

Elihu Confronts Job's

Friends

Chapter Thirty-Two

Elihu

- In Chapter Thirty-Two Elihu enters Job's story and for the next five chapters he points out three major things:
 1. Job's friends had not answered Job correctly but had successfully condemned him.
 2. Elihu pointed out that Job had been justifying himself before the Lord and suggested that Job should repent of his pride that had developed because of his suffering
 3. Elihu spoke on God's behalf and defended God's actions and character in His dealings with man.

- Elihu did not attribute Job's suffering to anything that Job himself had done but purported that suffering is for the revealing of the good purpose of the Lord.
- Elihu says, “He delivers the afflicted by their affliction and opens their ear by adversity.”-**Job 36:15**
- Elihu’s words and ministry prepared Job for his encounter with the Lord thus many commentators believed Elihu was a type for the Holy Spirit.
- Job never had a chance to refute Elihu because God takes over when Elihu is finished.
- “Elihu” translates into English as “He is My God”.

- “Elihu's ministry occupies the central place, because it is necessary, in order to explain what goes before and to prepare us to what is to follow. It is necessary, so that we may have it pointed out to us where Job and his three friends were all, alike, wrong. The root error of each side to this controversy is laid bare by Elihu ; and the true remedy is plainly declared.”-Bullinger, E.W.

Job 32:1-5

“So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes. Then Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, burned with anger. He burned with anger at Job because he justified himself rather than God. He burned with anger also at Job’s three friends because they had found no answer, although they had declared Job to be in the wrong. Now Elihu had waited to speak to Job because they were older than he. And when Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, he burned with anger.”

Job Was Self-Righteous

- Elihu said the Job's friends had ceased arguing because Job saw himself as **righteous in his own eyes**.
- Job falsely believed that he could gain God's approval by **doing** certain good behaviors.
- Job falsely believed that if he had **not done** a certain behavior he was good enough to gain God's approval.
- Job falsely developed pride in keeping certain religious acts.
- The combination of doing good actions with not doing bad actions gave him a sense of pride in his own self righteousness.

Elihu Burned With Anger

- Elihu had waited patiently to speak because Job and his friends **were older than he** but he indicated that during the waiting period he **burned with anger**.
- Elihu **burned with anger** against Job because Job had **justified himself rather than God**.
- Elihu **burned with anger** against Job's friends because they had **found no answer** and **had declared Job to be in the wrong**.
- Elihu was angry at everybody.

Job 32:6-9

“And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said: “I am young in years, and you are aged; therefore I was timid and afraid to declare my opinion to you. I said, ‘Let days speak, and many years teach wisdom.’ But it is the spirit in man, the breath of the Almighty, that makes him understand. It is not the old who are wise, nor the aged who understand what is right.”

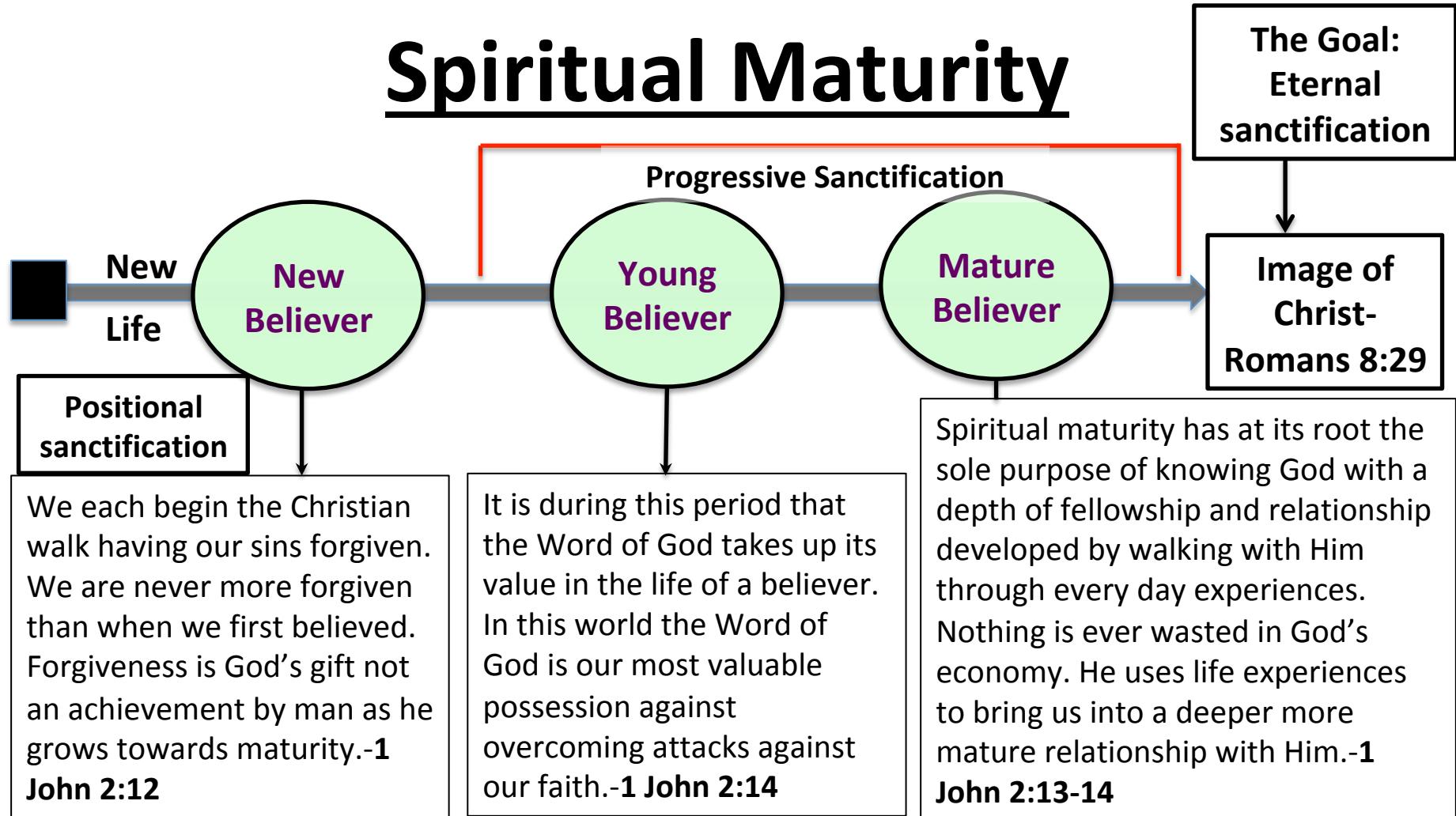
Spiritual Maturity

- Elihu demonstrated spiritual maturity in his words and actions
- Elihu showed spiritual maturity by waiting patiently to speak until his elders were finished.
- “In the ancient Orient, where age is synonymous with wisdom, the young were not expected to participate in the deliberations of their elders, let alone interrupt their discussion.”-Gordis, Robert

- Elihu understood that youth was not the issue in spiritual matters because it is the **breath of the Almighty, that makes him understand.**
- If a person is old it does not guarantee that they are wise in spiritual matters **since It is not the old who are wise, nor the aged who understand what is right.**
- “God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person’s thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also **no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.** Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, **that we might understand the things freely given us by God.** And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

- The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. “For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.”-**1 Corinthians 2:10-16**
- A person can be a immature in his faith at age 50 while a person who is 15 of age can have a deep mature faith.
- However, a person also can be stuck in their spiritual growth at the immature stage of their development not moving forward in their faith and this could be how Elihu was viewing Job and his friends.
- “Age is no just measure of wisdom. There are beardless sages and greyheaded children.”-Trapp, John

Spiritual Maturity



Steps Of Spiritual Maturity

- Spiritual maturity is not automatic but requires cooperation with Holy Spirit.
 - “About this we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.”-**Hebrews 5:11-14**
 - “If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit”-**Galatians 5:25**

- The first step to spiritual maturity is a desire to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.
 - Continue “to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”-**2 Peter 3:18**
- The second step to spiritual maturity is a craving for God’s Word in our life.
 - “Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation.”- **1 Peter 2:2**
- The third step to spiritual maturity is discipline and training.
 - “Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths. Rather train yourself for godliness...Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress.”-**1 Timothy 4:7;15**

Job 32:10-14

“Therefore I say, ‘Listen to me; let me also declare my opinion.’ “Behold, I waited for your words, I listened for your wise sayings, while you searched out what to say. I gave you my attention, and, behold, there was none among you who refuted Job or who answered his words. Beware lest you say, ‘We have found wisdom; God may vanquish him, not a man.’ He has not directed his words against me, and I will not answer him with your speeches.”

Listen To Elihu

- Elihu began his long dialogue by telling Job and his friends to **listen to me; let me also declare my opinion.**
- Elihu asked ten times that they pay attention to his words (vv. 10, 20; 33:1, 12, 31, 33; 34:2, 10, 16; 37:14).
- Elihu was slow to speak and quick to listen. He said **I gave you my attention. I listened for your wise sayings.**

Job 32:15-22

“They are dismayed; they answer no more; they have not a word to say. And shall I wait, because they do not speak, because they stand there, and answer no more? I also will answer with my share; I also will declare my opinion. For I am full of words; the spirit within me constrains me. Behold, my belly is like wine that has no vent; like new wineskins ready to burst. I must speak, that I may find relief. I must open my lips and answer. I will not show partiality to any man or use flattery toward any person. For I do not know how to flatter, else my Maker would soon take me away.”

Elihu Sought Relief

- Elihu stated that he **must speak** in order that he **may find relief**.
- He cannot contain himself because the **spirit within constrains** him.
- The word used for “constrains” carries the idea of being “compelled, pressed upon, or urged”.
- Elihu was bottled up with words that had been pressed upon him to speak by the **spirit within** and the only way he can find relief was to speak.

- Paul said something similar: “For if we are beside ourselves, *it is* for God; or if we are of sound mind, *it is* for you. For the love of Christ **compels** us...”.-**2 Corinthians 5:13-14a**
- Paul was urged, pressed upon by the **love of Christ**, that is, Paul was motivated by the love that he experienced from Christ so much so that he needed to speak about Jesus to the Corinthians.
- “The love of Christ had pressed Paul’s energies into one force, turned them into one channel, and then driven them forward with a wonderful force, till he and his fellows had become a mighty power for good, ever active and energetic.” –Spurgeon, Charles

Job's Friends Were Exhausted

- Elihu said the Job's friends had become **dismayed** and that they **have not a word to say**.
- The word “dismayed” means “to be shattered or broken”.
- Job's friends had become shattered and exhausted trying to convince Job that had sinned.
- It was a good thing that Job and his friends had run out of things to say because Elihu had a lot of words to say in one long discourse.
- “Almost all modern interpreters have found Elihu to be insufferably wordy. MacKenzie says that it takes him twenty-four verses to say, ‘Look out! I’m going to speak!’”-Smick, Elmer