

Christ-Centered



Biblical Training

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

**SEEK GOD'S BEST AND GREATNESS:
Pursue Spiritual Maturity in Christ-
Likeness as God Commands With
Excellence and Great Commitment**

by

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SUMMARY

Please read first the separate summary three page report for a background and presentation of the key points. It is available on the web site.

MAIN REPORT: ●1 IMPORTANT UNDERSTANDING AND ORIENTATION: FOR HAVING GOD'S BEST

PREAMBLE: We have a perfect and infinite God with perfect and complete attributes. This report's purpose is to point the way to have God's best for now and be best prepared for entering eternity. It is for us to seek with commitment and excellence the best of what God has for us beyond eternal life salvation. To have God's best means that He directs every thought and action we will have in life, both now and in eternity. This is so that He works all things together for our good, uses us in ministry, supplies our every need, and we live in close fellowship with Him and each other in His holiness and righteousness. It is so we can live by His perfection. But for this to happen, we need to have a mature high-skill spiritual ability in Christ-likeness in relationship living. God has designed this lifetime for the development of this spiritual ability so we can have a maximum walk with Him.

Even though there are many exceptions, observation of many churches today, however, show they are falling away from God's best by using mainly and only first level training to reach the youth and help people world wide to meet their human felt needs. These can be good things, but they are implementing Satan's dialectic process which is taking our churches to socialism. ●2 They are rapidly becoming immature. There are people in thousands world wide still coming to Christ and faithfully following Him. They are obeying what they know. But these people world wide can be more mature in Christ who know less of God's Word than we here in America who know much of God's Word but are not obeying what we know. We are doing little with it.

1. **REFERENCE REPORT:** See our report: *Keys to Becoming Mature in Christ-likeness In Relationship Living* for some key aspects for becoming mature in Christ with the many Scriptures involved.

2. **DIALECTIC PROCESS:** See my web site reports: *Serious Symptomatic Problems in Today's Churches Based on Four Major Causes with their Impacts and Indicated Solutions* and *Our Churches Are Falling Away, Being Transformed by the Dialectic Process to Bring World Government*. (The dialectic process is to use a method (dumbing down) to take churches from where they are (more orthodox) to where one wants them to be (immature with a loss of biblical intellect and with a small plateau of Bible knowledge.)

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PURSUING GOD'S BEST: The Bible teaches in several places that we, as believers in Christ's Cross, should pursue maturity in Christ-Likeness so we become to the full stature of Christ, being perfect and complete lacking in nothing.●3●4 This maturity is needed so we can know and relate to our perfect God in a maximum way, both now, but especially in eternity, Having this maturity, we would live in His depth-breadth in His holiness and righteousness by faith and sacrificial love in close fellowship with Him and each other. The reason we are here is to gain this maturity so that we can respond to God in high-skill spiritual capability as He directs our lives. It is so we can live in His perfection. We should train our people to help evangelize our complete local areas, particularly the children and the youth. To gain maturity, we need a training that includes doctrine, but is life centered. The concept is not so much to teach the Bible, even though we will do this, but instead to use the Bible to train people to walk with God. Instead of having a Bible school, we want a discipleship training center.

We should train with the Bible's deeper things and not use only first-level and Gospel training. God is the only one who can direct our lives to be perfect, holy, righteous, true, and without sin. In eternity, we will live in the Glory of His Perfection. He will direct every thought and action we will have. He will be God all in all. This makes Him God in our experience. Apart from this relationship, there is nothing.

Example Scriptures for becoming mature in Christ-likeness:

Hebrews 6:1 - Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity

We must train in the depth-breadth of God's Whole counsel instead of mainly and only using first level or fundamentals training. To train with only first-level training is sin.

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.

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

Gain Maturity

3. **GOD COMMANDS THAT WE PURSUE MATURITY IN CHRIST:** See 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. Gaining maturity in Christ-Likeness is not a do it yourself activity. It can only happen when we learn and apply Scripture and God works out the maturity in us. It is developed by our appropriately responding to God's leading in every area of life. Our maturity can only be measured by God. ***The degree of our maturity is the degree that we respond to God's leading in every area of life in comparison to how Christ, being perfect, would respond if He were to act in our place.*** In eternity, our response to God will be without sin because He will lead us only according to our ability to respond.

4. **MATURITY:** None of us are mature as we want to be, ought to be, can be, and should be. We all need work. I know that I do. We can help each other here. The issue is are we pursuing maturity and to what degree of excellence? Are we helping each other?

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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.

WHERE DO WE BEGIN TO BECOME MATURE IN CHRIST?

In my understanding, the overall and major concept in becoming mature in Christ is to learn to live as He lives:

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

We must begin here. Our Lord is our only role model. So how did He walk?

He lived out what the Father was doing in Him. So when people saw Him, they saw the Father.

Christ lives out and does the works only by what comes from the Father as a source and is working in Him (John 5:19-20). Our Lord did nothing on His own initiative, from Himself as a source (John 5:30; 8:28; 14:10). And when He lives this way, when people observe Him, they do not spiritually see Him, because He, from Himself, is doing nothing. They, instead, see God the Father as Christ lives out and speaks what the Father is doing in Him (John 14:6-12). Thus, He could say that He who has seen Me has seen the Father (John 14:9-11). Thus He and the Father were one (John 10:30). We are to live this way so that people will see the Father in us. This requires people to know the Bible so they can recognize the Father in Him and in us. We need to know the Bible to determine that the leading we are getting is from God and not from ourselves, the world, or the devil.

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....."

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 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. **(Living this way, we will have works that demonstrate that the Father is in us and***

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we are in the Father.)

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

This is how we are to live, doing only what comes from the Father as a source. This is how people learn of God the Father from a life that is lived. It is learned by others as we serve them sacrificially from love. We need to be there for each other.

This life should be learned, developed, and practiced. Such a life today would mean that **all** things we do for direction should be found in and taken from the Bible. We must believe that all we are doing is coming from God. Thus, we need to check all that we are doing against Scripture in order to know that it is from God. Everything that God will lead us to do will be in Scripture somewhere and in some manner. ***We must not decide from ourselves what we are to do for direction apart from the Bible as many churches appear to be doing today.***

Thus, it appears that there is a major way by which we can know and relate to God the Father. This is by observing His life in us as we live out what He is directing. This is when we, as believers in Christ, are thinking and acting, only by what comes from Him as a source. Then when others see us, ideally, they will see the Father because we, from ourselves as a source, are doing nothing. Being a Christian, we will work the works the Father is working in us. The works demonstrate whether or not we are Christians. We can have works and methods that are not in the Bible and thus, are not divine works. The latter is occurring in many churches today raising questions as to whether or not they are Christian churches and/or are being led by people who are Christians.

Because God works different things in us as believers, we can know more of who and what the Father is like in a greater comprehension by observing one another in composite. However, as stated, we need to have the Bible background to know that is coming from the Father. ***Our Lord told Satan, "It is written."***

Because God the Father is Omnipresent and deals with billions of people everywhere all at the same time, it appears very unlikely that we will ever see God the Father physically - at a single place in space. We will see Him in a spiritual relationship sense in each other and especially in the Lord Jesus Christ. We can know that He is living out what comes from the Father in heaven because we will most likely receive some new Bible for our understanding.

It appears that in heaven we will live in new physical resurrection bodies (John 5:28-29; 1 Corinthians 15:42) so that we will not be living in a spiritual body sense. We will have the bodies that allow us to see the Lord as He is (1 John 3:2). Thus, it appears very important that we carry out the command to pursue maturity now in our own people and no longer mainly teaching over and over again the fundamentals of the faith, just for the sake of new people. Again, apart from knowing and relating to God, there is nothing.

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,

DIVINE NATURE: When we became Christians we received a new divine nature that cannot sin.

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It can only take direction from God. It cannot take independent action. This is the nature that we train to have maturity in Christ-likeness. This is the nature we will take with us to heaven. (Our sin natures or flesh, at that time, that we still have now, will be taken from us.) ●5

It appears that our learning ability to know initially of heavenly things and have a closer walk with God can depend upon the maturity of our faith, love, and relationship walk we have when we enter heaven. We will need some maturity to learn new promises and commandments as we enter heaven. Thus, to learn the most of God after we die and are in eternity, we should want to have the maximum maturity we can have as we enter. We will want the best we can have in heaven.

FOUNDATIONAL ASPECTS AND ESSENTIALS NEEDED BY WHICH WE GAIN SPIRITUAL MATURITY

ORIENTATION: The following elements, in my understanding, are necessary items in our trek to become mature in Christ. It certainly is not a complete list. None of us may know a complete list. But we can consider what we understand and what should be most central.

BASIC ESSENTIALS ●6: Several keys to becoming mature in Christ include: (1) worshipping, obeying, honoring, pleasing, and glorifying God; (2) living the godly life in relationship living patterned after Christ's walk with the Father by faith and sacrificial love; (3) helping to accomplish God's work of evangelism, discipleship, planting churches, building godly families and reaching out to the needy; and (4) believing and standing strong on the Christian Faith Doctrines. (Each have their depth-breadth. There is much more detail. ●7) That which follows are necessary items that would be included in and are part of the listing. ●8

5. **DIVINE NATURE:** Romans 6:4; 1 John 3:9

2 Peter 1:4 - 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.

When we became Christians we received a new divine nature (a new creation) that cannot sin and cannot take independent initiative apart from God. It can only respond to God. This is the nature that we take to heaven with us. It is to be trained in this lifetime to become mature in Christ. We still have the depraved nature (the flesh) that wants to sin and sin it does. But the divine nature, not the depraved nature, now legally represents us. It is the new us.

6. **DOCUMENTS:** For mor details, see my web site documents: *God and His Greatness Must Be Central and Keys to Becoming Mature in Christ-likeness In Relationship Living*. I have taught these subjects in the adult Sunday School and in a home group for many years. I am available to help do training in these areas.

7. **REFERENCE REPORT:** See my report for more details: *Keys to Becoming Mature in Christ-likeness In Relationship Living Needed for Now and in Eternity*.

8. **PROMISES AND COMMANDMENTS:** See my document: *Living By God's Righteousness* that contains promises to memorize and commandments to obey.

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THE GREATNESS OF GOD MUST BE CENTRAL - When we appreciate God's Supreme Greatness and our pathetic spiritual poverty, we will let Him take charge and direct all of our lives. We will seek out His direction. His infinite Greatness is beyond our comprehension. He is perfect, most holy, and complete in all possible perfect attributes and character qualities. There is no sin or darkness in Him of any kind or of any amount. He has always existed and has eternal self existence. He has always known everything that can be known in the past, present, and future (omniscient). He is omnipresent and has infinite power (omnipotent). 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.●9

In my view, if we have an appreciation of God's Greatness, we should want to know as much as we could about Him and have a most close and intimate fellowship and relationship with Him. Thus, we would pursue knowing God's Greatness and having maturity with excellence, aggressiveness, and commitment. We would learn to live by great faith and sacrificial love. We would act to find everything in the Bible that He wants for our direction and carry it out with commitment and excellence and to His degree and scope. We would know that He would be complete to provide all that we need for direction. We would do nothing else or less for direction. Knowing and doing these, we have a personal God. We would not invent things.

But what are we doing? What examples do we have to follow? What about you? What about me?

DIE TO SELF ALLOWING GOD TO REIGN OVER OUR LIVES: We must first die to being in charge. We must let God be in charge so that He, not us, works all things together for our good. We must lose our lives in this world in order to save them. The way we should live our lives must come from God, not from ourselves. If we attempt to save our lives, living as we want, we will lose them. What does it gain a person to gain the whole earth, and lose their own life now and later in the Lake of Fire? (Matthew 16:24-26; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:23-25) Thus, we should take direction for our lives only from the Bible.

The Christian life is to be lived by living out only what comes from God the Father as a source, never from ourselves as a source. This makes Him God. In eternity, we will all live this way. This is a principle that should be learned, lived out, and experienced. This is the pathway to maturity in Christ-likeness. This is how our Lord Jesus lives. Can you visualize what this life is like? Are you pursuing it? What would make you think that you are? Am I pursuing it? As a leader, are you training your people to live this way, pursue it and how to pursue it? Do you have a curriculum that helps this to happen? Why not? What are the subjects? What ever has been the past, we can work to have the best future we can have.

9. **GOD'S ATTRIBUTES:** A listing summary 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.)

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Phillippians 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,

HEAD SUBORDINATE RELATIONSHIPS: We must learn to live as Christ lives in spiritual head-subordinate relationships patterned after His walk with the Father●10 as previously discussed. All of life's direction must come from God the Father as a source and head. We must learn to live under the headship and Lordship of God and Christ and have unity with them. There are key principles that should be learned and lived out, including in works. There is much detail involved in these relationships. I have taught these for many years. They are most precious and most needed. We applied them in our marriage.

Amos 3:3 Can two walk together, except they be agreed? (King James Version)

LOVE: We must love God with our total beings and others as we love ourselves such that we serve God and each other sacrificially (Matthew 22:36-40). When we keep God's commandments, we abide in His love and demonstrate our love (John 15:9-10). This implies that we know the commandments. When we keep them, we live holy and righteous lives. We learn of God's heart. ***Such a life is lived on the degree of our love for God that is based upon the degree we appreciate and live by HIS GREATNESS.*** We, to demonstrate our love for God and others, must be involved in God's work (having fruit, John 15:8) and serving others from our love sacrificially (John 15:13). Our lives glorify God when we carry out the work that He has given us and efforts we give back to Him in obedience. Not to do so? We certainly will learn many new commandments in heaven.

Matthew 22:36-40 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" 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."

John 17:4 - "I glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which Thou hast given Me to do. (Christ glorified the Father. We are to do the same.)"

FAITH: We must live by faith to trust God to carry out the provisions in His promises. It implies that we know them. We activate our faith to have living faith as we obey the instructions associated with the promise. God responds to our living faith. When we live this way, we live without sin, and we gain more revelation from God. God works through our activated faith and implements what He promises. We cannot please God without living by faith and having works that activate our faith. (We must not live and work things together for a potential good that come from us as source. We are talking about relationships here.) If we decide what to do, we should insure that a principle for what we are doing is in the Bible - from the Father as a source. We should have faith that this is so. Otherwise we can act in charge. (Romans 1:17; James 2:26; Hebrews 11:6; 2 Peter 1:3-8)

Essential to this faith walk, is to trust God, not ourselves, to work all things together for good. We

10. FATHER-SON RELATIONSHIPS: We learn these by studying the relationships the Father had toward the Son and vice versa. I have studied and taught these for years and have a set of charts on my web site.

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do this from our love of Him, by keeping His commandments, and from His purpose for us, help to accomplish His work. When we do, we treat Him as God and glorify 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.

When we act to work all things together for good ourselves, even working with the desire to serve Him. we act like the Most High God and we have major sin.●11 We trust in ourselves and we take charge. We do the latter when we decide what to do for direction, instead of carrying out only the direction given in His Word.

In my understanding, we need to walk by faith in that all of what we are doing came and is coming from the Father as a source - not from ourselves as a source. It should always be from the Bible in some manner such as in principle so we can tell. But we should know the Bible teachings. ***When we live this way by faith, we live without sin because we are doing nothing for direction from ourselves as a source.*** This process results when God leads us using His Holy Spirit. It is called being filled with the Holy Spirit as the Holy Spirit leads us and we respond in obedience (Ephesians 5:17-21).

No doubt we will learn many-many new promises in heaven by which by faith we are to trust God. As we live by more and more faith, we will receive more and more revelation from God (Romans 1:17). Thus, it is vital to learn to live by faith in our present lifetime.

FAITHFUL IN WORKS: The Bible teaches that the saved church, as the Father is working in her, will have works. These include working in the ministry somewhere. Believers who are mature or who are pursuing becoming mature will be faithfully carrying out God's work somewhere and in some or various ways. Faith without works is dead (James 2:26). If we are connected to Christ as the vine, we will have fruit in God's work. If we are walking as Christ walked, we will be discipling and sharing the Gospel in some manner. If we do not have divine works, we may not be saved.

OTHER ASPECTS: There are many others needed aspects. Some we most likely may not know until eternity. But we need to have the proper attitudes such as in the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-11) and have and live by the character qualities of Church leadership (1 Timothy 3:1-9; Titus 1:5-10). **We should have a humble attitude without the need to be first or in charge. (Those wanting to be first will be last and vice versa.) We should trust God, not ourselves to bring the results.**

RESULT: When we live this (the above) way, God will direct every aspect of our lives. He, as a person, will be manifested through us. We will trust Him in every aspect of our lives. We will die to self control and self dependence. We will only have God dependence. **(This must be learned. It can take a bit of time - a lifetime.)**

11. **WORKING THINGS TOGETHER FOR GOOD:** We impede our spiritual growth and go in wrong directions when we ourselves attempt to work all things together for good, not taking direction only from the Bible.

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KEY OBSERVATION: There will be many new things in heaven that we cannot know now. But because we are to train now to live by love and by faith, these principles most likely will be lived out also in heaven. And God is expected to teach us new things, depending upon our spiritual skill levels in these.

Thus, we should pursue maturity in Christ with excellence and great commitment as God commands. Because knowing and relating to God is all there is, we do not want to make a most terrible mistake by not pursuing maturity as God commands. And God now and especially in eternity may use and build upon our maturities we have at death in different ways than we can know now.

So when you die, what testimony or history will you have in this matter? What will I have?

The first thing we may need is a wake up call to get us going. I need one. This report brings one. The problem we now face is that it appears now to be but a short time remaining to the coming endtimes Tribulation. We should do training now with a sense of urgency and plan to obey God in the Tribulation regardless of the suffering that is coming. We should work greatly with our children and youth.●12

**BASIC UNDERSTANDING
(Review)**

When God is working in us and we are mature, we will be working the works that God the Father is working in us. Our works, or lack of them, demonstrate the degree of our walk with God.

In our understanding, God has planned this lifetime for us, after becoming believers in Christ's Cross, to live under Christ's Lordship and to develop and gain a mature high-skill spiritual ability in Christ-likeness in relationship living. He commands that we pursue this maturity. Having this spiritual ability, God the Father has planned that, in eternity, we will live a perfect spiritual life without sin in a close and intimate relationship to Himself (and to Christ) according to His perfection. We will get to know and relate to Him in His depth-breadth. We will live by His holiness and righteousness in a close and intimate fellowship with Him and each other. We do not know for sure, but the degree we can know of His depth-breadth appears to depend upon the mature skill level we have in spiritual ability at death.

In this development, we need to learn how to live by strong faith in God to act in our lives according to His Truth and promises. We need to learn to live by love that sacrificially serves God and each other, keeping His commandments. We need to know and live by the principles of head-subordinate relationship living patterned after the Father's walk with the Son (Christ) that applies to marriages and families.

12. **WEB SITE:** Check our web site periodically for training and teachings for principles for how we become mature in Christ and glorify God. This will include these foundational aspects and essentials. I have taught many of these for many years. In time, the Lord willing, these materials will be on our web site. Please send us information we may need to add or update.

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With this spiritual ability, we will learn new things of God that cannot otherwise be known both now and especially in heaven. Living a perfect life with God founded on His perfect character qualities without sin from His perfection is all there is. What else can their be?

We, thus, need now to pursue spiritual maturity, God's way, with commitment and excellence. But it must be done such that we live out what God is doing in us so that others can see God the Father and Christ in each of us, and no longer see ourselves. This is because we are no longer doing things from ourselves as a source. We should die to self and no longer live with things coming from ourselves as a source - only from God the Father as a source - now only from the Bible. We must trust God, no longer ourselves, to work all things together for our ultimate good. We need to be humble for the spiritual way up is down. Those wanting to be first will be last and vice versa. We need to live the exchanged life with all of God and Christ in all of us.

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.

IMPORTANT FOR CHURCH LEADERSHIP TO UNDERSTAND

In my understanding, the Bible teaches that the main job and first priority of the Church is to mature her own people in Christ, not to evangelize and work with new people, even though both should be vitally done. We must not work manly with only the fundamentals (Hebrew 6:1). If we do not mature our own people, new people in the Church will not have much with which to look forward after they learn the basic fundamentals. ●13

Leadership can know if they are maturing their people by the degree of works that their people are doing under God. Many churches today are dumbing down and are not maturing their people. This is a demonstration of immaturity, not knowing doctrine, not having discernment, and/or even not being Christians.

But most importantly, they will not come to know as much both academically and experientially about God in His depth-breadth both now and especially in eternity. And the Bible teaches that if we do not take care of our own, we can worse than unbelievers.

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 MUST PAY ATTENTION:

13. CONTINUED LEARNING: When I became a Christian, I studied much and wrote many reports. Our pastor preached mostly fundamentals. So after about 10 months of learning, I learned but little new from the pulpit. This situation can be very prevalent today.

I took a Greek class many years ago. The professor continued to work as the lowest common denominator of the class. As a result, half way through the course, half of the class left. There was no point in remaining. They were learning but little.

THE SPIRITUAL MATURITY WE HAVE AT DEATH, WE MAY HAVE FOREVER

The Bible does not teach directly that we will all have the same maturity in Christ-likeness in heaven or that it will not or can increase in heaven. He has left it as a matter of faith that we pursue maturity now as He commands. We cannot know for sure, but there is a strong implication in the Bible that the spiritual maturity we have at death we can have forever without any further increase. We will gain much more knowledge and wisdom. But our ability to handle these depends upon our spiritual ability. Thus, we can limit the depth-breadth of what God desires to give us now by not pursuing maturity now as He commands. God may increase our maturity in heaven a different way than we can know now, based on the foundation we develop now. But we are not told. ●14

As being discussed, it appears that God may have given us only this lifetime to develop this maturity in Christ. ●15 The environment used to develop maturity now will not exist in heaven. Thus, it appears very likely even though we cannot know for sure that the maturity we have in Christ at death, we can have forever without further opportunity for improvement. We will of course gain more knowledge and wisdom. But our ability to handle and live by it may depend upon our spiritual abilities. ●16 ●17

14. **EQUALITY:** I realize we may not all agree here. We want everyone to have the same benefits in eternity. There will be children when the Rapture comes. What maturity will they have? I believe that God will give them some minimum maturity. But is this God's way that all will have equality in heaven? I do not think so. His way is not ours. But what if our maturity is fixed forever at death. If it is, there is a great eternal penalty for not now pursuing it as God commands. Can you show from the Scriptures it is not?

15. **HEDGE:** We must hedge about being wrong if we do not believe that our spiritual ability we have at death can be fixed forever to be true such that we ensure to pursue maturity as God commands. Pursing maturity as God commands, then we will have the best that God desires whatever the results and whatever is in the future.

16. **FAIRNESS:** Many have problems with the concept that our spiritual ability can be fixed forever at death. They have problems because they want those who die as children and those who die soon after becoming a Christian to have the maximum maturity. But our God did not promise equality, only fairness. Whatever He gives us is holy and righteous, even though we do not all have the same abilities or revelation of Scripture. It is better to exist and go to heaven with some maturity, than not to exist. We also have wonderment how God can place people into the Lake of Fire forever. Such a concept for eternity (forever) is unfathomable.

17. **WHAT IF:** Churches act as if their maturities or what God requires of us in this lifetime will some how work out regardless of what they do. Many if not most are only using first-level training that does not get the job done. We state that in our faith, even though all Christians do not agree, we believe the Bible to teach that the spiritual maturity and spiritual ability we have at death we most likely will have forever without further opportunity for Improvement. God may have chosen this lifetime with the Cross in order to understand what mature sacrificial love is all about. The Bible does not state directly, but there are several reasons (not proofs) why we believe this can be true. If we obey God and pursue maturity as He commands, we will have
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Because God commands us to pursue maturity, there most likely can be penalties and short comings in our spiritual lives if we do not become mature. If we loved and believed God, we would with commitment pursue maturity and learn all we could about Him and how He relates to us. But others who love God less and believe God less demonstrate their beliefs by how they live,. Can they in reality expect to learn as much about God in eternity? The whole Bible teaches there is judgment for disobedience. Blessings come in obedience. We are rewarded and judged according to our works. It appears very strongly there will be different levels of maturity in eternity.

God may have provided this lifetime because it may not be possible for us to learn to live by the sacrificial love to the degree that was demonstrated on the Cross, without having the Cross. (The Father was willing to break spiritual fellowship with His Son while His blood was purging our sin - My God, My God, Why Has Though Forsaken Me? Is there any greater love?)

John 15:13 - "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.

The question before each of us, do we want to train to live His way in excellence having His best or just rock along hoping for the best and that things somehow will work out for the best? There is a price to pay in our development that includes suffering, trials, denial of self, temptations, sacrificial serving, and some tribulation. Do we want to pursue maturity such that we have the ability to live out the higher skill levels of His perfection? What else is there of value?

What we are presenting is certainly not totally complete, and we can be wrong in some ways. This is because we do not have complete information and we cannot know now much about what eternity will be like. But the Bible does give us insights for the Christian life in eternity and what we now are to pursue under God. It also shows what we can eternally forfeit by not obeying God now to the degree that He commands and desires.

This present earthly life is the only one we will have before eternity. We must not waste it. So why not pursue it, as God commands that we do, with excellence and commitment under

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the best we can have. ***But if we do not pursue maturity, and it indeed is fixed forever at death, we have made a most terrible eternal mistake. God has left the situation as a matter of our faith.***

However, to me, this lifetime makes the most sense if our maturity is fixed forever at death. Otherwise, why this lifetime? God has given the matter one of personal choice to receive the Cross and to pursue maximum maturity. If our maturity can increase In heaven, God just could have created us with the maturity He knew we would have at the end of this lifetime, and avoided sending anyone to the Lake of Fire. God may develop more aspects with different techniques in eternity that we cannot know now based on the development we have now in this lifetime. ***But as stated, if we pursue maturity as God commands, it will not matter which is the actual situation.***

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God's leading. But what are our churches doing? ●18 What are you doing? What am I doing? To me it is terrifying not to have God's best that He has planned for us as we enter eternity. There is no second chance. But we can now seek out God's wisdom and begin to obey it.

Proverbs 1:7 - The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge;

The Bible implies, does not teach directly, that our maturity in Christ can be fixed forever at death, in at least the following ways (these are indicators, not proofs):

ONE: God commands us to pursue this maturity. Thus, 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 to have a greater ministry now using greater love and faith. ***We can more greatly glorify God and enjoy His presence.***)

TWO: The biblical events over history from Genesis to Revelation, such as salvation in the Cross, growing in discipleship, and helping to accomplish God's work are designed to lead us to gain maturity in Christ. The Jew and Gentile believer are now one in Christ with only Christ having preeminence and first place. God established a spiritual warfare between Christ and Satan for an environment to help develop our maturity. (See my report: *God and His Greatness Must be Central.*)

THREE: The current developing environment of the world, the flesh, and the devil is not allowed in heaven. (This dynamic will not be in heaven.)

FOUR: The spiritual mistakes we make in our development are sins. No sin (no spiritual mistakes) is allowed or will occur in heaven. Our depraved natures that can sin are taken away from us. Our divine natures cannot sin - make no sinful mistakes. (This dynamic to sin will not be in heaven.)

FIVE: God chose to create us immature and a need for this maturity development.

SIX: 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 having fruit. The more it is watered and fed, the higher and stronger it will become (gaining more maturity) and the more fruit it will have. ***We cannot gain new life without dying to self and let God take over.***

SEVEN: There are Scriptures that may support the concept:

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;

18. CHURCHES: Our churches, even though doing many good things with many good results are doing the inverse of becoming mature in Christ. They, in their dumbing down, are rapidly becoming the immature church with a loss of biblical intellect with a low plateau of biblical knowledge. ***Leadership is responsible.***

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EIGHT: According to the parable, in heaven some may reign over 10 cities, and some over five. We receive different rewards depending upon our works now here on earth. (Luke 19-27; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15)

What if it is true that our spiritual ability is fixed forever at death? Can one prove from Scripture it is not regardless of what we may want to believe? God may use our maturity in ways in eternity we cannot know now. Of course, it is needed now for ministry and relationships and it, by obeying God in more depth-breadth, allows us to glorify Him more greatly. In my understanding, the degree of our maturity can limit the degree or skill level of the mature holiness and righteousness we can live under God. It limits the degree He can use us and the degree we can know Him in His depth-breadth now, but especially in eternity.

It would seem that if our maturity can increase in heaven, then why would God have this lifetime with suffering and sending many to the Lake of Fire? Why did He not just create us with the projected maturity He knew we would have in this lifetime at our death? He then could have avoided sending anyone to the Lake of Fire. He could have avoided the most terrible suffering that is going on in the world today and through the years. But He did not choose to do this. Of course we all still have questions.

If we will pursue maturity with commitment and excellence as God commands, it most likely will 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 and with the necessary ingredients of living by God's Greatness, faith, love, and head-subordinate relationships. If we do not? We should ensure to have these topics or ingredients in our training as previously described.

Church and family leadership should take action to help train their people so that they and themselves indeed become more mature in Christ to the maximum level they understand. They should train and live out the example. The problem is that leaders very often show the way through doctrinal academic training, but do not lead the way with a life that is lived out with testimony and experiential training that shows to us what God the Father is like. They seem to present an ideal life in a manner that no one has lived that way - no testimony. To show what He was like, the Father worked in Christ and the Father's life was demonstrated by Christ's life. We are to live this way and have a resulting testimony. ●19

EXPECTATIONS, CONSEQUENCES, AND RESULTS

ANTICIPATION: *When we enter eternity, we anticipate that we will get more commands to*

19. **BELIEF:** Believing that maturity can increase in heaven (or not paying attention to it either way) has led or allowed churches to dumb down their training in order to reach the youth, believing they are not eternally hurting their people. Thus, this is an item in the spiritual warfare. This may be one reason why God has left the situation of whether or not our maturity can increase in heaven as a matter of faith. If we obeyed God's command, we may not need to know. But our churches are not doing it. This dumbing down is leading to the disobedience that allows Satan to bring the endtimes Tribulation. Thus, the situation is a spiritual warfare item.

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obey and promises by which to trust God. We will get more leading by which we should believe is coming from God. Our divine natures, trained in this lifetime, will only respond to God's leading. God will give us more work to do. To receive new revelation from God, we anticipate that we should enter heaven with the spiritual ability to walk by faith. If we are to keep new commandments, we anticipate that we should enter heaven with the spiritual ability that loves God and serves Him and others sacrificially. These can be done at a higher skill level if we have a greater spiritual maturity in Christ-likeness in relationship living as we enter heaven.

We anticipate the above because God planned and commanded us that we develop these skills in this lifetime. Not to do so can be to make a most major and eternal mistake. Those with the greater maturity most likely will be used of God in greater ways and will learn more of God. All will learn more of God, but the degree and depth can depend upon one's maturity. Apart from knowing and relating to the perfect God in eternity, there is nothing. ***He is the only one of value, and we become of value when He puts Himself in us. So why not pursue God's best with commitment and excellence?***

Again, what if our maturity is fixed forever at death? Not responding to God's command to become mature, then, can be, as stated, a most terrible eternal mistake. It might in some manner limit our knowing and relating to God in His depth-breadth. As far as we understand now, there is no recovery after death. Apart from knowing and relating to God, there is nothing.

As stated, God may use our maturity in eternity in ways we cannot know now. If we appreciated God's Greatness, would we not pursue becoming mature as He commands with great commitment and diligence. This is so we could know and relate to God in the best that is possible - to know the maximum about Him and having all that He has for us? I would think so. What else is there?

But what are we doing?

Thousands of churches today are failing away by dumbing down their training and by not maturing their people in Christ. We believe that this can be bringing eternal harm to their people and helping to bring the endtimes Tribulation. They have lost their excellence before God and appear to no longer have needed Scriptural discernment.

We should understand that we can only live a righteous and holy life with our God directing everything. Apart from Him and Christ, we can do nothing.

**ETERNAL ASPECTS:
SEEING GOD THE FATHER AND THE MANIFESTATION OF HIS GLORY**

NEEDED UNDERSTANDING: God the Father with the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are the only ones of great (infinite) value. We become of value when God places Himself in us. We must realize that the reason we are here is to gain the ability to know and relate to the perfect God in His perfect ways throughout eternity. We have value when God places Himself in us and when we live out what He is directing us to do. There is nothing else. Thus, we should pursue it under His leading to the utmost with great commitment and

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excellence. We are to be eternally minded.

We, in my understanding, in eternity, will see the Lord Jesus Christ physically. But since there will be billions of believers in heaven, we all cannot expect to be near Him. There most likely will be a chain of command.

But also most likely, as stated, we will never see God the Father visibly (not now or) in eternity (John 1:18; 6:46). He is omnipresent and deals with billions of persons all simultaneously. He is everywhere all at once. We can know much about who and what He is by studying His Attributes and Character Qualities and what the Bible teaches what He is like and what He does with them. We see the Father spiritually speaking in relationship living illustrating His character and who and what He is through our Lord Jesus Christ. This happens as Christ lives His life before us doing only what the Father is doing in Him - what is coming from the Father as a source. When He lives this way, we no longer spiritually see the Lord for He from Himself is doing nothing. He and the Father are now one. We are to live this way and become one with the Father and Christ.

In eternity (and now) as discussed, God the Father can be seen in us as we live out what the Father is directing us to do in thought and in action. He will lead us individually in different ways and in different amounts. Thus, as we live this way and observe each other, we will learn, spiritually speaking, what God the Father is like. Of course, in much more so, as we observe the Lord Jesus Christ. But we need to know the new Bible we receive in heaven in order to recognize the Father in others. Of course the Glory of God will be known by the perfect environment in which we will live in eternity.

We will be one with the Father and with Christ. We must live this way to live without sin and to live holy and righteously. We will live by faith that what we are doing came from the Father as a source and not from us. We will obey His commandments from our love for Him and Christ. As we do, the Glory of the Father, our perfect God, is manifested through us, and we glorify our God through our actions, carrying out what came from Him as a source.

(The problem today is that we do not normally live this way so others can see God in us. We want to do things our way. We are more academically than experientially oriented. We want to be in charge. Thus, when we do, we see apostasy and immaturity, not God the Father. If we lived God's way so people could see God in us, they would come to God to become saved, wanting to have the same life. This is the Word of God being lived out. It is God's Word that draws people to Himself. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the Word of God. They should see the Christ - in us - to become saved. When they do come to us, we should have the method and procedure by which God uses to bring them salvation.) ●20

As we live out our lives before the Lord only doing what comes from the Father as a source, and as we view each other, we will see God the Father in all His Glory living through our

20. MUST LIVE THE EXAMPLE: I had a secretary years ago who had a group of Christians from a well-known Christian organization tell her that if she would believe in Christ and His Cross, she could have the same life they did. She took one look at their lives and walked away without receiving the Gospel.

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lives and before us. We will not see ourselves, because, we, from ourselves, will be doing nothing. This may be one of the major ways God the Father demonstrates much of His Glory and who and what He is. It is a major way we are allowed to see Him.

Thus, for God the Father in His infinite depth and breadth to be known and seen, we should become mature in Christ-likeness in relationship living. We must live only by what comes from God the Father as a source. Then it will be God all in all as the Bible teaches will be in eternity as Christ delivers up His Church to the Father.

1 Corinthians 15:28 - And when all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, that God may be all in all.

But for us to see God the Father in others in His depth-breadth, we need to have the spiritual ability to recognize this life in others. Thus, we must know the Bible teachings, including those taught to us in heaven. Understand that the Jews at the time of Christ did not recognize God the Father in Christ. People could see God the Father in Christ only by knowing what the Bible teaches and then they needed to live by faith. We will only be able to see God the Father in others to the degree that we know and understand His Word. We will learn much more of His Word in heaven, and most likely from our Lord Jesus Christ. But all of this requires a life that is lived with mature love and mature faith in divine head-subordinate relationships.

John 14:7-11 - "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him." Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." 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.

We will live by faith that God the Father exists and will fulfill the promises that our Lord Jesus will teach us. We can learn more of God and be used of God in greater, deeper, and wider ways if we have a very mature life of living by faith and by sacrificial love in head-subordinate relationships. So we should pursue maturity now as God commands with excellence whether or not the statement that our spiritual maturity can be fixed at death is correct. We cannot please God without living by faith (Hebrews 11:6) because He cannot reveal as much about Himself otherwise as He desires. Also if we do not live by faith, we will sin. We sin because we depend upon ourselves instead of upon God. We do what comes from us, and not from God. Thus, we by necessity will live by faith in eternity.

We will also live by sacrificial love keeping God's commandments. But if we do not live by sacrificial love, we are nothing, even if we know all knowledge and live by great faith. This is because we must live by love, keeping God's commandments, in order to live holy and righteously, and abide in God's love. This is necessary to know of God and His heart in His depth-breadth.

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

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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.

In summary, we must walk by faith to live without sin and to receive new revelation from God and to have God work all things together for our good. We must live by sacrificial love serving God and each other by keeping God's commandments in order to live holy (with a pure heart without any immorality) and righteously, accomplish God's work, and to know God's heart.

Matthew 5:8 - "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

We should realize that God's standards are different from ours. So we should hedge about the situation that our maturity can be fixed forever at death and pursue what God commands. If we love God, we will do as He commands and pursue becoming mature with commitment and excellence. He is in charge. ***Church and family leadership should ensue this happens.***

However, we also should be examining the trends and signs to see where things are going and whether the endtimes Tribulation could be coming soon. We should learn how our faith and love is lived out and can increase as we undergo suffering in the coming Tribulation.

**VERY IMPORTANT:
WHAT IS OUR POSTERITY BECOMING?**

Even though there are many exceptions and varying degrees of obedience, our churches are now trending to teach only first level training to reach the youth without also teaching in depth-breadth to mature their people. They are not adequately doing local area-wide evangelism. ***If we are to have a posterity that knows and relates to God from maturity, we should train our youth with some urgency to become mature in Christ with great commitment and with excellence.*** Very few know and can teach the Bible below the notion level.

Failure to do so will result where the trends are now going to an immature church with a loss of biblical intellect and with a very low plateau of biblical knowledge, including that of Bible prophecy. There will be very few who can teach God's Word in any depth-breadth leaning to bringing people to maturity in Christ. There can be much fewer who are mature in Christ. ***As a Church and family leader, do you want to be responsible for this trend and result?*** Very few now know what is coming with the calamity that will bring the Tribulation and its world government. They do not know what will happen and what they will experience when the Tribulation comes. Most do not know and realize what they are forfeiting if they are not pursuing a maximum maturity in Christ.

The problem we have now is that our leaders do not know what and how to train such that their people gain a maximum maturity They do work for some good things. Many work for some spiritual growth, but not maturity. Many work to do some evangelism, but do not work with other churches to evangelize complete local areas. Most very likely do not have and do not know what is the needed curriculum with printed existing materials. What is your Church doing? What is mine doing?

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But for you and I, what ever has been the past, let us have the best future we can. Let us pursue maturity in Christ as God commands and have the best future we can. We must do this with some urgency because signs signal the Tribulation can come soon.

Phillippians 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,