



## The Inscrutable Question: Spiritual Maturity Characteristics: Contentment, Cognitive Invincibility & Wisdom; & Escrow

3- Stage 3: Spiritual Maturity:

1) At this stage the believer's spiritual life maxes out in several distinguishable areas:

a. Maximum contentment. The wisdom developed in momentum testing has assured the believer that God and His Word along with the enabling power of the Holy Spirit are the only assets he needs to endure and pass either adversity or prosperity testing. Knowing that God is in control of every situation becomes the foundation for sharing the happiness of God.

b. Cognitive invincibility. "Invincibility" is defined by *The New Oxford American Dictionary* as "too powerful to be defeated or overcome." This inventory of ideas that is invincible in the face of all that *cosmos diabolicus* can offer is maximum wisdom.

Wisdom comes from the Greek word **σοφία, sophia** and means, according to Arndt and Gingrich's *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, "good judgment in the face of the demands made by human and specifically by the Christian life."

Solomon gives wise instruction about wisdom throughout his Proverbs. Here's one that gives counsel regarding discernment between divine viewpoint and human viewpoint and the dark side of morality:

**Proverbs 2:6** - The Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding.

**v. 7** - He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity,

**v. 8** - guarding the paths [ **אֶרֶץ O-rakh** ] of justice, and He preserves the way [ **דֶּרֶךְ DE-rek** ] of His godly ones.

**v. 9** - Then you will discern righteousness and justice and equity and every good course [ **מַעְגָּל ma-GAL** ].

**v. 10** - For wisdom will enter your heart, and knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;

**v. 11** - discretion [ **מִןְחָמָה me zim-MAH** ] will guard you, understanding will watch over you,

**v. 12** - to deliver you from the way [ **דֶּרֶךְ DE-rek** ] of evil, from the man who speaks perverse things;

**v. 13** - from those who leave the paths [ **אֶרֶץ O-rakh** ] of uprightness, to walk in the ways [ **דֶּרֶךְ DE-rek** ] of darkness.

*Derek* and *orakh* are used figuratively to describe the way to life or to death. Together they form an idiom meaning "lifestyle." Jesus basically quotes this concept in Matthew 7:13-14 when He compares the two gates open to human volition. (*TWOT*, 1:71)

**Matthew 7:13** - Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction and many are those who enter by it.

**v. 14** - For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it.



In verse 11 we find the singular feminine noun **מוֹצֵחַ**, **me zimmah** and the English word “discretion” is an excellent translation. It comes from the Hebrew root word **זָמַם**, **zepam** which means “plan.” The person who acquires maximum doctrine has a complete understanding of the plan of God for his life and the will of God expressed in that plan. The noun **מוֹצֵחַ**, **me zimmah** indicates the ability to make responsible decisions based on one’s knowledge of God’s will and plan. God has given us free will to make choices but His Word gives us guidance on how to make choices that comply with his will and coordinate with His plan. This is a major advantage of wisdom and in spiritual maturity contributes to the concept of cognitive invincibility.

- c. Escrow blessings. Spiritual maturity is the fulfillment of the escrow agreement and results in the conveyance of the escrow deposit in time. We have studied the escrow deposit in Ephesians 1:3. They are also mentioned in:

**1 Peter 1:4** - We have an inheritance [ **escrow deposit** ] which is incorruptible [ **irrevocable** ] and undefiled [ **not even by sin** ] and will not fade away [ **not retained by failure to fulfill the escrow agreement** ], reserved in heaven [ **the depository** ] for those of us

**v. 5** - who are guarded [ **by the wall of fire** ] by the power of God through faith alone in Christ alone for a salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time [ **by the resurrection body at the rapture of the church** ].

Peter refers to the escrow deposit as our “inheritance.” Paul calls it the “prize” in:

**Philippians 3:13** - Fellow believers, I do not evaluate myself to have laid hold of it yet [ **the high ground** ], but one thing I concentrate on: forgetting those things which are behind [ **sins confessed & forgiven** ] and reaching out toward those things which are ahead [ **escrow blessings in time** ],

**Philippians 3:14** - I keep advancing toward the objective [ **spiritual maturity** ] for the prize [ **decoration** ] of the upward call [ **efficacious grace which begins the advance** ] of God which is in Christ Jesus [ **the Depository** ].

The writer of Hebrews informs us that the fulfillment of the escrow agreement occurs when the believer reaches spiritual maturity in:

**Hebrews 10:35** - Therefore, do not throw away as worthless your confidence [ **spiritual self-esteem and cognitive self-confidence in Stage 1 of the sophisticated spiritual life** ] which keeps on having great distribution of blessings [ **conveyance of the escrow account** ]

**v. 36** - for you keep on having need of perseverance [ **habitual inculcation of doctrine** ] so that when you have executed [ **ποιέω, poieō** ] the will of God [ **move through His plan to the point of spiritual maturity** ] you may receive [ **κομίζω, komizō** ] the deposit [ **conveyance of the escrow account** ] which was promised [ **Ephesians 1:3** ].

The verb **ποιέω, poieō** means “to keep the will of God obediently” (Arndt & Gingrich, 682). It is an aorist active participle. And the action of the aorist participle always precedes the action of the main verb. The main verb is **κομίζω, komizō** which is the conveyance of escrow blessings which is promised in Ephesians 1:3.



This is the first way by which a believer can actually glorify God. The first thing He ever did for us was to bless us. For those whom He elected to privilege, in recognition of their free-will response to the gospel, He provided a perfect plan that if followed through free-will decisions would eventuate in the conveyance of these blessings. When the believer utilizes delegated omnipotence and avails himself to the mentorship of the Holy Spirit he will grow in grace and will ultimately arrive at spiritual maturity. That a creature lower than the angels would respond to truth and follow its teachings by means of grace provisions proves the contention held by the Prosecution in the appeal trial: if

- (1) a member of the human race, born totally depraved, will willingly pursue God's plan through faith all the way to its conclusion then,
- (2) the fallen angels, who are far more advanced as a creation, must be found guilty of rebellion since they chose to follow Lucifer's plan of arrogance rather than God's plan of grace.