

Motivated toward Maturity

Ephesians 4:13

In the verses immediately preceding our text verse Paul spoke of the spiritual gifts we have received in Christ. Every believer is gifted of the Lord with specific spiritual gifts, and these gifts work together in order to achieve a specific purpose: [perfecting the saints, the work of the ministry, and the edification of the body of Christ, V.12](#). We are not gathered tonight under haphazard circumstances. This local body of believers has been equipped and placed within the body of Christ according to His divine plan.

Having explained the diversity of gifts, and the sovereign purpose behind our placement within the body, Paul discusses the desired goal for every believer within the body. He sought to equip the church to stand united in Christ, maturing in the faith, while striving to experience the fullness of Christ.

The Lord has dealt with me much lately about experiencing Him in a more intimate way. Our churches are filled with those who seem content to go through the religious motions, but never grow in their faith or enjoy daily communion with the Lord. I want to break out of the habit of religious formality and experience the fullness of Christ. I want to experience Him in greater ways than ever before. That is the focus of this thought from Paul. Let's take a few moments to discuss the [desired attributes](#) Paul sought for believers as we consider: [Motivated toward Maturity](#).

I. Paul Spoke of Unity (13) – [Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ](#). There is no doubt Paul desired unity among the believers. He knew unity was essential in order to fulfill the work they had been given. It doesn't appear that Paul is necessarily concerned with doctrinal divisions in Thessalonica, but he emphasizes the importance of unity in the faith. He knew the church must be settled in the faith, fully embracing the Gospel, in order to prosper for the Lord. There were young believers in the church and those mature in the faith as well. He wanted no one left behind in matters of unity in the faith. There was no room for compromise or error.

- This attribute remains of upmost importance. The church must have unity in the faith. We must agree on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That is the message we are called to share. The Gospel is the focus of our mission and the truth we are to proclaim. When a church is settled in the faith, united in Christ, and Gospel centered, she is prepared to prosper for the Lord. Proclamation of the Gospel, the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, must be our fundamental purpose and genuine pursuit. [Phil.1:27 – Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel](#).

II. Paul Spoke of Clarity (13) – Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Along with complete unity of faith, Paul also desired they be filled with the knowledge of the Son of God. This refers to much more than mere head knowledge. This has the idea of “*knowledge which powerfully influences our religious lives and personal involvement.*” It deals with the relationship of the learner to the object of knowledge. Paul had experienced such knowledge which led to deeper spiritual life and he longed for the church to experience that as well.

▪ Wouldn't it be great if our knowledge of Christ affected us in a powerful, tangible way? I would never seek to detract from biblical learning, but our knowledge of Christ must be more than being familiar with the accounts in the Gospels. We need to be moved and motivated by what we know of Him. That is what Paul is speaking of here: being so consumed with what we do know of Christ that it affects our everyday lives. Such knowledge will hunger for more and create an attitude of submission, love, and service for the Lord! [Phil.3:10-12 – That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;](#) ^[11] [If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.](#) ^[12] [Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Col.1:10 – That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.](#)

III. Paul Spoke of Maturity (13) – Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. This does not speak of perfection as we think of in our modern day. Paul is not advocating that we become perfect while living this life, living above sin. He speaks of our growth in the Lord, being united in the faith, changed by our knowledge of Christ, and spiritually mature.

▪ Maturity takes time, but it is expected and obvious. Physical maturity is obtained over a period of years, with many factors contributing. In order to properly mature, we must eat a proper diet, exercise our bodies and our minds, and deal with life experiences. The same is true in regard to spiritual maturity. We must eat a proper diet, daily feeding on the Word of God, growing in knowledge and wisdom. We must expand our learning, graduating from the milk of the Word to the meat it offers. As we walk with the Lord, facing trials, temptations, and storms, we learn more of Him and ourselves. The wisdom we have gained over the years helps mature us spiritually. There is always room for growth, but we need to strive for spiritual maturity. I fear many will stand before the Lord, having been saved for years, and yet they remained babes in Christ. [2 Cor.3:18 – But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.](#)

IV. Paul Spoke of Conformity (13) – [Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.](#) As we grow in the Lord, maturing in the faith, we become more like Him. That should be the goal and desire of every believer, to be conformed to the image of Christ. Paul longed for the church to become Christ-like in their daily lives, reflecting His image to the world around them.

- Paul refers to the measure of stature in Christ. This speaks of “*the portion allotted.*” Christ desires us to be conformed to His image. He provides all we need to become more like Him as we walk consistently with Him. There is no reason for a believer to live their life without being conformed to the image of Christ. As we walk with the Lord, we are to seek a measure of fullness in Him. This speaks of “*completeness; reaching the intended goal; full maturity in Christian love and service.*” I don’t know about you, but I want to achieve fullness in Christ according to His divine desire and will. He has allotted that for me, and there is no reason for me to live apart from His fullness. We can experience abundant life in Christ! [Rom.15:13 – Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.](#)

Conclusion: Where are you on this spiritual journey? Is there room for improvement through a closer walk with the Lord? I know we received the Spirit when we were saved, but I am also convinced we need to be filled daily in order to experience abundant life in Christ. The decision is yours; how will you decide? Do you want more than you currently experience? You can have it, but you must seek the Lord to obtain it. If you are unsaved, I urge you to respond to the Lord in salvation. He alone in the means of forgiveness of sin and eternal life.