

Signs of Maturity

Romans 1.12-16a

“. . . that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith. I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I planned many times to come to you (but have been prevented from doing so until now) in order that I might have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles. I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish. That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are at Rome. I am not ashamed of the gospel.” Romans 1.12-16a

Our attitude will change how we deal with our circumstances and determine the impact those circumstances have on us. Often, God will use those circumstances to do a “work” in our life. In reality, God is more concerned about our character than he is about our comfort.

Last week, we looked at some character traits exhibited by the Apostle Paul, and this morning, we want to continue that exploration as we look at some indications of maturity in our faith.

It should be noted that all of these marks of Christian character or maturity come from a life that has been seasoned and tested through the tough times. We learn the most from the difficulties we face.

The Power of a Teachable Spirit

“. . . that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith.”

One of the greatest stumbling blocks in the Christian life is pride. Pride keeps us from admitting that we have a need. Pride also keeps us from being in a position where we can receive from God, and pride keeps us from experiencing what God desires for us in our lives.

The Power of a Deliberate Purpose

“I do not want you to be unaware, brothers, that I planned many times to come to you (but have been prevented from doing so until now) in order that I might have a harvest among you, just as I have had among the other Gentiles.”

While Paul maintained a teachable spirit, he was far from passive. In fact, Paul had many plans which motivated him. He was possessed by deliberate intentions to accomplish the Lord's work.

The Power of a Willful Obligation

“I am obligated both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the wise and the foolish.”

Not only did Paul have a teachable spirit and a strong purpose, he was guided by a sense of obligation.

“Yet when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!” 1 Corinthians 9.16

The Power of Eager Anticipation

“That is why I am so eager to preach the gospel also to you who are at Rome.”

The great apostle continues to reveal his heart by telling these Christians in Rome that he was **eager to preach the gospel** to them. A characteristic that marked Paul's life was an eager anticipation.

The Power of Unashamed Faith

“I am not ashamed of the gospel.”

One final characteristic in our text that marked Paul's life was a bold faith. He says without hesitation that he is **not ashamed of the gospel**. A mark of maturity in Christ is a boldness and confidence in Christ.