



Striving Together for the Gospel:

Seven Marks of Maturity

Sunday, June 19/22

Romans 16:17 – 24

I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught... your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Romans 16:17, 19 – 20

Introduction:

It is uncertain why Paul waits until the end of his letter to warn against false teachers. But the description he gives is typical of warnings from other letters. False teachers serve themselves rather than Christ, they use smooth talk and flattery to deceive, and they cause divisions in the church.

In contrast to such people, Paul commends the believers in Rome for their obedience in living out their faith consistent with how they had been taught or disciplined. In the process, Paul alludes to seven marks of a mature disciple of Christ. As we look at them, we have opportunity to test ourselves.

Seven Marks of a Mature Disciple:

1. They watch out for false teachers and false teaching (vs. 17)
2. They avoid those who cause divisions and create obstacles (vs. 17)
3. They are not easily deceived because they are not naïve (vs. 18)
4. They are obedient to the way of life and teaching they had been taught (vs. 19)
5. They are wise about what is good and innocent about what is evil (vs. 19)
6. Their hope is firmly in the God of peace who will soon crush Satan (vs. 20)
7. They are fellow-workers who live and labour in team, not as islands (vs. 21 – 23)



Study and Discussion Questions:
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Seven Marks of Maturity

Romans 16:17 – 24

Open it:

1. What would you say are some of the most important signs of spiritual maturity in a person?
2. Why is it important to think of signs of maturity? Is there a danger in identifying growth factors?

Explore It:

3. What kinds of divisions are most dangerous for the church? (16:17)
4. What should we do about people who cause division among Christians? (16:17-18)
5. What is a key marker of a person who is a false teacher we need to avoid? (16:18)
6. What encouragement did Paul give in struggling against evil in the world? (16:19-20)
7. Think of some characteristics of people whose obedience to the Lord is 'known to all' (16:19).
8. Who actually wrote down this letter for Paul? (16:22)
9. With whom had Paul been living? (16:23)
10. What do the many greetings in Ch. 16 say about Paul?

Get It:

11. What is a meaningful compliment a Christian could give to another believer?
12. For what would you like to be remembered?
13. What does our level of generosity reveal about our understanding of God?
14. What causes division in churches and between Christians today?

Apply It:

15. As you think about the seven marks of maturity in these verses, how do you compare?
16. What fellow workers in the Lord's service do you do life and ministry with? How?