

# The Marks of Maturity

In our last lesson, we will focus on the goal of maturity. What does maturity look like for me? I also want you to understand what maturity looks like in the opposite sex. Many of you have probably thought about marriage. What should you look for in a future spouse? You should look for maturity. I limited this lesson to five qualities that mark maturity in men and women. If you want to study this topic in more depth (and hear about other important qualities), check out the Sermons page on [www.anchoredresources.org](http://www.anchoredresources.org) and look for, "Shooting for the Mark – Raising Men" and "Shooting for the Mark – Raising Women".

Let me first say that I believe Scriptures teach that saved people should marry those who are saved (1 Corinthians 7:39, 2 Corinthians 6:14,). When you understand that the true purpose of marriage is to be a picture of Christ and His church (Ephesians 5:22-33), you will realize that this image cannot be achieved when one spouse is saved and the other is lost. "Dating evangelism" has ruined many young Christian lives and ended up hindering their service to the Lord for countless years.

## A Christian Man

With that foundation laid, what are the five important marks of reaching maturity as a man?

### 1. **Spiritual maturity sufficient to lead a wife and children as an example**

Read Ephesians 5:25-26 and 6:4 and answer the following questions:

What spiritual responsibility does the husband have to his wife? **He needs to lead her in her own spiritual growth. He is to be concerned about her relationship with God and encourage her to grow.**

Who has the primary responsibility when it comes to raising the next generation? **Fathers are given this responsibility. They need to oversee and participate in raising of their children for the Lord.**

### 2. **Personal maturity sufficient to be a diligent husband and father**

Read Proverbs 12:24 and 26:13 and answer the following questions:

What character quality is always present in a good leader? **Diligence is an essential character quality for leadership. They must be able to see a difficult job through to completion, to be committed.**

How are the lazy described in Proverbs 26:13? **They always find an excuse to not do what they need to do. A man doesn't make excuses, he does what needs to be done.**

### 3. **Financial maturity sufficient to hold an adult job and handle money**

Read Proverbs 24:27 and 1 Timothy 5:8 and answer the following questions:

What is Proverbs 24:27 teaching us about the importance of being able to provide for a family? **Men must make sure they can support a family before they try to have a family. Planning to live in your parents' basement is not sufficient.**

How does God describe the man who won't provide for his family in 1 Timothy 5:8? **He is worse than an unbeliever. Notice that I said, "won't" and not "can't". God may allow or decree circumstances in a man's life that render him unable to work after he is married. That is not a sin.**

### 4. **Biblical maturity sufficient to make responsible and godly decisions**

Read 1 Kings 3:9 and 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and answer the following questions:

When Solomon received the opportunity to lead, what did he ask for? **He asked for wisdom, to be able to lead the kingdom in a godly way. All men should seek such wisdom for their home.**

How sufficient is God's Word when it comes to equipping us to make good decisions? **The Bible makes us complete for every good work. A man of maturity knows God's Word and is able to use it.**

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## 5. Sexual maturity sufficient to maintain **purity** for marriage and within marriage

Read 1 Corinthians 6:17 and 1 Thessalonians 4:4 and answer the following questions:

How does God describe the sin of fornication (sexual immorality) in 1 Corinthians 6:17? **It is a unique sin in that it is committed against our own body. It is an especially harmful sin.**

Consider 1 Thessalonians 4:4, what is a mark of spiritual maturity? **Being able to control (not give into) our sexual desires is a mark of spiritual maturity.**

Let me conclude this section with a comment. If a young man cannot control his passions before marriage, what makes him believe that he will be able to control them after marriage? The opportunity for a pure physical relationship within marriage doesn't make the sinful lusts previously cultivated disappear. Only a true heartfelt repentance can begin the process of making that change.

## A Christian Woman

Now let's discuss the five important marks of reaching maturity as a woman.

### 1. **Spiritual** maturity sufficient to embrace the beauty of **submission** to her husband

Read Ephesians 5:22-23 and 1 Peter 3:1-2 and answer the following questions:

What is the role God has ordained for the woman in the marriage relationship and why? **God has called women into submission to their husbands. This is a picture of Christ and His bride, the church.**

In reading 1 Peter 3:1-2, how does the wife exert the most influence over her husband? **It isn't by bossing him around, but rather by godly behavior and submission that makes her influence a greater power for true change in his life.**

### 2. **Personal** maturity sufficient to be a **diligent** wife and mother

Read Proverbs 31:10-27 and complete the following sentence.

Being a godly wife and mother is very **hard** work. It requires **intelligence**, **initiative**, and **diligence**.

### 3. **Sexual** maturity sufficient to maintain **purity** for marriage and within marriage

Read Song of Solomon 8:8-9 and answer the following question:

How important was purity for the young lady described in Song of Solomon 8:8-9? **Her older siblings declared that if she was pure (a wall – protecting against sin), they would build a palace on her, if she was impure (a door – easy to go in and out), they would board her up.**

Sexual purity is an important mark of maturity and an indicator of future success in the home. Notice that a palace would be built upon the girl who was a "wall", a description of her purity.

### 4. **Moral** maturity sufficient to embrace the value of inner **beauty** more than outer **beauty**

Read 1 Peter 3:3-5 and answer the following questions:

A great deal of pressure is put on women to look and act a certain way by society. What does God value? **God values godly qualities in the heart of women rather than their outward appearance. These qualities will never fade, even though physical beauty will fade over time.**

How do the qualities of a meek and quiet spirit lead to the harmony of the home? How does trusting in God relate to these qualities? **A meek and quiet spirit doesn't assert itself over others but is submissive. Submission is challenging until we learn that God is in control. A husband has no authority outside of God and will answer to Him. When we trust God, submission becomes easier.**

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5. **Biblical maturity sufficient to be a wise counselor to her husband and to teach her children.**

Read Proverbs 31:26 and Proverbs 1:8 and answer the following questions.

Who should be a man's most trusted advisor and confidant and what should her qualifications be? **A wife is to be a husband's most consistent and significant advisor and confidant. The more biblically grounded she is, the more valuable her counsel is.**

A strong practical knowledge of God's Word is essential for a godly wife and mother. Doctrine is not just for men; we all need to know how to apply God's Word.