

## Maturity Is A State Of Mind ***Philippians 3:1-16***

### A Short History Lesson:

Philippians 3:2-3 & Galatians/ Romans 3:19-23, James 2:10-11 & Galatians 3:24

- **Before “Worship Wars”:** There were **circumcision** & **diet** wars!
- **The Big Debate:** Did Jesus **fulfill** OT laws or do they **still apply today**?
- **The Key Question:** What was their ultimate **purpose**?
  - ✓ A **stairway** to heaven?    ✓ A **signpost** to Jesus?

### Today's Passage: Beware! Religion Can Keep You From Knowing God!

- ✓ Avoid the dead-end called **rules** & **rituals**. (vs 1-3)
- ✓ Avoid the self-deception called **heritage** & **self-discipline**. (vs 4-9)
- ✓ Take the highway called **following Jesus**. (vs 10-16)  
John 14:6

### Following Jesus: A Mature Perspective Never Forgets. . .

Philippians 3:12-16

- ❶ **As long as I'm **alive** – I haven't **arrived**.**  
Philippians 3:10-14/ 1 Corinthians 10:1-12
- ❷ **I need a **mirror** more than **binoculars**.**  
Matthew 7:3-5 & Galatians 6:3-4
- ❸ **The **right path** is seldom the **easy path**.**  
Philippians 3:12-14/ 1 Corinthians 9:24-27/ 2 Timothy 2:3
- ❹ **Success isn't **forever** and failure isn't **final**.**  
1 Corinthians 10:12/ Revelation 12:10, 1 John 2:1-2 & 1 Timothy 1:12-16
- ❺ **The best way to follow Jesus is **one step at a time**.**  
Philippians 3:15-16/ Proverbs 4:18/ Philippians 2:13

## TAKING IT HOME

1. Supposedly, growing Christians think and live more and more like Jesus as we learn to follow Him well. Stop for a couple minutes and ask God about how you're doing. Ask Him what the next step to become more like Him is – and then just listen to your heart and the Holy Spirit.

What is God telling you?

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✓ A \_\_\_\_\_ to heaven? ✓ A \_\_\_\_\_ to Jesus?

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## Growth Group Homework

For the week of February 12, 2006

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**QUICK REVIEW:** This weekend we took a look at spiritual maturity from the angle of how a spiritually mature person thinks of and perceives their spiritual life. Looking back over your notes, what did you find most challenging or interesting from this week's message?

### MY STORY

1. Many people have pointed out that there is no coasting in our walk with God. We are "growing or slipping backward." From your perspective, what are some telltale signs that a person is moving forward?

What are some indicators of stagnation and slipping backwards?

2. When it's pointed out that the right path is seldom the easy path, what is your response? Does it motivate you or discourage you?

### DIGGING DEEPER

Pastor Larry pointed out five important truths that a spiritually mature perspective never forgets. While each one is important, at various seasons of our life one truth may be more important than another. Below are some questions focused on a couple of these important principles.

1. The process of maturing can be hard work. Paul often used the analogy of athletic competition to help Christians understand their part in growing up. How do the following verses increase your understanding of what it takes to develop a spiritually mature perspective?

Philippians 3:13-14

1 Corinthians 9:24-27

2 Timothy 2:5

Hebrews 12:1-2

Now read Matthew 11:28-30. How do you see Jesus' promise to give us rest fit with this week's teaching about the "easy path"?

2. King David experienced both great success and extreme personal failure. He was chosen by God as king, killed Goliath and reigned as a powerful king. He also committed adultery and murder and did a poor job of parenting his rebellious children. The Psalms below give us an up-close look at David's relationship with God during his time of great failure. Read each one and jot down how David responded. . .

Psalms 51:1-12

Psalms 32:1-5

What can you learn from his prayer life that will help you develop a similar perspective?

3. Adam and Eve had a very different response to God after they sinned. Read about it in Genesis 3:6-13. How does their response to God differ from David's?

Looking at your own past mistakes and failures, do you tend to respond to God more like David or Adam and Eve?

Bob Buford writes, "*Too many people approach the second half of their lives with regrets over the first half . . . regret is a tough emotion to live down; it haunts you in ways that will sap your strength and inspiration to go on to better things.*" Can you think of any real life examples that prove this insight to be true?

4. When children learn to walk, they typically start with a shaky step and a nearby parent's steady hand to protect and lead them. This weekend we were encouraged to focus on one step at a time as we follow Jesus.

How does that principle work out in your own spiritual journey?

As we take the next step in obedience (whatever that might be) God is along with us every step of the way. In Psalm 23 we have a vivid description of how God stays with us. Read Psalm 23 and jot down any of David's words that relate to where you are in your own journey today.