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Growing in Grace


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Growing in Grace

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Christian Association for Psychological Studies – March 2022

Can we recognize maturity?



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Christian Spiritual Maturity

4

Superordinate Frameworks of: Development

Relational | Cognitive | Staged



Relational Turn

Object Relations & Attachment Theory

5

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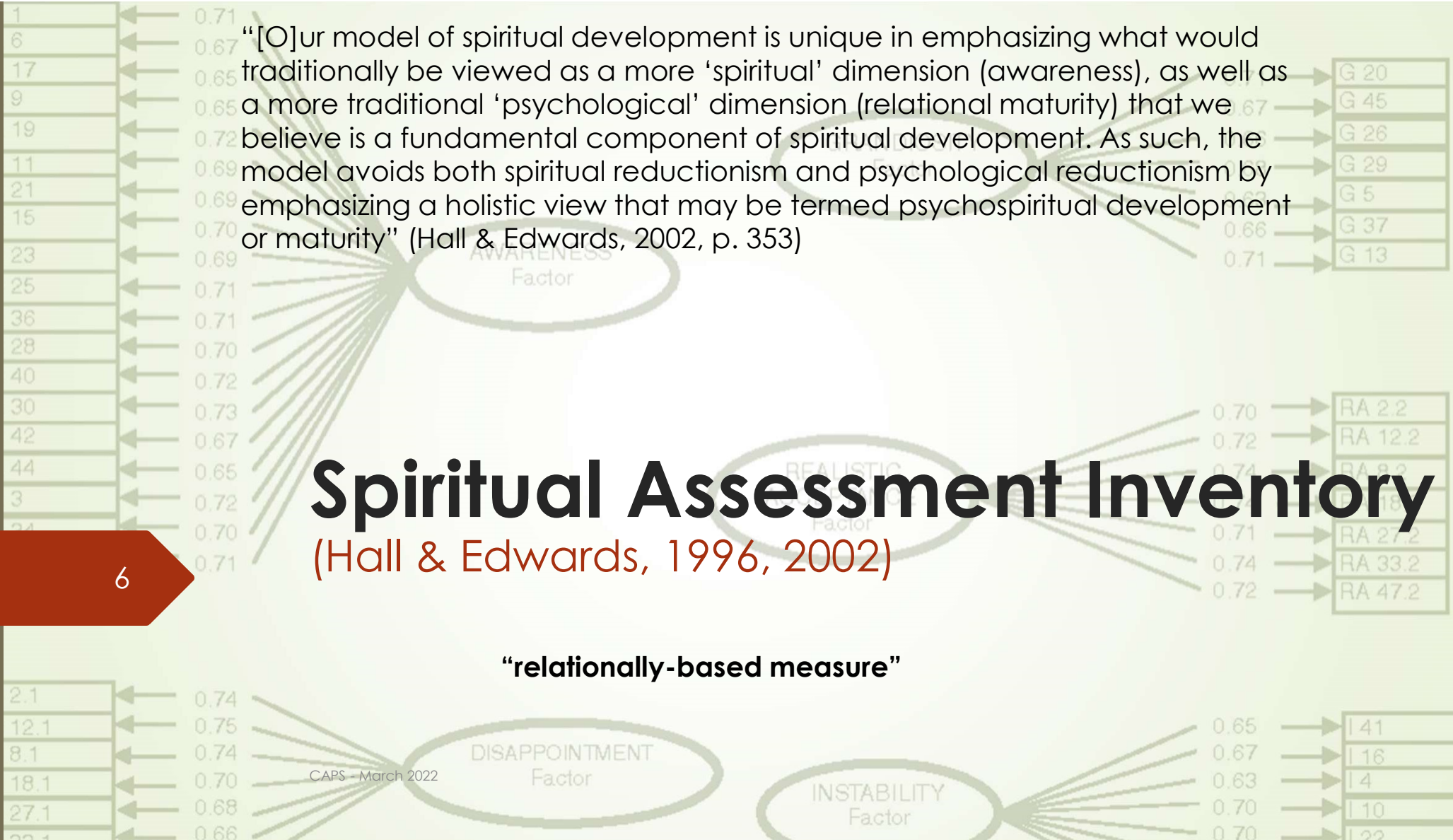


"[O]ur model of spiritual development is unique in emphasizing what would traditionally be viewed as a more 'spiritual' dimension (awareness), as well as a more traditional 'psychological' dimension (relational maturity) that we believe is a fundamental component of spiritual development. As such, the model avoids both spiritual reductionism and psychological reductionism by emphasizing a holistic view that may be termed psychospiritual development or maturity" (Hall & Edwards, 2002, p. 353)

Spiritual Assessment Inventory

(Hall & Edwards, 1996, 2002)

"relationally-based measure"





Cognitive Revolution

Development of Complex Thinking

7

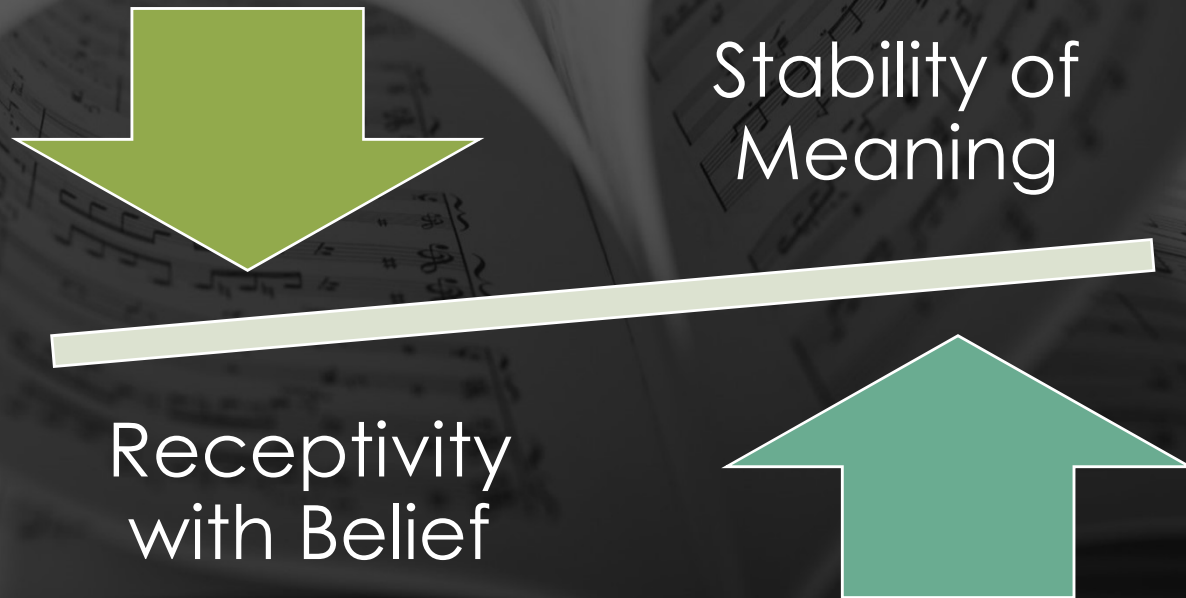
Quest Scale

(Batson & Schoenrade, 1991)

“openly facing complex, existential questions... and resisting clear-cut, pat answers” (p. 430).



Spiritual Experience Index–Revised (Genia, 1991, 1997)





Psychosocial Stage Theories

- Erikson's Psychosocial Stages
 - Measurement Attempts
 - Concerns

- Fowler's Faith Development Stages
 - Measurement Attempts
 - Concerns

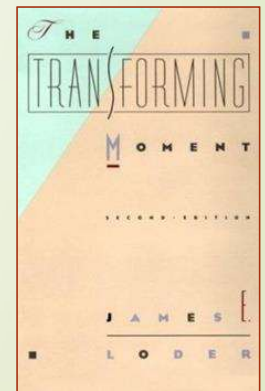
“ [T]he whole configuration of human development needs to be reconceptualized... In... God resides the ultimate coherence from whom each passion for understanding, each new insight, new stage, new vision of the universe, derives its ultimate intelligibility and toward which all such phenomena point. ”

11

James E. Loder

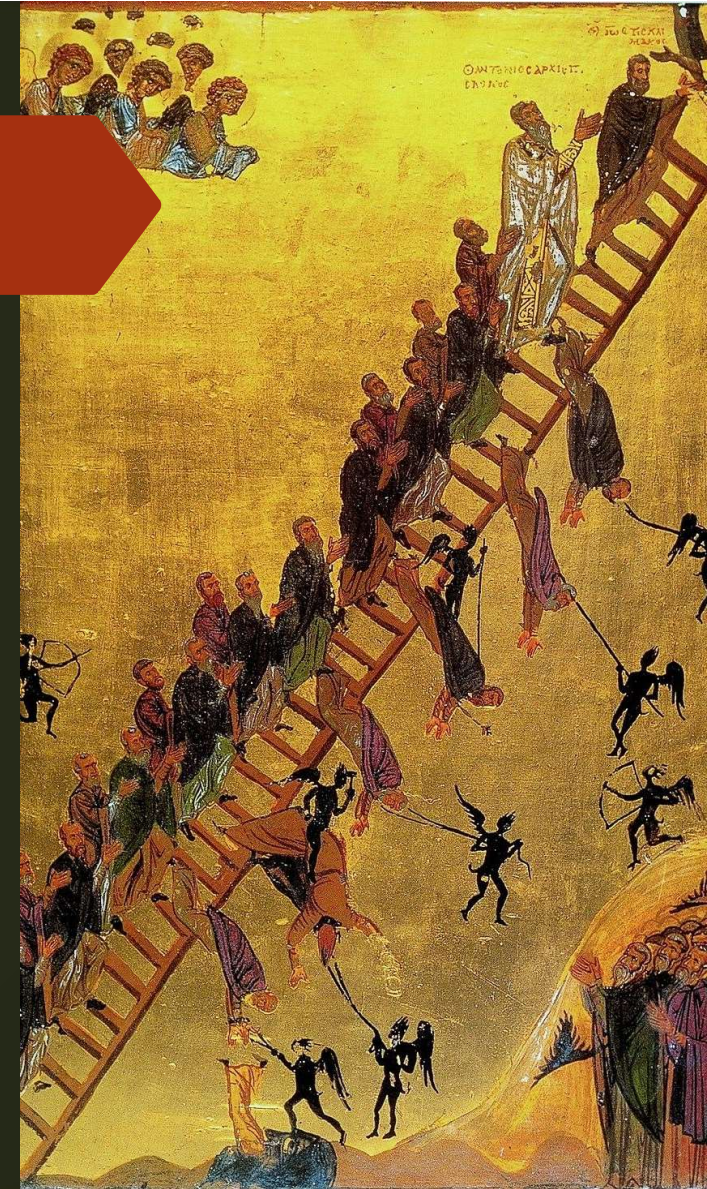
The Transforming Moment

CAPS - March 2022



Moving Forward

- Modernist presuppositions
- Renew focus on Evangelical understanding
- Purpose of this presentation







Growing in Grace

Christian Spiritual Maturity: What is it and how can we measure it?

- Growing in grace is one way that development toward Christian maturity is described. Efforts to measure spiritual maturity have a long history (Hood et al., 2018). Christian maturity fits within this domain, but we believe that many measures of spirituality are insufficiently specific to capture the essentials of Christian maturity. As we seek to understand Christian maturity, we must face several challenges. First, what is Christian maturity? Second, in what ways is Christian maturity distinct from maturity in a more general sense? Third, what are the processes that lead the Christian toward maturity, and how is this maturity distinct from the processes that may promote it? Finally, how can we measure such maturity?
- Working definitions of spiritual maturity are diverse but generally consider the degree to which individuals strive to integrate their lives with their perceived systems of ultimate value or meaning (Emmons, 1999; Graves, 2017; Parks, 2013). Many concepts of spiritual maturity are combined with habit-forming processes of virtue/moral formation and/or positive outcomes from developmental frameworks (e.g., Object Relations theories, cognitive models, psychosocial stages). Developmental processes are consequential; therefore spiritual maturity is typically measured by quantifying virtuous behaviors and developmental milestones.

Growing in Grace

Christian Spiritual Maturity: What is it and how can we measure it?

- Here we report findings of two studies that explored the Christ-Centered Spiritual Maturity Scale (CCSM).
- Sample 1 was gathered in 2005 and included 191 participants
 - Demographics
 - CCSM
 - One-item R/S measures
- Sample 2 was gathered in 2019 and included 131 undergraduate participants
 - Demographics
 - CCSM
 - One-item R/S measures
 - Big 5 Personality, Cultural Humility, Dimensions of Grace, DUREL, and Self-Compassion

Growing in Grace: Study 1 Participants

N = 191

Predominantly white, female, Christian

➤ Age

- 17-65 (M = 25.93, SD = 12.07)
- 54% were 18-20 years old

➤ Sex

- Female 129 64.2%
- Male 72 35.8%

➤ Groups

- Freshman N = 111 54%
- Other N = 31 15%
- Seminarian N = 65 31%

➤ Race

- White 172 (88.2%)
- Hispanic 8 (4.1%)
- Asian 6 (3.1%)
- Black 3 (1.5%)
- Other or no response 6 (3.1%)

➤ Religious identification:

- 196 (98.5%) Christian
- 3 (1.5%) Other

➤ Data gathered 2005

Growing in Grace: Study 2 Participants

N = 131

Predominantly white, female, Christian

➤ Age

- 18-36 (M = 18.95, SD = 1.84)

➤ Sex

- 91 (67.4%) Female and
- 44 (32.6%) Male.

➤ Race

- White 99 (73%)
- Hispanic 16 (11.9%)
- Asian 9 (6.7%)
- Other or no response 11 (8.1%)

➤ Religious identification:

- 125 (92.6%) Christian
- 10 (7.4%) Other

Growing in Grace: Study 2 Instruments

- Christ-Centered Spiritual Maturity (CCSM; Hancock et al., 2005) 36-items
- Big-5 Personality Scale (Big-5; Johnson & Srivastava, 1999)
- Self-Compassion Scale (SCS; Neff, 2003)
- Duke Religion Scale (DUREL; Koenig & Bussing, 2010)

Growing in Grace: Results

Factor Results

Group Differences

Convergent and Divergent Validity Coefficients for CCSM Scores

Growing in Grace

Christian Spiritual Maturity: What is it and how can we measure it?

- 1 One factor
- Christians > Others
- Seminarians > Undergraduates
- Female > Male
- Race NS

Growing in Grace: Results

Factor Loadings for a Forced One Factor Solution

Item	Study 1	Study 2	Item	Study 1	Study 2
SM-4	.672	.686	SM-22	.742	.817
SM-5	.589	.545	SM-24	.673	.745
SM-6	.747	.691	SM-25	.699	.703
SM-7R	.531	.581	SM-26R	.557	.148
SM-8	.536	.538	SM-29*	.776	.835
SM-9	.624	.644	SM-30	.636	.696
SM-13	.555	.487	SM-31	.663	.761
SM-14	.679	.737	SM-32*	.801	.866
SM-15	.658	.755	SM-34	.752	.837
SM-16*	.723	.836	SM-35	.776	.816
SM-17	.626	.662	SM-36*	.764	.838
SM-20	.640	.684			
SM-21	.777	.807			

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Growing in Grace: Results

- Results showed a single factor for CCSM and generally supported its validity.
- Those who identified themselves as Christian scored higher than those who did not ($\eta^2 = .232$)
- Women scored minimally higher on the CCSM ($\eta^2 = .037$).
- R/S engagement was strongly correlated with CCSM scores ($r^2 = .24$).
- The CCSM measures outcome rather than process. It reflects a definition of spiritual maturity rooted in Christian tradition and shows promise as a measure of Christ-Centered Christian maturity.

Growing in Grace

Christian Spiritual Maturity: What is it and how can we measure it?

- Results showed a single factor for CCSM and generally supported its validity. Those who identified themselves as Christian scored higher than those who did not ($\eta^2 = .232$) and women scored minimally higher on the CCSM ($\eta^2 = .037$). R/S engagement was strongly correlated with CCSM scores ($r > .49$).
- The CCSM measures outcome rather than process. It reflects a definition of spiritual maturity rooted in Christian tradition and shows promise as a measure of Christian maturity.

Analyses of Variance

Study 1

- Gender $F_{1,176} = 0.00$; NS
- Race $F_{4,169} = 0.68$; NS
- Christian commitment
 $F_{1,170} = 26.32, p < .001$;
 $\text{Eta}^2 = .217$
- Groups $F_{2,176} = 13.85, p < .001$;
 $\text{Eta}^2 = .136$
(Freshman, Other, Seminarian)

Study 2

- Gender $F_{1,131} = 5.37, p = .022$;
 $\text{Eta}^2 = .039$
- Race $F_{6,126} = 1.53$; NS
- Christian commitment
 $F_{3,124} = 35.79, p < .001$;
 $\text{Eta}^2 = .23$

Growing in Grace: Results Study 2

*Descriptive Results and Analyses of Variance for Group Differences**

<u>Variable</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Sig</u>	<u>Eta²</u>	<u>95% CL</u>	<u></u>
Gender CCSM-24									
Male	43	4.12	1.21						
Female	90	4.61	1.11						
Total	133	4.45	1.16	1, 131	5.37	.022	.039	.000/.122	
Gender CCSM-5									
Male	44	3.92	1.60						
Female	91	4.53	1.40						
Total	135	4.33	1.49	1, 133	5.14	.025	.037	.000/.118	
#Ethnicity									
CCSM-24	133	4.45	1.16	6, 126	1.53	.183			
CCSM-5	135	4.33	1.49	6, 128	1.14	.351			

Growing in Grace: Results Study 2

Study Two: Descriptive Results and Analyses of Variance for Group Differences*

Variable		N	Mean	SD	df	F	Sig	Eta ²	95% CL
Christian									
CCSM-24	No	10	2.50	.86					
	Yes	123	4.61	1.03					
	Total	133	4.45	1.16	1, 131	39.51	< .001	.232	.116/.345
CCSM-5	No	10	2.02	1.22					
	Yes	125	4.52	1.35					
	Total	135	4.33	1.49	1, 133	32.08	< .001	.194	.087/.307

Growing in Grace: Correlational Results

Alphas and Concurrent Validity Coefficients for the 24-item and 5-item versions of the CCSM

Measure	Study One		Study Two	
	CCSM-24	CCSM-5	CCSM-24	CCSM-5
Alpha	.95	.87	.96	.91
CCSM-5	.95**		.96**	
Chronological Age	.28**	.23**	.08	.09
Frequency of Attendance	.48**	.45**	.58**	.56**
Frequency of Devotions	.57**	.61*	.57**	.57**
Importance of Religious Beliefs & Practices	.71**	.68**	.73**	.72**
Spiritual Maturity-self-rating	.46**	.43**	.20*	.18*
Years a Christian			.24**	.19**
Life Satisfaction			.12	.11
Current Religious Knowledge & Development			.50**	.48**

Growing in Grace: Correlational Results

Study 2 Concurrent Validity Coefficients for the 24-item and 5-item versions of the CCSM

<u>Measure</u>	<u>CCSM-24</u>	<u>CCSM-5</u>
DUREL		
➤ Organizational Religiosity	.59**	.56**
➤ Non-organizational Religiosity	.68**	.72**
➤ Intrinsic	.83**	.80**

Growing in Grace: Correlational Results

Study 2 Concurrent Validity Coefficients for the 24-item and 5-item versions of the CCSM

<u>Measure</u>	<u>CCSM-24</u>	<u>CCSM-5</u>
Dimensions of Grace		
➤ God's Grace	.72**	.65**
➤ Costly Grace	.35**	.31**
➤ Grace to Self	.09	.08
➤ Grace from Others	.13	.14
➤ Grace to Others	.30**	.25**

Growing in Grace: Correlational Results

Study Two Concurrent Validity Coefficients for the 24-item and 5-item versions of the CCSM

Measure	CCSM-24	CCSM-5
Big-5 Personality		
➤ Agreeableness	.25**	.22*
➤ Conscientiousness	.13	.11
➤ Extraversion	.10	.07
➤ Neuroticism	-.15	-.12
➤ Openness	.21*	.21*
Cultural Humility	.29**	.31**

Growing in Grace: Correlational Results

Study 2 Concurrent Validity Coefficients for the 24-item and 5-item versions of the CCSM

Measure	CCSM-24	CCSM-5
Self Compassion Scale		
Self-Compassion-Total Score	.23**	.22*
Self-Kindness	.24*	.27*
Self-Judgment	.15	.14
Common to Humanity	.18*	.20*
Isolation	.12	.11
Mindfulness	.23**	.21*
Overidentified	.17*	.11

Growing in Grace: Discussion



Growing in Grace: DISCUSSION

Measuring Christian maturity is difficult

- We have difficulty conceptualizing Christian maturity
- We have different ideas about what it is or ought to be
- Even if we were clear on the concept, developing a valid measure is difficult

Growing in Grace: DISCUSSION

Spiritual maturity has many dimensions:

- Relational
- Cognitive
- Developmental
- Stages
- Experiential

Growing in Grace: DISCUSSION

It took a couple decades to develop some practical measures of intelligence—and 100 years later we still wrestle with articulation and agreement on the concept

- ▶ Perhaps we should not be surprised when we encounter similar challenges with spiritual maturity
- ▶ Here we advance the idea that Christian spiritual maturity is layered and contextual, involving various superordinate frameworks

Growing in Grace: DISCUSSION

Contextual factors also matter:

- Social location
- Divine providence and grace

Growing in Grace: DISCUSSION

- The CCMS's development is described by Hancock et al (2005)
- In the interim an interesting study by de Vries-Schot et al (2011) developed a Mature Religiosity Scale

Growing in Grace: DISCUSSION

The Mature Religiosity Scale

- Is strikingly similar in context and findings,
- Includes similar empirical correlates with R/S measures
- Uses a European sample, likely from the Netherlands.
- De Vries-Schot et al. described the Mature Religiosity Scale as a “measure for mature Christian religiosity” (p. 68)

Growing in Grace: DISCUSSION

- Taken as a whole, the current findings are promising
- The CCSM is internally consistent
- It has promising validity support
 - Expected group differences
 - Minimally related to gender and ethnicity
 - Expected correlations with other measures of R/S and personality

Growing in Grace: DISCUSSION

- Can we measure Christian spiritual development? Maybe
- Can we measure Christian spiritual development better? We hope!

Growing in Grace: DISCUSSION

Does the CCSM fully navigate this challenge?

- We doubt it.
- Scale development preceded the present framework; see Hancock et al. (2005)
- Developing a scale to match the framework seems to us a daunting task

Growing in Grace:

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