

## **JACK'S CORNER**

**QUESTION:** What is a good measure of Christian maturity?

**ANSWER:** There are many... how one forgives, loves, sacrifices... but one of my favorite characteristics to watch for in an individual as I counsel is to observe how they view problems in life. The mature believer sees problems as the primary tool God uses to shape people into the image of Christ. The mature Christian doesn't whine to God when problems arise. He knows that any problem that gets in the way of his relationship with God, God will remove. The other problems are opportunities for spiritual growth. Although he knows the path through problems may be difficult, he rejoicing in the effect. St. James tells us: "Consider it pure joy when you encounter various trials for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. Let steadfastness have its full effect that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing." (See also Romans 5:3-5)

As I have counseled individuals, couples and families over the years, I am convinced that problems are indeed opportunities. God accomplishes character changes through struggles that cannot be accomplished in any other way. The measure of a mature believer can be found in his courage, hope and steadfastness in wrestling with the problems of life.

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