



## **A Prayer for Maturity**

### **Paul's Prayer for the Corinthians**

***"Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother, to the church of God, which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:***

***Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."***

***"I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God, which was given to you by Christ Jesus, that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ..."*** 1 Corinthians 1:1-7

1. After Paul left, divisions erupted, envy, and strife (1 Corinthians 3:3).
  - a. The church services became disorderly.
  - b. The communion became a common meal.
  - c. Members of the church were suing each other.
  - d. Gifts of the Spirit dominated the church service.
  - e. Sexual problems were being overlooked and ignored.
2. Paul did not begin criticizing but thanking God for them.
3. "I thank my God always concerning you..." (vs. 4).
  - a. Paul used his relationship with God to lift up other's needs.
  - b. His spiritual relationship with God was also used for practical.
  - c. Paul used his praise for other's benefits.
  - d. God does not prosper self-centeredness (Philippians 2:4).
  - e. Things changed in Corinth and not primarily for the better. Yet, Paul's affection for them did not change.
4. "...For the grace of God which was given to you by Jesus Christ..."
  - a. Paul's thanksgiving to God came from his remembrance of their salvation experience.
  - b. Salvation is where God's grace comes to us.
  - c. If grace can save us, it can deliver us and bring us to maturity.
  - d. Despite their actions, grace has not been removed or recalled.
  - e. God, who began a good work in them would complete it (Philippians 1:6).

5. "...That you were enriched in *everything* by Him in all utterance and all knowledge." (vs. 5).
  - a. Grace that brings salvation also brings maturity (Titus 2:11-12).
  - b. It is time for them to be enriched in *all things*.
  - c. They have excelled in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, utterance, and knowledge. They need to mature in all areas.
  - d. Gifts produce service, not sanctification. They were babes.
  - e. The Corinthians abounded more in gifts than in any other area.
  - f. Paul taught the Corinthians the proper use of the gifts:
    1. They are from the Holy Spirit.
    2. They are given for mutual benefit.
    3. They are to be exercised in an orderly manner.
    4. The gifts are given for edification.
    5. They are to be desired – but not as much as living a life of love, sanctification, and service to others.
6. "...Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ..." (vs 6-7).
  - a. You have the gifts of the Holy Spirit based on the testimony of the new birth. Now wait patiently for the coming of the Lord.
  - b. If you want to grow, look at the grace given at the new birth which will carry you into maturity until the coming of the Lord.