



Season 8 Podcasts

The 'Maturity and Standard' of the Gospel

**By
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So far in my 8th Season Podcast series I've shared thoughts with you about:

- 8 Rules for Bible Study
- 40 Rules for Ministry
- The Heart of the Gospel
- Defending and Confirming the Gospel
- Your Fellowship in the Gospel
- The Completion of the Gospel
- The Affection of the Gospel
- The Discernment of the Gospel
- The Excellence of the Gospel
- The Sincerity of the Gospel
- The Fruit of the Gospel
- The Advancement of the Gospel
- The Preaching of the Gospel
- Living for the Gospel
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- Suffering for the Gospel
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- The Gospel's Name Above Every Name
- The Glory and Honor of the Gospel
- The Power of the Gospel
- The Obedience of the Gospel
- The Gift of the Gospel
- The Light of the Gospel
- The Servants of the Gospel
- The Enemies of the Gospel
- The Confidence of the Gospel
- The Gain and Loss of the Gospel
- The Resurrection Power of the Gospel
- The Pressing On of the Gospel

The next aspect I'd like to share with you is the 'Maturity and Standard' of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Let's quickly remember the context of this part of Paul's letter to the Philippians:

"Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 3:12-14

Was that just something God wanted from apostles? Pastors? Evangelists? Paul answers that question clearly in the next verses:

"Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind." Philippians 3:15-16

Paul reminded the Philippians of his overarching message from earlier in the letter:

“Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.”

Philippians 1:27

“Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. ” Philippians 2:1-3

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 2:5

“But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state.” Philippians 2:19-20

What was Paul's overarching message? Being like-minded. Having the 'mind' of Christ. What does having the mind of Christ and being like-minded mean? Maturity (*teleios* – complete, perfect, mature, one who reaches the goal). Look at what Paul wrote again and notice who he was calling to be 'mature' – “Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind.” Therefore let 'us.' Us. Paul was addressing every member of the church in Philippi. God has called every Christian to be 'mature' in their thoughts and actions. It's not just for pastors, or evangelists, or denominational leaders. It's for everyone who names the Name of Christ – that Name that is above every name.

Paul knew that some in the church might disagree with him (*heterós phroneó* – differently you are minded, have a different opinion about something), so he added this – “and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you.” Not everyone in a church will agree on every point about how a church should operate or even what Scripture says or means, so what do we do about that? We speak the truth, then watch as God does what He does. He will ‘reveal’ (*apokaluptó* – disclose, take off the cover, uncover) His truth. Will every Christian get it? Will every believer understand and move their thinking toward what God wants? Sadly, the answer is no. So, who will understand? Those who are ‘mature’ – “Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind.”

Paul completes this thought with the next sentence –

“Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.” Philippians 3:16

Notice that Paul referred to this as a 'rule' (*kanón* – rod used as a measuring standard, standard of measure'). We get the theological term 'Canon' from this Greek word. God hands down rules, His 'standards,' that He expects His people to obey. Obedience to God's standards are part of being a 'mature' follower of Christ Jesus – which takes us back to the overarching theme of being 'of the same mind.' Being of the 'same mind' is a 'standard' of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It's not an option. It's not something we can consider, then choose not to do. It's the 'standard,' the 'rule,' God established for His people to follow.

Think about it. May God reveal to all of us how He wants us to 'walk' (*stoicheó* – walk in an orderly manner, walk in line, keep in step, march in proper rank). We belong to God, not ourselves. If you think differently, may God reveal to you that you do belong to Him. He bought you with a HIGH price – the sacrificial death of His Son, Jesus Christ. May we all march obediently toward maturity in our Lord and Savior following the 'standard' God established for His people.

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In Christ's Love and Grace,

Mark McGee

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