

Emotional Maturity

Did you ever check your emotional responses to know whether you have emotional maturity and stability?

Most people give little or no thought to this matter of emotions.

Humans start life as little babies and we have to grow up not only physically but to fulfil human life's real purpose we must also grow mentally, spiritually and emotionally.

[Please download and study our article, '*God's Purpose For Every Human Being*' listed under general heading '*Human Nature*'.]

We are educated mentally through the schools and colleges we attend but what about spiritual maturity?

The average person automatically accepts the established religion of their parents or country, but how many give any real thought to why they believe the religious ideas they hold sacred?

How many ever give thought to spiritual growth?

Yet no person attains true maturity unless they attain spiritual maturity as well as physical growth.

Fewer still ever give much as a passing thought to the need for emotional development, and maturity.

Just what is meant by emotional maturity? –

Few know the meaning of the term, yet it is one of the real secrets of human happiness.

No-one is born with emotional maturity, it has to be learnt, developed over a period of time.

We need continually to realise that we are born as helpless little babies, knowing nothing at birth. We do **not** come equipped with instinct, like dumb animals. A little calf comes into the world by an instinctive, natural process. Almost immediately it struggles to its feet and is able to walk within a few minutes. No-one teaches it where to go for its food, it has a built-in instinct.

No new-born human knows either of the above, but the human baby does have something that animals do not have, a human mind and human spirit, [Job 32:8; Proverbs 20:27; 1 Corinthians 2:11].

It is through these two human abilities that we are able to be taught and learn how to live life.

One of the basic things every human needs so vitally to learn is the right use of human emotions, emotional maturity, something that must be learned by the mind and developed by self-discipline.

Uncontrolled human nature is like a magnet, a constant pull in the direction of self.

The way of life that the Creator God wants us to share with Him, the way that brings happiness and everything that is good, **is away from self to giving, sharing, serving, helping**, which is something we have to learn from Him.

Emotion is an impulse towards action or expression of feeling that is dangerous unless it is controlled by the mind.

Among the emotions are such feelings or expressions of fear, anger, jealousy, resentment, hatred, grief, sorrow, surprise, desire, elation, joy.

Emotions are linked to moods, those who are emotionally immature are usually unable to control their moods.

While animals are guided by instinct into a course intended by the Eternal Creator God, human beings have been given potentialities infinitely higher.

The “*human spirit*” imparts intellectual and even spiritual qualities to every human being.

Animals cannot appreciate a Gainsborough, Rembrandt or Goya painting, or a Beethoven sonata or a Schumann concerto, or the literature of great authors.

Animals cannot acquire scientific knowledge, weigh facts, make decisions, render judgements, exercise self-discipline or develop character of their Creator.

Animals cannot enjoy actual communion with their Creator or have their minds and human spirit enlightened by the Holy Spirit, or come to understand spiritual truths or become part of His created family [the Kingdom of God].

Humans were put on earth to develop and attain to something infinitely higher than animal destiny.

Humans are intended to develop spiritual character.

Genesis 1:26-27 [New King James] *“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”*

The Hebrew word translated “*image*” is “*tselem*” meaning resemblance, outward form, material representation, but the Hebrew word translated “*likeness*” is totally different, “*demûwth*” meaning manner, attributes, character.

As we know, character is only formed after spending time in close union with the person whose character we wish to reflect, hence humans are given a period of time for this to happen if we choose to seek it.

The Holy Spirit, joined to our “*human spirit*,” gives us a sound mind that can control our emotions, [2 Timothy 1:7].

Emotional maturity does not mean emotionless maturity but mature control of our emotions.

They express at the right time, and in a proper degree, enthusiasm, happiness and joy. They do feel deep gratitude for blessings and also deeply felt adoration and reverence in the worship of the Eternal Creator God.

They sincerely feel compassion towards other human beings, a feeling of true outgoing concern. They express sympathy and have mercy.

Emotional maturity does not crucify emotions, it controls and guides them with right knowledge and true wisdom.

Emotional maturity develops hand-in-hand with physical, mental and spiritual growth, the four blending, finally, into the perfect spiritual character that is the true destiny of all human beings and the very purpose of human life.

Where do we go to find the right teaching on emotional response? –

The Word of God teaches us that our relationship with the Eternal Creator God must completely dominate our lives and the decisions we make in life.

Romans 12:1 [NIV] *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, this is your spiritual act of worship.”*

The Greek word translated “bodies” is “soma” meaning whole life, physical body, mind and human spirit. The sacrifice referred to is the “burnt offering,” the sin offering of **Leviticus 6:30**.

Romans 12:2 [NIV] *“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is, his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

Only then can the Holy Spirit in us start to re-educate our minds to conform with God’s mind and not the mind of this world that is under the influence of Satan at this time, [2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 John 5:19].

Galatians 5:22-25 [New King James] *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”*

The “fruits” of the Holy Spirit depict the very character of the Eternal Triune God which we will take on if we follow His lead in life, [**John 14:17; John 16:13; Acts 5:32**].

This relationship with our Creator God is the product of meditative study of God’s Word, the Christian Bible, and heartfelt personal prayers to Him.

Yet most people, if they pray to God at all, are casual in approach, perhaps as a matter of duty, and without feeling or emotion.

King David was a man whose prayers were from the heart and emotional.

Notice David’s prayer of repentance after his sin of adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband.

Psalms 51:1-17 [New King James] *“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight, that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me. Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me hear joy and gladness, that the bones You have broken may rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You. Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise. For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, these, O God, You will not despise.”*

This humble and emotional approach to God was accepted by the Creator God and David was freed from the deserved death penalty, [2 Samuel 12:1-13].

Notice Daniel’s prayers, he was in intense, dead earnest, they were not casual, routine prayers; he put his whole heart into them, [**Daniel 9:3-19**].

I'm sure that tears were streaming down their faces as they made these intense prayers of surrendered, yielded lives to the Eternal loving and merciful Creator God.

Jesus Christ gave us an example of two men praying, one a respected Pharisee, the other a hated tax collector for the Romans, [**Luke 18:9-14**].

Jesus Christ showed His deep emotional feeling as He looked on Jerusalem knowing what would happen in a few years' time, [**Matthew 23:37-38**].

Or the prayer to God the Father just before He faced His death on the cross, [**Luke 22:41-44**].

Let us begin now to live our lives as Jesus Christ did when on earth as a humble being as an example for our children and others who know us of how we should mature emotionally, with the help of our Creator God.