

Chapter Summary

Week 1:

This first week introduces and defines spiritual maturity, using Galatians 5, 1 Corinthians 15 and Ephesians 4:13. The author digs deep into the passages explaining the meaning of many words in the original language. She contrasts the work of the Holy Spirit in a believer's life with the role The Law once played before Christ's final sacrifice for sin. There is a mounting excitement as the reader gets a glimpse of the magnitude of their true freedom in Christ. Much of this first week is reading, with limited questions for the reader, laying a solid foundation for future weeks of in-depth study.

Week 2:

This week discusses the development of spiritual maturity. First the author explains that a believer is made complete in Christ aside from any personal work or effort. However, each and every believer must learn to live out of that completion, to walk by the Spirit and use the mind of Christ that God has placed within His children. To this end, Week Two uses two Old Testament characters to highlight essential practices and habits that lead to spiritual maturity: humility, solitude and worship.

Week 3:

This week the homework begins with intensity. Digging through two separate stories in the book of Acts, the author examines how, when and why the Holy Spirit takes up residence in a believer's life. Day 4 invites the readers to profile Paul, Pricilla and Aquila and Apollos to discern additional spiritual disciplines that help us to walk in the Spirit. Week 3 closes with a personal story, inviting the reader to be introspective as well. Is God waiting on us?

Week 4:

One of the hallmarks of a spiritually mature Christian is abundant freedom. Galatians 5:1 says, "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free,". This week takes a critical look at freedom, discusses its development and, equally important, how to manage it biblically. The author refers to freedom as "dangerous" pointing out that freedom, used unwisely, can offend others and result in pride, greed and idolatry.

Week 5:

Week five takes an intimate look at each of the Fruits of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-24. Using a Greek lexicon and even the modern dictionary, the author plumbs the depth of each word and invites the reader to evaluate the quality of that fruit in their own life. The week ends with a personal, humbling story from the author's own life, and a reminder that God knows our weaknesses and we who believe in Christ for our righteousness are not condemned for our shortcomings.

Week 6:

Week 6 invites the reader to accept the challenging process of spiritual maturing, noting that it is not an end-game in itself. Glancing backwards at the biblical characters analyzed earlier in the study, the author demonstrates that imperfections and failures do not disqualify the Christian from a full, fruitful and mature life in Christ. The study ends with a resounding note of hope. While life and spiritual maturity are a process, we are not merely waiting for our “happily ever after”. Today, this very day, and these unique lives are the living branches on which God desires to produce the evidence of the Savior.