

“Joy In The Everyday: A Prayer For Maturity”

Growth Group Guide

May 3, 2026

WELCOME (Connecting with each other)

Give examples of things in nature that demonstrate how growing and maturing are natural and come simply and quietly. How can these examples encourage us as we look at growing into mature Christians? What joy would you say spiritual maturity provides us?

WORSHIP THROUGH PRAYER (Connecting with God)

Open in prayer inviting the Spirit to lead your time of discussion. Rejoice that our maturity in Jesus comes freely, and lightly, a natural by-product of depending on Him.

Matthew 11:29-30 MSG. Walk with me [Jesus] and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.

Psalms 37:6 ESV. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday.

Psalms 85:10-11 ESV. Steadfast love and faithfulness meet; righteousness and peace kiss each other. Faithfulness springs up from the ground and righteousness looks down from the sky.

Romans 5:2a PHILLIPS. Through him we have confidently entered into this new relationship of grace, and here we take our stand...

WORD (Letting God speak to us)

1. **Read Philippians 1:9-11.** This is Paul's prayer for the Philippians. What strikes you about it? If we prayed this prayer for ourselves or for others, what might we see happen in them and us? Consider all facets of our makeup as people (spirit, soul, and body).
2. **Read Philippians 1:9 again.** Paul prays for the Philippians that their love would be more and more (superabundant). The Greek word he uses for love is “agape” which is the highest form of love; its source is God. **Now read 1 John 4:8.** Based on this verse, what is Paul desiring? What could we expect if agape love increases in our lives as well?
3. Paul prays that love will increase with knowledge and discernment. He means that our deepening knowledge of God and His love will be applied to how we love others, actually changing how we love others. Discuss why it's important for our faculties of thinking to impact our actions of love. Why would this be important for us we grow?
4. **Read Philippians 1:10 again.** Paul is praying for the outcome of mature character, which first involves being able to prioritize what is spiritual over everything else. Oswald Chambers says, “The great

enemy of the life of faith in God is not sin, but the good which is not good enough. The good is always the enemy of the best.” Which part of the quote describes the “spiritual” life we are to prioritize? Which parts describe “everything else?”

5. Based on Oswald's statement, why do you think it is important to differentiate between the good and the best (i.e. to “approve what is excellent”)? What are some good and/or bad things we need to set aside to prioritize the best?
6. The outcome of living this way Paul says is being pure and blameless. (Pure: inner righteousness, Blameless: outer righteous actions) **Read Ephesians 2:10**, how does this verse and the prayer to be pure and blameless fit together? Why is *inside out* versus *outside in* living so important in this conversation?
7. **Read Philippians 1:11.** Jesus is the focal point in this verse. He's the one that righteousness comes through. What brings God glory and praise based on this verse?

WALK (Living out God's purposes)

- ✓ **One Big Idea: Our spiritual growth, increasing love, and fruitful lives, stemming from Christ within us, bring glory and praise to God.** What process have you pictured when thinking about becoming spiritually mature? Paul's prayer shows us that spiritually mature people are dependent people because their dependence on Jesus is what causes them to draw from Him within. What hopes, fears, dreams, etc., do you have in considering this? Talk to God about it today. Meditate on Matthew 11:29-30 from the Worship Section of this guide. Practice a Be Still quality and see what God has for you!
- ✓ Spend the week praying Paul's prayer for yourself and the people in your life. Praise God in advance for the good He will do as you pray.

WORLD (Embracing God's heart for others)

Everyone Village has been highlighted this year, in videos, by three separate groups. These videos capture what many of us already know: Behind every tiny home and every garden bed is a person reclaiming dignity, belonging, meaning and purpose, and becoming a person who is flourishing. One special note is the “The Garden Program” video. It showcases how Everyone Village is starting workforce opportunities—like gardening and recycling programs—to help Villagers build confidence, income, and dignity. See the links below for more and feel free to share them with anyone who wants to see a hopeful model of community-centered housing solutions. (2026 January, February, and March Email Updates.)

1. Lane County Commissioners State of the County address highlighting the successful work of Everyone Village (at 25-minute mark): www.youtube.com/live/1PrO_JPIPA0?si=eK9z197DLclE_FSE&t=1460
2. NBC Video on the Village: <https://youtu.be/VNwmk8JK0TQ>
3. The Garden Program: <https://youtu.be/FPLoaA8FrJY>

[Copies of this Guide are available at <https://thurston.church/resources>]