

## Signs of Maturity in Christ

II Corinthians 12:11 – 13:4

5/05/02

### Intro

- Mission's auction.

.....  
Paul has been addressing a church that he has loved and poured himself into. Yet were those who bothering the church with false doctrine, and to win over the church, they were criticizing Paul's ministry and saying he was inferior as an apostle.

Paul is surprised that they would be so easily swayed by these so-called eminent apostles. He faced this in other churches as well. Galatians 3:1-14 describes Paul response to this false doctrine.

Here, in these verses, Paul shows them his heart for them and that is where we gain insight for ourselves. Paul gives them signs of a true apostle and we can see signs of a heart for God.

These verses are about having the qualities of maturity in faith.

### **I. He knows that it is God's strength, not his.**

Vs 11 A. **Paul says, I am not inferior, though I am a nobody.**

- Paul has great confidence, but his confidence is in Christ.

*Illus- In the movie, Sound of Music, Maria sings about confidence, "I have confidence in confidence alone. I have confidence in me."*

- Paul writes to the Philippians, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthen me."

*Illus- God was David's greatest weapon*

### **B. Does faith come by signs, miracles, and wonders?**

- We only need to look at Israel in the desert.

*Illus- The rich and Lazarus; "Send someone from the dead!!"*

- It's understandable that people would seek a miracle, because there are in great need, but what they are seeking is a miracle.
- **But Paul shows us the right heart...**

**Vs 14 "I do not seek what is yours, but you."**

### **II. He gladly gives of himself.**

Vs 15 A. I will gladly spend and be spent for your souls.

- This is a model of giving without expecting anything in return.

*Illus – the son who gave his mother a bill for all the work he was doing around the house – total \$10.  
The mother who gave her son a bill for the work she had done for him – total nothing.*

B. May we never present a bill to God.

- Some people believe that if they give God praise that He will give something back to them.

***Illus- Some people give to God expecting to get back 100 fold.  
This is not worship, but spiritual manipulation.***

Vs 17-18     C. Paul says, Name one time when I took  
                  advantage of you.

- This is the problem of modern TV evangelism, their main purpose is to promote and increase their ministry.

**III. He seeks God's approval, not man's.**

Vs 19

A. Paul says, I have been saying these things in the  
          sight of God.

- God is the one Paul wants approval from.

**Gal 1:6-10, "If I were still trying to please men, I would not  
be a bond-servant of Jesus Christ."**

***Illus – Mr. M, "we're going to have a meeting with your union  
representative."***

***Illus - Mr. M, "I had great plans for you here."  
But God didn't.***

Vs 13:4

B. Paul trusted that God will settle every matter by  
          His great power.

- Christ died for weakness, yet lives by the power of God.
- We were weak in Him, but we shall live with Him by the power of God...

C. Which is now directed toward you.

- Paul was not saying that he would be judge.
- But that God would settle every matter by the power of the Holy Spirit convicting them and correcting them.

**Conclusion**

**May we desire maturity in Christ in every area of  
our lives as well.**