

# Daily View

*"But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called 'today'" Hebrews 3:13*



Photographs, music and art often serve, among other things, as "mood-adjusters." This photo was taken in Prague, Czech Republic, October, 2018

## Moods

I'm not really in the mood to write anything today. I'm not sure why, but... it's a *mood*: a frame or state of mind, a temporary emotional state. I'm not in a bad mood or a good mood this morning... just not in the "mood."

There are many times in my life when I wasn't in the mood to do something I had to do. I wasn't in the mood to go into the Army when I was drafted and afterwards, there were many days that I wasn't in the mood to be a soldier that day.

I wasn't in the mood to be laid off my job right after my first child was born and I wasn't in the mood to become a prison guard or work 19 hours in a row when I was managing a 24 hour store. Sometimes, I'm not in the mood to do work around the house that Christie would like me to do.

There were times I was not in the mood to be a father or a husband or a salesman. There were even a couple of times I wasn't in the mood to do something I enjoyed like go skiing, play tennis or a round of golf. I just wasn't in the mood.

There are days when I'm not in the mood to read the Bible... or pray... or visit someone who needs visiting... or to call or write a note to someone who I know would be helped by it. Sometimes I'm not in the mood to answer an email or a phone call or a text that I know I should answer. There are Sunday mornings when 9:30 rolls around (in normal times) when I'm not in the mood to preach.

The Bible doesn't use the word "mood," at least in any version that I'm aware of. But the idea is there. I have no doubt that Jesus was not "in the mood" to talk to certain people, to be at their beck and call all of the time. After all, he was human, like us (Hebrews 2:14, 17). That might be why he often got up early in the morning, when it was still dark, and went out to a desolate place to pray (Mark 1:35) — perhaps to "get in the

mood" ("get in the spirit," might be a better way of expressing it). He had to get ready for a day with his overzealous apostles — especially Peter. *"We've been looking for you!"* said Peter when he found Jesus (Mark 1:37). Have you ever had someone tagging along with you all day, calling you every day, showing up at your doorstep every morning? I have and, sometimes, you're just not in the mood.

Apparently, on one occasion, Mark himself was not in the mood to travel with Paul and Barnabas and that didn't sit well with Paul. He didn't want Mark to accompany them on another trip (Acts 15:36-41).

Paul didn't give in to moodiness, in himself or others. I'm quite sure he wasn't in the mood to be *"afflicted in every way... persecuted... struck down... given over to death"* (II Corinthians 4:8-11), but that didn't keep him from driving on. He took his cue from Jesus who did many difficult things regardless of how he felt. He never let his mood determine his course of action; neither would Paul, whose attitude is summed up in one of my favorite verses:

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. <sup>I Corinthians 15:58</sup>

That word "always" leaves no room for "moodiness," does it? C.S. Lewis had an interesting observation about mood and faith:

*"Faith, in the sense in which I am here using the word, is the art of holding on to things your reason has once accepted, in spite of your changing moods."* — C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

What would Jesus say to our "moodiness"? I can only think of one thing: *"You're not in the mood? So what? Do you think I was in the mood to die on the cross. Pick up your own cross and get on with it."*