay a most terrible result of not having the capability to know more (sufficiently) of God in His depth-breadth. Because, living by more mature faith, God can do greater things (fulfill many new promises) in our lives. We can receive greater revelation of God and of what He wants to teach us. And knowing God in His depth and breadth is all there is.**

*Hebrews 11:6 - And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.●23*

**WHAT MATURITY IS NOT:** We are not mature when we know much of the Bible, as a person, teacher, a pastor, or do the work of the ministry, unless it is coupled with living the life under God's direction - where we have a testimony of living out God's promises (We trust Him to fulfill the promise, and we obey the instructions with the promise) and keeping God's commandments from love. We love Him demonstrated by our keeping His commandments. (We must know them.) We need the experience of applying what we know, especially in head-subordinate relationships patterned after

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23. **LIVING BY FAITH:** When I first became a Christian, God taught me how to live by faith. I have taught this subject for many years. But in doing so, I discovered it has many mature skill levels that we must pursue.

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Christ's walk with the Father. ●24 (This immaturity is demonstrated when pastors and teachers train with essentially only what to do without adding how to do, examples, and personal testimony.)

Thus, seminary and Bible college graduates most likely have a good academic background, but they are not yet mature until they live out and minister what they are learning concerning the principles of the Christian life - not just basic doctrine. The situation is worse if they have not had training in Christian-Life Relationship Principles such as living in head-subordinate relationships patterned after the Son's walk with the Father, living by sacrificial love, living by faith, and have applied the principles in life and in ministry. They, without personal experience, cannot train their people to become mature. This is why most pastors should be married and have (having) lived out head-subordinate relationships in their families for many years. ●25 **The Bible teaches that if we have all knowledge and much faith, but do not have love, we are nothing.**

*1 Corinthians 13:1-3 - If I speak with the tongues (languages that other people regularly spoke) of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. (Comment: Mine)*

### **HOW WE TRAIN TO GAIN MATURITY IN CHRIST-LIKENESS** *(Both Academic and Experiential are Needed. Principles Must Be Lived Out.)* *(These are key topics. There are more. Send us your inputs.)*

**HOW DO WE GAIN MATURITY IN CHRIST-LIKENESS - Some principles we presented earlier (Procedure):** The Church and family heads should train their people in depth-breadth both academically (the what to's) and practically (the how to's) to live as Christ lives with maturity and share many examples and testimony. ●26 In my view and experience, the "minium methods" (both known academically and lived out experientially and practically with on-the-job training) by which God wants believers to reach this maturity and to obey Him, include (We can add more - give us your thoughts):

**1. Exalt, Worship and Glorify Him.** This includes praising, honoring, worshiping, glorifying, obeying, pleasing, and loving God from our hearts and love in an intimate fellowship. We do this in our worship services and by the way we live our lives in response to Him - giving back in our lives what He Has

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**24. MUST BE BALANCED:** Many people including pastors and teachers have a strong knowledge of doctrines and Bible content, but often are weak in knowing and living out the principles in the Christian life, **as shown what they do not teach.** They often teach, in my observation, what to do without telling us how to do things with examples and with their personal testimony. (How mature is their faith?)

**25. HIGH SCHOOL PASTOR:** A church at one time hired a high school pastor just out of seminary with little experience, particularly in the Christian life. After gaining much experience, he left the church. Then, the church started over again hiring another pastor again with little or no practical experience. In the mean time for many years, our young high school people did not become greatly mature in Christ. The lesson is that churches should only use leaders for the high school **only AFTER** they have gained much living life experience in and know at least head-subordinate relationship teachings, living as Christ lives with the Father, and how to walk by faith. They should have an experiential walk in all of these. They should know and lived out the commandments. They should have memorized many of the promises and have trusted God using them.

**26. MY EXPERIENCE:** I have taught many or most of these principles in the adult Sunday School, in home studies, and in seminars for many years.

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given to us - all led by the Holy Spirit. (Psalm 150; Matthew 22:37-38; John 4:23; 15:10; Acts 5:29; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 1:9-11, 18; Hebrews 11:6.) As an example, as previously stated, for how we glorify God:

*John 17:4 - "I (the Lord Jesus Christ) glorified Thee (God the Father) on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou hast given Me to do. (Comments: Mine) (Our Lord gave back to the Father in obedience, what the Father had given Him to do.)*

We can only glorify God by obeying what comes from Him as a source. We cannot glorify God by what comes from us as a source even though it may seem right. We from ourselves (having depraved natures) have nothing by which to offer and/or glorify God.

*John 5:41 - "I do not receive glory from men; (Thus, we must ensure what we are doing only came from God and the Bible, not from us or the world as a source.)*

**2. Live a Godly and Holy Life (described above).** This life includes living by faith, love, and hope in Biblical head-subordinate authoritative relationships patterned after the Son's walk with the Father, serving God and each other from sacrificial love, fellowshiping with God and with each other, etc. It includes the sacrificial love, mercy, grace, faithfulness, forgiveness, kindness, longsuffering, compassion, and care for each other as disciples of Christ as a demonstration of our love for each other. Most importantly, it includes living a holy life before God from love keeping His commandments, remaining pure and without having immorality. It will include unceasing prayer. It is an experiential life applying the principles. This is a necessary life for pastors, teachers, elders, and fathers. (Psalm 150; Matthew 6:33; 22:39; John 5:19; 14:7-11, 15; 15:10; Romans 8:28; 1 Corinthians 11:3; 13:13; Ephesians 5:18-20, 27; Colossians 1:22; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Hebrews 11:6; 1 Peter 1:16; 1 John 2:6; 3:2-3.)

We are to walk by faith in God to keep His promises. When we do with activated faith, we live without sin (all is coming from God as a source - nothing from us as a source) and we gain more revelation from God.

We are to keep God's commandments from our love of Him. When we do we live holy, righteously, and know God's heart.

**3. Help Accomplish God's Work.** We are to help accomplish God's work. His work includes witnessing and evangelizing **total** local areas particularly the children, discipling to maturity in Christ-Likeness (not just working for Christian growth), building godly families, training faithful people (particularly the gung ho and very faithful), planting new churches, and out of love, reaching out to and helping the needy. (Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 24:45-48; Acts; Romans 10:13-15; 1 Corinthians 3:6, 10-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21; 9:10-15; Galatians 6:2; Ephesians 5:21-6:4; 1 Thessalonians 1:3, 8; 2 Timothy 2:1-2; Hebrews 6:1; 12:1-2; 1 John 3:16-18.)

**4. Believing and Standing Strong on Basic Christian-Faith Doctrines Including on God's Attributes. Knowing Bible Content with the Doctrines of the Spiritual Warfare and Endtimes Prophecy.** We should learn the doctrines of the faith for which we should be willing to die. See my doctrinal statement and web site documents for details. We should also learn God's Plan for history and how the spiritual warfare and endtimes prophecy fit in to His Plan. We should have our own doctrinal statement - personally derived or adopted, such as from our church.

*2 Timothy 3:16-17 - All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.*

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*1 Timothy 4:6 - In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following.*

*Acts 20:26-27 - "Therefore I testify to you this day, that I am innocent of the blood of all men. "For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.*

**5. Devotional Life:** We will have a strong personal devotional life before the Lord where we regularly read our Bibles (His Word) and pray about all things and people He puts in our minds. We meditate on the meaning of His word and its application to us.

**SUMMARY:** Each of the above five activities has a large depth and breadth to them. They are involved in Christian-Life Dynamics and Relationship Principles. **Christians are to have these activities (living experiences) as the center of their lives and in their training. (Leaders and teachers must should) be previously trained and have life experiences in all of these.)**●27 **Every Christian needs to know, be involved in, and be lifetime faithful in all five if he or she is to develop and have great maturity.** This means that the Christian should be involved in God's work, but in a manner (responding to Him) that he exalts and glorifies God and lives a godly life - in a testing and proving environment.

**LIFE IN ETERNITY** - The Bible does not reveal much about what happens and what we will experience in eternity. *Romans 8:18 - For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.* Revelation 21 gives us some information. But based on how we are to train now, we should expect that, in eternity, God will direct all our thoughts and actions (as believers in Christ's Cross). From His absolute perfection, He may very likely do this commensurate with our maturities, personalities, callings, knowledge, fellowships, and gifting. He must do this to be our God (Otherwise we act as being god.) He will do this from His love for us to live holy and righteously and to have close and intimate fellowship with Him and with each other. This is the only way we can live perfect, productive, and satisfactory lives and have great fellowship with Him and with each other. We must live by faith in God to fulfill His promises (to bring the results in life) to continuously gain more revelation from God of His Greatness and to avoid sinning. We do not sin because everything in our faith-obedience is coming from God as a source.

**We must understand that all we do in thought and deed must come from God the Father as a source - through the Lord Jesus Christ.**●28

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**27. PREVIOUS TRAINING:** As a head engineer, I would never hire a person to head up a major project unless they had both academic and on-the-job practical previous experience. But churches will hire pastors and youth leaders with little or no experience apart from a college degree. They have little experience in living and training the Christian life. (We cannot train and mature our people this way toward the maximum- our youth and people will be cheated - most likely unknowingly.)

**28. GOD'S BEST:** We can do this to the greatest if we have had mature training and are living out the principles in our lives. We are seeking God's best for our lives.

## **MANY SIGNS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF BEING MATURE IN CHRIST (These May Not Be Absolutes, But They Are Guides From Bible Teachings.)**

### **MANY SIGNS AND CHARACTERISTICS THAT WE HAVE (OR ARE WORKING TOWARDS HAVING) AT THE HIGHER MATURE SKILL LEVELS (OF MATURITY) IN CHRIST-LIKENESS, LIVING GODLY (OUTCOME AND PROCEDURE)**

There are many signs (characteristics) of a mature Christian. There are many mature skill levels and different degrees of implementing the signs. We present a few of these signs and characteristics below - those that we know and understand and have gained insight from others. A mature Christian will have many or most of these signs or characteristics. We must not assume we are mature just because we attend Church and have much Bible knowledge or that we have been to Bible School or Seminary or that we are a pastor or an elder. Maturity comes from a life that is lived out, responding to God's leading, from doctrine using love, faith, and hope in relationships. Being mature, one is living by faith, in sacrificial love, is in the ministry, and has lived many years in Biblical head-subordinate relationships. It is a life that has much testimony in all of these and, as a pastor or teacher, has taught all of these and has lived them out. **I would not choose a pastor or high school leader unless they had both knowledge and living-life experience in all or most of these to some extent.**

There are many in the world who are without Bibles and Bible training. They live under great persecution and under the most difficult conditions. They may not be able to have some of these characteristics, but obeying what they know, they can have great maturity, even more than many of us have who know more, but are doing but little with it. They will be doing what they know to honor and obey God. They will reach a mature level of some spiritual ability. **The main thing is that we are committed and are taking action to do things God's way, doing what we know from the Scriptures, and searching out what for we do not know.** We need to help each other here because none of us have it totally all together. But as the apostle Paul said, regardless of the past, let us make the future the best we can have. We should and need to help each other.

***Phillippines 3:13 - Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,***

Many of the signs and a few doctrines that signal we have a large degree of maturity in Christ are as follows, many obtained from others (We do not know them all; what follows are guide lines - send us inputs that we can add):

- \* We will have an appreciation of God's infinite Greatness, including His attributes and character qualities. We will know what they are. He, being perfect, is the only One who can direct our lives in perfection.
- \* Appreciating God's infinite Greatness, we will search the Scriptures for all that He wants us to become (Outcome) and also for all the ways to gain the needed outcome (Procedure). We will record these in a computer and update when we learn more. We will let our congregation read our findings,
- \* We will use only the Holy Bible for life's direction and our authority for life. We will believe the entire Bible, both Testaments (66 books) in "the original manuscripts," are true without error and came only from God (inerrant and inspired by God) and meant for our life guidance. (None of the original manuscripts came from man as a source.) The Bible alone is God's only authority on the earth. No

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person, church, religion, or other book is the (or an) highest or higher authority from God. We will use only what is in the Bible found directly or in application for our Christian living, ministry, and in our churches.

*2 Timothy 3:16 - All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;*

- \* We will use the most accurate Bible translations (available) (e.g. KJB and NASB - there are several others) and avoid using (especially largely) paraphrased editions that contain much interpretation and can be in error, incomplete, and/or misleading. (Paraphrased editions are not the Bible, but contain man's interpretation (not translation). I never want to hear them read. I never read them by choice.)
- \* We commit to going all the way with God even if others do not. Our purpose for living is to fulfill God's (not our independent) Plan for our lives. We will follow Christ and God with great commitment and excellence. We will be doing regular critical analysis to see how well we are actually doing against Scripture and make needed corrections and changes. Christ, the Father, and their Bible will always be the center of our lives and the reason we want to live.
- \* We will believe that the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit are the one and only single God. They have always existed (pre-existed), will always exist, and none were created. They have created all things. Nothing came by evolution. There is no other god. Thus, the Lord Jesus Christ has always existed (Pre-existed) and will always exist. He was not created.
- \* We will believe that salvation is founded only on the efficacious complete work of Christ on the Cross and in His death, burial, and bodily resurrection. The Cross is efficacious - a complete work in itself. We are saved only by faith in Christ's work with the faith activated by a prayer to God, being water baptized, or by confession of Christ dying on the Cross to others. We are only saved by our activated faith in Christ's work on the Cross and in His Resurrection, never by the activations. God draws us to Himself to be saved.
- \* We will believe that all believers in Christ (both Jews and Gentiles - all ethnic groups) are His Body and compose and are the Church. The Church is not an organization or a group of buildings. Christ is the only head of the Church. Thus, believers (in this sense) do not go to church, but instead, the Church assembles for worship. We will (can) attend Church meetings regularly: e.g. in buildings, in the park, in vehicles, or in homes. God uses elders and deacons to help lead and guide in the worship services and ministries.
- \* We will believe that we have eternal security in Christ as Christians. We can never lose our eternal-life salvation. This is because we received a new divine nature at salvation that cannot sin - it now legally represents us. We still have the depraved nature (which no longer legally represents us) by which we do sin. But this nature, even though effecting our current life, does not effect our going to be with God and Christ in eternity. But by not being obedient (being disobedient) using our depraved nature, we can gain less maturity for eternity (Sanctification). And by being disobedient, we can receive divine discipline. We will make mistakes in our growth. This is sin, and we can confess it to God for forgiveness - being cleansed by Christ's blood.
- \* We will live to glorify God, not ourselves. We glorify Him when we give back to Him in faith-love obedience what He has given to us - we live out what comes from Him as a source. We will know the Scriptures for doing this. We will do nothing that comes from us as a source. God does not accept anything from us as a source.
- \* We will have a regular hunger for the Bible and will read and feast upon it regularly, hopefully daily

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so we can have a great walk with God with Him directing our total lives. We will have a deep and personal devotional life with God as we walk in relationship to Him and do daily devotions reading our Bibles every day and have much prayer. He and Christ with the Bible are the centers of our lives. We will live by and obey the leading of the Holy Spirit to obey God's Word in all of life. We will study the Bible and use Bible helps for faster learning, but check out all things in the Bible to confirm their truth. We will read the works of others for more insights, checking all things with the Bible.

- \* We will have a regular, strong, and unceasing prayer life. We should pray for needed things for life, our families, the ministry, and for the salvation and needs of others. We have not because we ask not. Whatever we ask believing we shall receive.

*Matthew 21:22 "- And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive."*

*1 John 5:14 - And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.*

*1 John 3:22 -and whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight.*

*1 John 1:9 - If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

- \* We will have been disciplined by the Lord for our spiritual growth.

*Hebrews 12:5 - and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, Nor faint when you are reprov'd by Him;*

*Hebrews 12:7-8 - It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.*

- \* We will very importantly trust God and depend upon Him to work all things together for our good. Thus, from our love of Him, we will keep (obey) His commandments and from His purpose for us help to accomplish His will and work. (This means we know the commandments.) This requires us to die to self rule. We will take up our cross daily (die to self rule) and follow Christ under His rule. Dying to self-rule is of utmost importance if we want the best of God and for Him to work His intended best in our lives for good forever.
- \* We will die to self rule - and live under God's rule. We realize that most of our problems and sin come when we do not die to self, and then, we attempt to work all things together for our own good by ourselves using our own or the world's ideas, instead of only the Bible's (God's). We unknowingly believe wrongly that we can. When we do we act as head, instead of trusting God to be head, we actually act as god over our lives. We must believe that only God is capable to work all things together for good.
- \* We will have an overall comprehension of Bible teachings and doctrines so we will not be swayed by people leading us in wrong or inadequate directions and to believe wrong or inadequate doctrines, such as in false religions with false (no) salvation and worship. **We will choose the best methods and melody dominate music to bring maximum worship to God - this will allow us to worship and praise Him in spirit and in Truth "from our hearts," even going to our knees in worship.**
- \* We will have our own written doctrinal statement of our beliefs (for which we are willing to die) only

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from the Bible with Scriptures upon which contains our foundational beliefs. (See my doctrinal statements (short and detailed) on my web site for my beliefs.)

- \* We will have an intimate fellowship and unity walk with God and with each other. We will be aiming at holy and righteous living as defined only by the Bible. We will seek unity and fellowship with all others as far as it depends upon us.
- \* We, in our church, will work in our families and church people to have unity in all things, including in that of the type of music in our Sunday Schools and Church services.
- \* We **will be eternity oriented** so that we help mature our people in Christ-likeness toward the maximum and help do area-wide evangelism (particularly of the children) with high priority and with excellence. Church elders will have a complete prepared curriculum that is a version of God's Whole Counsel that helps to bring their people to maximum maturity in Christ. This can be updated and augmented. They can use different type training sessions such as in church services, seminars, and special training classes.
- \* We will live by priority. It will be God first, then family, then support of family - job, then personal assigned ministry, and then the church. (Ministry to our families must have priority over all other ministries, unless there are emergencies.)

*1 Timothy 5:8 - But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever.*

- \* We as Church leadership will not train just (or only) with Bible content (knowledge). But instead, and very importantly, will use the Bible to train people live the Christian life in worship, godly living, God's work, to stand strong on basic doctrine, be in the ministry, and have personal devotions. We will be life, ministry, and worship oriented. **Leadership will train with the what to's and the how to's with examples and personal testimony - how they lived out the teachings.** In other words, we should be Discipleship Training centered to train people to have an experiential walk with God, gaining maturity on-the-job, and not just gaining mostly Bible knowledge (Bible college) oriented.
- \* We will train with God's Whole Counsel in its depth-breadth with excellence and commitment - 80% of our time will be to the gung ho and the very faithful. Then we will not be guilty of the people's blood. We will not dumb down our training for the sake of new people. However, we will provide extra basic training for them, bringing them up to speed. We will especially train our children and youth with a version of God's Whole Counsel. Most of our training (high percentage of our time) will be with the gung ho and the very faithful to bring them maximum maturity in Christ. If we do not do this, our church life, Bible knowledge, and ministry will plateau. We will loose our Bible intellect.
- \* We will be persons after God's whole heart, seeking to do "all His will". Regardless of the past, we will be seeking to make the future the best we can have.
- \* **We will have a higher priority to mature our own people over gaining numbers, even though we do both.**
- \* We, personally, will be involved in ministry somewhere in evangelism, discipleship to maturity, planting churches, building godly families, and reaching out to and helping the needy. We as Church and family leadership will train with God's Whole Counsel and Purpose. We will train to do area-wide evangelism, not just some evangelism. We will train to help people to grow to maturity, not just work for some Christian growth. We will be outcome oriented and know the procedures to gain the required outcome. Thus, we will to gain an outcome, not just implement a procedure.

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- \* We will work to do much evangelism in the community. We will emphasize evangelizing the children and the youth. We will use a variety of methods such as having (establishing) tens of after-school Bible clubs (working with CEF and others), VBS, responding to divine appointments including out in the community, and establishing crusades.
- \* We for our life structure will be based on Biblical theology and relationships including that for our families. Thus, we will live in head-subordinate relationships patterned after the relationship of the Father with the Son. We will train our families. This is essential.
- \* We will understand the spiritual warfare and Satan's tactics so we will avoid using or being taken over by them. Satan works to prevent any of the elect from believing the Gospel to be saved and/or accomplishing any of God's work. We will understand that we are placed into trials, testings, and temptations for our spiritual growth as we apply Scripture to life and trust God to get us through them. We will realize that when teaching but little of God's Word and doing but little evangelism (especially with the children and youth), we are implementing satanic strategy. Having same sex marriages and abortion is satanic strategy. Having these, the elect might not be born. In my view, using rock music is satanic strategy because it helps to produce the immature Church. (Investigation shows it was used in Voodooism to call up evil spirits and demons.)
- \* We will regularly experience having the fruit of the Holy Spirit and Christ's vine as we obey Christ through the Holy Spirit's leading. We will do this when we are filled with the Holy Spirit.
- \* We will walk by strong faith in our salvation (being true) and in God to fulfill His promises. We will learn and memorize the promises and carry out their instructions. We will walk by sacrificial love, serving others sacrificially, according to the Bible's ways. We will obey and love God demonstrated by keeping (obeying) His commandments. Thus, we will know what they are. We will not let the details of life overtake us.
- \* We will be involved with other Christians for fellowship, worship services, training, ministry, mutual support, and accountability. This can be in the ministry and especially in small groups.
- \* We will remain faithful to God and to Christ throughout our lifetimes, worshiping them and helping to accomplish their work. **We will endure to the end.**
- \* We will not have (will try to avoid having) mental (fantasies) or physical immorality (and adultery) or be pursuing it.
- \* We will stay in unity fellowship with all others as far as it depends upon us. We will work to restore any lost fellowships, marriages, without writing people off. We will work to restore others to fellowship and help rehabilitate others from sinful conditions. We will attempt to never continue, as far as it depends upon us, being (remaining) in disagreement with others (in disunity) - we want to be in fellowship with unity. (However, if they choose to continue to sin, we have another type problem.)
- \* We will choose music in our fellowship groups and in our church services that is honoring to God, bringing Him maximum worship from His perspective, and not taken from the world. We will choose music that causes us to sing melody from our hearts, spirits, and souls unto the Lord, not have great body motion to some loud dominate repetitive drum beat. ●29

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29. **AWESOME AND GREAT SPIRITUAL SINGING:** I attended a CEF international conference where there were 1100 people from 87 different nations attending. **"ALL"** the people were in the ministry, **"ALL"** the people (continued...)

## Keys to Becoming Maximally Experientially Mature in Christ-likeness In Godly Relationship Living

Thus, in worship, we will be on our knees singing to the God we love and serve and will not be jumping around to rock satanic music, satisfying self for the experience. We will sing the great hymns (and like music - even Gospel and black people spiritual music) of the faith from the heart that describe God's Greatness and Glory. We will "never-never" use dominate loud rock-type repetitive beat music. (The word "drum" is not found in Scripture.) ***(And when we have two church services with different music where some believe one type (rock music) is not of God, the elders will act and research the situation to find God's will and attempt to bring unity - not leave the situation unresolved.) (Elders and pastors should do the research on the source of loud type beat music in the world and in the Bible. Doing so, they will never use it again by choice.***

*John 4:24 "God is spirit, and those who worship Him "must" worship in spirit and truth." (Emphasis is mine.) (The meaning of "must" in the Greek is: "it is necessary.")*

*Ephesians 5:18-19 - ..... but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;*

*Colossians 3:16 - Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.*

We will appreciate that trained musicians tell us that good music must have the melody dominate, then the harmony, and the rhythm last and under control. Having drums etc is not wrong as long as they are played properly, but not in dominate rock beat. Rhythm brings fun, life, and dynamics to the music - such as a full orchestra does. With this music we can sing from our hearts to the Lord. (For the life of me, I do not know how anyone can be highly mature in Christ and by choice bring rock music into a worship service (and attend them) or in the ministry. They should use His ways only in the Bible under His leadership, not under their leadership.) (I realize some evangelists use loud rock music to bring the youth in to hear the Gospel during crusades. But?)

- \* We will be supportive to our church elders and leaders in the areas of their leadership. But our true and ultimate head for all of life is God, Christ, and their Bible with its doctrine - not the elders, any Church leader, or any Church. Only an accurate translated Bible is our written authority and what it teaches. Others can represent it, but they cannot act in place of it or have anything that supercedes it.
- \* We will not be addicted to drink alcohol. Limited drinking of wine is not sin, but it does not generally provide a good example to others that might become addicted - particularly the youth. We can allow others and ourselves to drink a little wine for our stomach's sake as the Bible teaches. But we should not be addicted to it or become drunk. Some red wines, including pomegranate wine, in limited quantities are actually very good for the health.
- \* We will never support same sex marriages, bigamy, and abortion. We will not support children's rights apart from (independent of) parents. Doing so is great sin. We will teach this is sin.

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29(...continued)

were Christians and "highly committed" to Christ, and "ALL" the people had led tens of kids to Christ. When they sang the great hymn: *To God be the Glory*, it was absolutely awesome. They were singing from their hearts, souls, and spirits unto the God they love and serve. The tears ran down my face. Such great worship is not possible under rock music. They had this great and wonderful worship because God had used them greatly in the ministry. They saw His greatness at work when He brought salvation to people, especially to the children.

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- \* We will not be double minded, being lukewarm. We will work to serve only God and accomplish His will, but not (or also) the desires of the flesh and its will, however strong. This is a growth situation.
- \* We, as introduced, will be doing regular critical analysis to determine how well we are actually obeying God - maturing our people and ourselves, avoiding major sin, and are actually doing local area-wide evangelism, especially of the children. We will be observing the trends and signs around us and the world for world changes that signal the endtimes are soon coming, and make needed changes. We will be warning our people of soon-coming bad endtimes so they will prepare and not be caught blind sided. **They will need to put in some supplies, including how to prevent and get well from disease (such as using colloidal silver to kill infections), etc. We will ensure our children and youth are well trained, particularly walking by very strong faith.**

### SUMMARY THOUGHTS

#### **WHAT WE CAN FORFEIT IF WE DO NOT BECOME MAXIMALLY MATURE IN CHRIST-LIKENESS AS COMMANDED AND AS WE COULD AND DO NOT ACCOMPLISH GOD'S ASSIGNED WORK AS WE SHOULD AS HE COMMANDS**

- Knowing and relating to the infinite perfect God is all there is including as He leads with His Holy Spirit for us to do His will and work to become what He has planned for us. But like everything else, it requires a certain amount of ability and in this case, spiritual ability. By not becoming greatly mature and not following the leading of the Holy Spirit as we should, we will not know as much about the perfect God and be used of Him in great work than we otherwise could. This is a great forfeit. **We are talking about eternity (forever) here.** Not being maximally mature, we will do less of God's directed work, and thus, will glorify God less. We will attempt to go our own way, even in the church. Thus, we will send less spiritual riches on ahead. We will not receive as many heavenly rewards that God wants to give. The biggest forfeiture is that we will not know as much about and relate to the perfect and infinite God and our fellowship with God, as we otherwise could. There is nothing else. We have fellowship and unity when we hold things in common - first with God and then with each other. Having unity fellowship is most important. Otherwise we can be going our own way - this can be sin.

*Matthew 6:20-21 - "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*

*2 Timothy 1:14 - Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you.*

*1 Corinthians 3:10-15 - According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it. For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. If any man's work which he has built upon it remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire. Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you.*

*1 Timothy 6:17-19 - Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for*

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*themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.*

*Revelation 22:12- "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.*

**IMAGINE:** Imagine what it will be like to live holy and righteously, knowing and relating to our infinite perfect God and fellowshiping with Him toward the (His) maximum and each other forever and ever. Carefully remember that the righteousness of God is revealed as we walk by faith to faith. Thus we should (must) have a very strong faith walk capability as we enter heaven. Since He is perfect and inexhaustible in perfect Domain and Glory, we need a spiritual ability to know and relate to Him in His depth-breadth. Is not this something we should want to have and live out. Is this not of infinite value? Should we then not train under His direction to reach the highest experiential maturity level in Christ-likeness we can have? We will need to find teachers who know the doctrines and have lived them out, particularly in families. (I can help here having raised a family, and taught the principles for many years. But I am still learning and growing.) Again, imagine what it will be like to live under His Greatness. How mature will you and your family be in Christ when you and they die? How mature will I be? We need to help and be there for each other as team players. We can and need to help each other because we have different gifts, experiences, callings, and Bible knowledge - insights.

Please realize that apart from us having mature high-skill spiritual ability in Christ-likeness in relationship living so we can know and relate to our perfect God toward His fullest throughout eternity, living holy and righteously in close fellowship with Him and each other, there is nothing. As stated, Christ is our only role model. The main reason we are here, in my understanding, is to gain this spiritual maturity in Christ-likeness. We must pay attention and cooperate with God to gain this ability. What we have at death, we most likely will have for all eternity. Remember, that apart from relating to Him where He directs our every thought and action, there is nothing. If we are to have the best life we can have throughout eternity, we must become maximally mature in Christ-likeness. "We can help each other in this needed pursuit."

Thus, gaining maximum maturity must be "a high priority" Church ministry. Church leaders must train their people and themselves to reach this maximum high-skill maturity in Christ-likeness "at very high priority."

But carefully remember, the time remaining until the Tribulation comes

appears to be very short. We should (must) implement all training with great urgency.

## APPENDIX ONE WAYS TO HAVE A GREAT CHURCH WITH DIVINE LIFE WITH GOD WORKING EVERYWHERE

**PUT A SENIOR SPIRITUALLY MATURE TEAM TOGETHER TO ACCOMPLISH THE FOLLOWING IN OUR CHURCH (OR VERIFY IT IS BEING DONE), AND “THEN WITH URGENCY:”**

- \* Determine all the ministries that God wants done (found only in the Bible). Work to accomplish these ministries with excellence and completeness under God’s leadership, working to have God’s best.
- \* We must not attempt to work all things together for good ourselves using things (Including signs) from us or the world as a source. This is major sin (It was used by Adam and was and is by Satan). We must be sure to use only that which comes from God directly or in application - now only from an accurate Bible - no paraphrase. We must learn to live as Christ lives with everything coming from God as a source - nothing from us as a source. Then when people see us, they will not see us , but instead observe God living out His life through us.
- \* Determine only from the Scriptures all the things that God wants for us to become greatly mature in Christ-likeness and for all the aspects (a curriculum) we must live out experientially to gain this maturity. This will include living by great love and by faith, trusting God not ourselves to work all things together for good. We need to build godly families. Record our results in a computer and do nothing else, especially form ourselves or the world as a source. (Doing things from the world or ourselves as a source is major sin for only God is holy, righteous, and knows all Truth.) Determine how we are going to actually know and live out these aspects. Determine to what degree we are actually training them now and then upgrade our training to accomplish them all. Give our people the results of our findings and a copy of the curriculum so they can work independently also to help gain this maturity.
- \* Realize the main reason we are on the earth after becoming a Christian is to gain this maximum maturity so we can have an experiential mature relationship with God in eternity and get to know more of His infinite depth-breadth as He works all things together for our good. Apart from this great relationship with Him (and then with each other) there is nothing in the eternal view. **We must thoroughly appreciate that our maturity will not increase in heaven because the development environment will not be there and we are told to pursue maturity now.** Therefore realize our most important church job with ~85% or more of our time is to work with our own people, maturing them in Christ-likeness and training them to do ministry, not to reach unbelievers or the unchurched, even though both must be done. If we do not take care of our own, we are worse than unbelievers.
- \* Determine how successful we are actually doing in each ministry. For example in working to reach the unchurched, our attendance is not increasing showing this approach is not

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effective. We should switch to maturing our people with a complete curriculum - the whole counsel of God. In doing outreach evangelism in the community, we have almost no water baptisms of new converts. We need to train our people how to do evangelism with on-the-job training. We can work with CEF to help evangelize the children, taking its training, including on-the-job. We have CEF people in our church. We must remember adults do as they learned as children. We should work with the children with priority to evangelize and mature them in Christ-likeness, because with the endtimes Tribulation soon coming, they will not live normal life spans. God most likely will save those who have not reached God accountability and give them some maturity.

- \* Doing this with many regular water baptisms of new converts, singing mainly the great hymns of the faith with melody from our hearts, and with our people becoming and greatly working to become greatly mature in Christ-likeness, we will have divine life everywhere, seeing God doing many things. We will have excitement everywhere.**
- \* We should realize that expository preaching includes going verse by verse explaining each verse in depth and breadth (not just giving a talk about the verses), even from the Hebrew and Greek. We should train with what to do, how to do it, examples for how we do it, and testimony for how we did it. We need to put our people in position to act. Few people respond if we mainly train with what to do, without teaching knowing how. Our pastors should examine their teaching and preaching against these requirements and make needed changes.
- \* We should look for the needy in our church and reach out helping them to meet their needs.
- \* We should study the spiritual warfare between our Lord and Satan and learn the strategies that Satan uses to prevent the elect from believing and/or accomplishing God's work in order to win the spiritual warfare. We should investigate if we are using any of his strategies in our churches. Most or many churches now are doing so unknowingly. Anything that deters or impedes our church ministries, including not maturing our people and doing needed evangelism are part of his strategies. For example, not greatly maturing our people, or doing things that impedes this maturing, deters people from being in ministry, particularly in a great way.
- \* We should determine the music of the Bible (especially from the New Testament) and use only it. Then this brings God worship, not only from our perspective, but also very importantly from His perspective. This music (as they sang a hymn at the Last Supper) is to sing hymns (and like music) when filled with the Holy Spirit in dominate melody from the heart unto the Lord we love and serve. Several instruments can be used. The sound must not be too loud and controlled drum beats can be used. It is good to have a choir (or choirs) and/or soloists sing each Sunday music with dominate melody. These help our hearts in worship.
- \* Since loud rock beat structured music has been added to thousands of our church services in these later years, its source may be from Satan for his endtimes purposes. Many of the instruments used are found in the Bible, but the structure of this loud rock beat music is not. We know that Satan was the leader of music in past times. The problem we have is that our kids and young people are now growing up with this loud beat music and most likely may not come to church unless we use it. The situation we have is that to bring in the younger people,

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the Bible teaching used is mainly only the basics (not maturing the people) that does not bring great maturity. As a result over time (especially after the older people die), almost no one will know the Bible in any depth and thus, most will fall away from the faith under the severe persecution coming in the endtimes Tribulation, preventing evangelism to gain the elect and accomplishing God's work. This certainly is Satanic strategy, as he now gains control over thousands and thousands of churches world wide.

**Thus, our church leadership should carefully and “urgently investigate” the source, and most serious effects this loud beat music brings.** Many have done so, examining many-many documents and reports and the results are most terrible for the worse. Church leaders doing this research will never want to use this music ever again. One cannot gain great maturity in Christ-likeness sitting regularly under it and it has a deterioration effect on both physical and spiritual life over time. People who approve and/or choose to sit regularly under this music cannot be greatly mature. (Led of the Holy Spirit, one will sing hymns with dominate melody unto the Lord.)

- ❖ We should look ahead and see what is coming. Signs now signal most loudly that the calamity that brings in the endtimes Tribulation can come most any time, even in the next few months. Thus, we must urgently now do our key ministries that includes greatly maturing our people in Christ-likeness. We should immediately train our people with the Post-Tribulation Rapture View of endtimes prophecy and with what they can experience when the endtimes Tribulation comes. There are over 20 doctrines that teach “unambiguously” the Rapture comes “after” the Tribulation. (The wrong Pre-Tribulation Rapture View is based only on assertions, no doctrines, and does not consider any of the 20 doctrines that refutes the view.) We should prepare our people for going through the Tribulation (when our church doors most probably will be closed) to walk by very strong faith so they will not fall away under the persecution (they then will gain more spiritual maturity) and to now store food and water to last for several months or even years. We should place our church people into small home groups composed of our church people who live near each other. We should train leaders for each group and provide a maturing curriculum. Then worship, maturing and evangelism can continue, at least for awhile, hopefully for a few years.
- ❖ We must thoroughly realize that there are three things that must be accomplished before we die: **(1)** We must become Christians so we can be with God in heaven; **(2)** We must become maximumly mature in Christ-likeness so we can have a maximum relationship with God (and each other) in all eternity; and **(3)** We must have accomplished all the work that God gave us to do in this lifetime.

### **APPENDIX TWO Can you answer these questions?**

**(All of our upper-level high school on-fire students should be able to answer them. All of our gung ho and faithful in the church should. But, are we teaching them?)**

1. What is (one of) God's major purpose(s) for putting us on the earth?
2. How do we walk close to God and come to know Him?
3. How do we become spiritually mature in Christ-likeness?

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4. How do we build godly families, living in unity?
5. How do we solve spiritual relationship problems in our families?
6. How do we walk by faith and live by love? What is our life like when we do?
7. How do we live pure and avoid immorality?
8. How do we find God's work that He wants us to do?
9. How do we train others to witness the Gospel and lead people to Christ?
10. What do we do when things go wrong; how do we make corrections?
11. What happened to us at salvation that gives us a guarantee of eternal security and being in heaven with Christ?
12. What is the meaning of redemption & atonement for iniquity?
13. What are the Biblical characteristics of God's choice for a husband and wife? How are husband and wife to relate to each other? (What characteristics would a young person look for when looking for a spouse?)
14. How do the endtimes unfold and why? What allows them to come?
15. What do I do to be a person after God's own heart?
16. What do I do to glorify God? How am I living and what am I like when I bring glory to God.
17. How do we become filled with the Holy Spirit? What happens to me when I am?
18. How do we worship God in Spirit and in Truth?
19. What music should (must) we choose for our worship services that brings maximum worship to God from His perspective so we can sing melody from our hearts, souls, and spirits and worship God in spirit and in truth?
20. Explain what it means to be both outcome and procedure oriented?
21. What is one of the highest priority ministries of the Church?
22. How do we do and live such that life's directions and actions only come from God as a source?
23. Should we use paraphrased Bibles in our church services or Sunday School classes? Why is our choice important?
24. What attitudes should I have? What types or categories are they?
25. Why is it necessary that, in all of life, all thought and action come from God the Father?
26. By what methods and techniques should leaders use when teaching to ensure training is taking place - when believers will live out the training?

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27. What is meant by the baptism of the Holy Spirit (nothing to do with tongues)? What happens to us? How are we changed and what is the significance?
28. How do we gain the fruit of the Holy Spirit?
29. How do we live in head-subordinate relationships? What principles do we follow?
30. Why should we warn and prepare our people for the soon-coming endtimes Tribulation? What happens to them if we do not warn and prepare them? How many know endtimes prophecy?
31. What must happen or be completed before the Rapture can come, before the Tribulation can begin, and before Christ's Second Coming can come?