

Understanding People - Student Notes
Chapters 12 & 13: Maturity / Love & Conclusion

1. Some Biblical descriptions of Christian Maturity.

Some key scriptures related to Christian maturity.

1) Conformity to the image of Christ - Romans 8:29. _____

2) Ability to handle “solid food” - Hebrews 5:14 and 6:1 _____

3) Spiritual wisdom and faith resting on the power of God - 1 Corinthians 2:6 _____

4) Walking in the Spirit & the Fruits of the Spirit - Galatians 5:16-24. _____

5) Having the love of Christ - John 13:34-35 _____

6) A healthy Church - the Body of Christ - Ephesians 4:13 _____

7) True spirituality of serving God, living in harmony with the rest of the body of Christ and loving others - 1 Corinthians 12-14

2. Crabb’s statements about evidence of Christian Maturity include:

1. Mature Christians “_____ a God whom they know better than we.”
They should draw us to the Lord (194).

2. Maturity creates a growing awareness of our imperfection that drives us toward _____
on Christ (194).

3. Mature people are _____ (194) “an unhealthy focus on oneself nourishes
the arrogant presumption of self-sufficiency.”

4. Maturity is most evident in the manner of relating including:

A. Abandonment of self-protection and _____ with others to encourage them
to move toward God (pg 198).

B. **Love**: 1 Corinthians 13 (but note that Crabb says that this is not “above-the-water-line
activity.” It is a love that is concerned about the welfare of other people above our own.
pp. 196,197).

C. Love that is characterized by the _____ and keeping the one another
commands (197) - Crabb specifically lists “patient, kind, not envious, humble, sensitive,
other-centered, slow to anger, quickly forgiving, haters of wrong, lovers of right,
protective, trusting, hoping, persevering.”

3. Crabb's definition of Christian Maturity:

Crabb defines maturity according to his four circles - pages 199-200.

1. Personal circle fullness - _____.

2. Rational Circle fullness -

R-2, regards self as unworthy of being loved by God, but also recognizing _____ as an image bearer by accepting God's love and cooperating with His purposes.

R-1, believing that there is _____ than Christ.

3. Volitional circle fullness -

V-2, _____, so demands nothing from life but strives to love God and others,

V-1, _____ in a manner consistent with that goal of love.

4. Emotional Circle: _____ and uses them to grow deeper in all the other circles. pp. 199,200.

4. Crabb's contrast of two models for developing character.

A. "Acquisition / performance Model" (pp 204-205)

"Character develops _____ directly working on the hidden issues below the water line" (p. 204). Crabb's perception of this model is that its stress is on the acquisition of knowledge and conformity to behavioral standards.

Its dangers are _____ to behavioral standards without a corresponding heart attitude. That is the foundation of legalism. It also can result in an academic Christianity in which people know about God but do not know Him personally to be dependent upon Him. It also can result in people remaining isolated for fear of exposure of the hidden evils of their hearts - keeping up the facade of godliness defined by their behavior will not allow them to expose what they are really thinking and feeling.

B. "Character Through Community"

"The study of people's relational patterns as observed in actual practice becomes the focus in an effort to promote repentance of self-protective patterns and to drive us to dependency on God . . ." (pg 205). Crabb also states that *"Character fault is properly defined as a pattern of relating designed to protect oneself from more personal pain" (pp 205).*

The result is that Crabb _____ personal interaction to expose things *"below-the-water-line"* as the essential means to character development - Christian Maturity. This model promotes exposure of defensive maneuvering of self-protection and their underlying unmet longings so that there can be meaningful repentance to cling to the Lord as the only hope in the midst of unresolved pain (pg. 206)

C. Crabb's Summary (pg. 206).

*"It is my conviction that the **Acquisition/performance Model** leads at best to a love corrupted by unnoticed defensiveness and leads at best to a love corrupted by unnoticed defensiveness and lacking a presence that draws others to the person of Christ"*

*“The **Character Through Community** model had the potential to deepen a person’s awareness of his weakness and dependence in a way that slowly frees him more and more from self-protective patterns of relating and increases a sense of presence that grows only through intimate communion with the Lord.”*

5. The Essence of Maturity

Crabb defines Godly character as “_____ in God that one day things will be as they should be” (p. 207). This requires that (1) “the reality of unfulfilled longings is deeply felt now,” and (2) “our inability to find satisfaction on our own is painfully admitted” (p. 207).

Or stated another way. Increasing maturity directly corresponds to increasing _____ upon God. This requires honest exposure and acknowledgment of error or lack in any of the four circles to bring about repentance from all forms of self-reliance so that life is lived in a loving relationship of trust and dependence upon God purposed to glorify Him.

6. What are some of the ways in which God has revealed in the Scriptures that Christian character is developed?

A. Salvation through the gospel of Jesus Christ: 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 6:4-6

B. Prayer and Confession: Psalm 32; 51; 139:23-24; James 5:16; 1 John 1:9

C. Trials of life : James 1:2-4, Romans 5:2-5; 2 Corinthians 4:16-18; Psalm 119:67, 71

D. God’s chastening: Hebrews 12:4-11; Psalm 119:75; Psalm 89:30-33

E. The Word of God: Psalm 19:7-11; Psalm 119; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12

F. Knowledge of Christ & pursuing it: 2 Peter 1:2-8; Ephesians 4:13; Colossians 1:16

G. Walk by the Spirit: Galatians 5:16-26; John 16:7-14; Romans 8:12-17

H. Being a living sacrifice and renewing our minds: Romans 12:1-2

I. Putting off the old man and putting on the new: Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:5-10, 12-14

J. True Christian Fellowship: Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12-14; Heb. 10:24; the “one another” verses
