

EVIDENCE OF JOYFUL SPIRITUAL MATURITY
Sermon Outline & Devotional Guide
Philippians 4:10-18
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- All of us are growing older physically and that is not a choice. Our choice is: will we choose to grow up _____?

† *Philippians 4:10*, "How I praise the Lord that you are concerned about me again. I know you have always been concerned for me, but you didn't have the chance to help me" (NLT).

How Do You Know You Are Spiritually Mature When Life Goes South?

1. You have the attitude to _____ those who need your encouragement, not just show appreciation to them (vs. 10).

2. You remain _____ in your present circumstances (vs. 11).

- So, what is contentment? The Greek New Testament word is [αὐτάρκης; autarkēs]. It does not mean, "I don't care what happens." No. The word means "_____." It described the mind-set of the person who had become independent of all things and all people. It referred to the person who was not dependent on people, places, positions, prestige, power, and possessions to keep them happy. They were self-sufficient from those. Paul uses this to refer to being _____.

† *2 Corinthians 11:23-28*, "I know I sound like a madman, but I have served him far more! I have worked harder, been put in prison more often, been whipped times without number, and faced death again and again. ²⁴Five different times the Jewish leaders gave me thirty-nine lashes. ²⁵Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. Once I spent a whole night and a day adrift at sea. ²⁶I have traveled on many long journeys. I have faced danger from rivers and from robbers. I have faced danger from my own people, the Jews, as well as from the Gentiles. I have faced danger in the cities, in the deserts, and on the seas. And I have faced danger from men who claim to be believers but are not. ²⁷I have worked hard and long, enduring many sleepless nights. I have been hungry and thirsty and have often gone without food. I have shivered in the cold, without enough clothing to keep me warm. ²⁸Then, besides all this, I have the daily burden of my concern for all the churches"

3. You remain _____ in the yo-yo of your circumstances (vs. 12).

† *Romans 12:15*, "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep" (NASB).

- God uses _____ Christians to help _____ Christians. Paul writes about this in 2 Corinthians 8:1-15.

4. You remain _____ in the Lord no matter your circumstances (vs. 13).

What Were The Results of the Philippians' Spiritual Maturity?

1. Personal _____ (vv. 14-15).

2. Financial _____ (vv. 16-17).

- The Greek New Testament word translated as "gentle" is [ἐπιεικής; epieikēs] and it means "calm, gentle, to desire, wish for, crave." We might say _____.

3. Sacrificial _____ (vs. 18)

***** **Next Steps Devotional Questions** *****

1. Do you ever look at someone as “damaged goods” and think they should not be serving in the church or for the Lord? Why or why not? Since you are “damaged goods” and God wants to use you, how should you look at others you think are more damaged?
2. How do you define “spiritual maturity” and why? What is the proof for you?
3. Author Fred Cook defines maturity this way: “Maturity is the ability to do a job whether you are supervised or not; finish a job once it’s started; carry money without spending it. And last, but not least, the ability to bear an injustice without wanting to get even.” Do you agree with him? Why or why not?
4. We looked at ways to know you are spiritually mature. Which one of these do you need to mature more in than the others and why?
5. Would the Lord say you are more self-sufficient or Christ-sufficient? Why?
6. Sometimes the Lord allows us to go through suffering or tough times to help us grow spiritually. When is a time this happened to you and how did you mature?
7. Someone once said, “We would rather brag about how little we have than thankfully relax in what God has given us.” Why do you think this is so?
8. What does this mean to you, “I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength?”
9. We looked at 3 results of spiritual maturity. Which of these are evident in your own life? Why?
10. Abraham was a liar. Moses was a murderer. David was an adulterer and a murderer. The prophet Jeremiah had a huge problem with chronic depression. Scholars call him “the weeping prophet.” Peter had a potty mouth. Thomas doubted. James and John had huge ego problems. The Apostle Paul, the writer of Philippians was a murderer — he had Stephen martyred for simply being a Christian. But God took this “damaged goods” zealot against Christianity and turned him into a zealot for it. What does this tell you about how God loves to use “damaged goods” people to build His kingdom? Why?