You Don't Have to Be Spiritually Mature to Serve

Sometimes we convince ourselves that we need to become "better Christians" before God can use us. We think we need to know more Scripture, overcome every struggle, understand theology better, or reach some undefined level of spiritual maturity before we begin serving. But Scripture gives us a different picture.

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." 1 Peter 4:10 (NIV)

Peter does not say, "Once you become mature enough, use your gift." He says, "Each of you." God gives spiritual gifts to His people so that we can strengthen and encourage one another.

The church in Corinth is an especially encouraging example. Paul told them they did not lack any spiritual gift (1 Corinthians 1:7), yet he also described them as spiritually immature (1 Corinthians 3:1). They were gifted and still growing. That means spiritual giftedness and spiritual maturity are not the same thing.

Of course, God cares about our character. We should continually be growing in holiness, repentance, humility, and obedience. Scripture also gives specific character qualifications for certain leadership roles. But ordinary Christian service was never intended to be reserved for people who have everything figured out. In fact, serving is often part of how God matures us. When we serve, we learn patience, humility, how to love people different from us and dependence on God. We discover strengths and weaknesses He still wants to transform.

And sometimes we discover our spiritual gifts simply because we were willing to start helping. You do not need to wait until you feel spiritually impressive. You simply need to be willing to let God use what He has already placed in your hands. Maybe today your prayer is simply: "Lord, show me how You have equipped me to serve others, and give me the courage to start."

REFLECT

Where have you been telling yourself, "I'm not spiritually mature enough yet"?

What ability, experience, passion, or opportunity might God already be inviting you to use for someone else?

PRAYER

Lord, thank You for choosing to work through ordinary, imperfect people. Help me continue growing in You while also faithfully using the gifts You have given me. Show me where I can encourage, serve, help, give, teach, lead, or care for someone else. Keep my heart humble and teachable, and use my life to build up the body of Christ. Amen.