

# “What the World Needs is Christians who Are Compassionate and Mature”

2 Corinthians 1:1-11

*“Compassion costs. It is easy enough to argue, criticize, and condemn, but redemption is costly, and comfort draws from the deep. Brains can argue, but it takes heart to comfort.”*

(Samuel Chadwick)

## **Christians who are compassionate and mature...**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ when others \_\_\_\_\_.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ even when it's \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ even when it's \_\_\_\_\_.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ when others \_\_\_\_\_ away.

*How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant of the weak and strong. Because someday in your life you will have been all of these.* (George Washington Carver)

## WHAT ARE THE SIGNS OF AN EMOTIONALLY MATURE CHRISTIAN?

*by Pete Scazzero*

Why do so many Christians make lousy human beings? Why are so many of us judgmental, unaware, and defensive? Part of the answer lies in a failure to biblically integrate emotional health and spiritual maturity.

A vast industry exists around emotional intelligence that ignores spirituality. A vast amount of information also exists that defines a “mature” Christian. Rarely are the two integrated.

The following are 11 signs of an emotionally mature Christian:

1. **You anchor your life in the love of Jesus.** You don't divide your life into “secular” and “sacred” compartments. Instead, you rather enjoy communion with Him in all areas of your life – work, recreation, church, and parenting. Towards that end, you regularly practice spiritual disciplines (e.g., meditation on Scripture, silence, solitude, community, confession, worship) to position yourself to practice His presence all throughout the day.
2. **You break the power of the past.** You can identify how issues from your family of origin (e.g., character flaws, ways of coping with pain) impact your current relationships and decisions. As a result, you are reflective and open to feedback from trustworthy sources in order to

minimize the negative impact of your past and live freely in the new family of Jesus.

**3. You listen to your anger, sadness and fear.** You take the necessary time to experience and process these “difficult” emotions. Thus, you are able to express anger, hurt, and sadness in ways that lead to growth in others and yourself.

**4. You slow down for Sabbath.** You regularly set aside a twenty-four-hour period in which you stop your work and practice Sabbath – setting a healthy limit around your paid and unpaid work. This rhythm of stopping, resting, delighting and contemplating God informs the structure of your week.

**5. You recognize your brokenness and vulnerability.** People experience you as approachable, gentle, open, and transparent. This is evidenced by the way you receive criticism without becoming defensive. You easily admit when you're wrong and freely talk about your weaknesses, failures, and mistakes.

**6. You live out of your marriage or singleness.** Your highest priority is to invest time and energy to build a healthy marriage or singleness that reveals Christ's love to the church and the world. Why? You know the quality and integrity of your marriage or singleness is the most important gospel message you preach. It is a sign and wonder that points people to Christ.

**7. You receive limits as a gift.** You have a realistic sense of your emotional, relational, physical and spiritual capacities. As a result, you regularly say “no” to requests/opportunities rather than risk overextending yourself. You are profoundly aware that your limits are a key factor in faithfully fulfilling your God-given destiny.

**8. You engage in conflict maturely.** You don't avoid difficult conversations and are able to repair relationships (as much as it is possible) when they have been ruptured. Moreover, you can state your own beliefs and values without becoming adversarial.

**9. You refuse to judge the spiritual journeys of others.** You are careful to take the “log” out of your own eye first – knowing you have huge blind spots – before removing the speck in another person's eye. And you are deeply aware to let others be themselves before God and move at their own pace.

**10. You make loving others well a number one priority.** You take the time to master learning new ways of relating as a Christ-follower. For example, you learn to speak clearly, honestly, and respectfully, and how to enter other people's world by listening deeply – without having to fix, change, or save them.

**11. You embrace endings and losses as a fundamental way God works.** You refuse to interpret endings as signs of failure. Instead, you rest in God's goodness and sovereignty when disoriented by and confused by loss. You know that waiting attentively on God in the midst of disorienting change is foundational to your spiritual growth.