

## Are You 'Growing Up' Spiritually? Philippians 3.1-14

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, Rejoice!* Paul wrote these words from prison, as church leaders attacked his character! Where did he get his joy and vitality, even when times were hard? Spiritual maturity is the *key*. Are you maturing spiritually? Time to *grow up!*

### Beware of 'counterfeit maturity' (fleshly) (2-6)

- Its substance: Evil, phony, based on law (rules)
- Its character: Boastful, self-focused
- Its goal: Self-righteousness

### Pursue the 'resurrection life' of Jesus (7-11)

- Its substance: From God, on the basis of faith
- Its nature: Humble, self-effacing
- Its goal: Righteousness of God through faith in Christ

### Press on for the prize of the 'upward call' (12-14)

- *This is what Christ wants for every believer!*
- *The 'finish line' isn't in this life!*
- *Keep your eyes on the prize!*

GROWING UP  
SPIRITUALLY



1. The concept of 'growing spiritually' is hard for many Christians to apprehend because it is *spiritual*. We focus on achievements or experiences, but these do not result in spiritual growth. Many NT Christians faltered, too. Read 1 Cor. 3.1-4. The Corinthians were proud of their knowledge and gifts, but they were 'spoiled babies'! How did their immaturity show itself? Read Gal. 3.1-5. The Galatians were trying to grow spiritually by following rules, but this reflected a different gospel altogether (Gal. 1.6-7). Why? Read Heb. 5.11-6.3. These early Christians focused on physical aspects of the law – the 'dos and don'ts, and theological debates. What do you think it means to be 'dull of hearing' (5.11)?
2. Philippians 3 is the 'warning section' of this epistle, and Paul is most concerned about the 'counterfeit maturity' of legalism. He 'takes off the gloves' here! How does he describe legalists who focus on laws and good works (2)? What marks a person who is pursuing true spiritual maturity (3)? In verses 4-6, he lists things he *could have* based his spiritual life on. What kind of things do Christians today sometimes base spiritual growth on?
3. How would you describe Paul's *mindset* in Phil. 3.7-8? What is his priority in life? What does it mean to "gain Christ" (v8)? To "be found in Him" (9)? The word for "know" in 3.10 means to "come to know Christ in a life-shaping way" – so that our lives are changed because of Him. Why do you think Paul mentions Christ's resurrection, suffering, and death? What does it mean to "attain to the resurrection from the dead" (11)?
4. In Phil. 3.12-14, Paul sounds like a mountain climber; he hasn't reached the 'summit' yet, so he *presses on, forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward...for the prize of the upward call*. Have you climbed a mountain? What was that experience like for you? How did you overcome discouragement or fatigue on the way? Now imagine the Christian life as a mountain climb. When do we reach the summit? How can we reach 'the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus'?