

To the church in Philippi

Philippians



Lesson 4—Rejoicing, living, trusting, and giving for Jesus

Philippians 4:1-23

I. Being and rejoicing together in the Lord (v.1-5)

- a. (v.1-3) Evidently there were two people who had not been of the “same mind” in the Lord (v.2). Paul urges the believers in Philippi to also reach out and help these women to labor together in unity. “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is when brethren dwell together in unity” (Psalm 133:1).
- b. (v.4) **We are to “rejoice in the Lord always...”!!** God has always given us something to be thankful for. We should never give in to some sort of discouraging circumstances! We should always be looking up to Jesus Christ and not be overcome by the darkness of the evil world around us! **James said**, “Beloved, count it all joy when you fall into diverse trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience...” “...and let patience have her perfect work” (James 1:2-4). **Peter and the other Apostles** had an experience that perhaps you might think should bring sorrow. But, were they sorry for being faithful in Jesus or for their situation and punishment? Not at all! They were rejoicing! (See Acts 5:38-42). **Paul and Silas** also had experienced a difficult time previously in Philippi! Yet, they found reason to rejoice in Jesus Christ and to not be discouraged by their trying circumstances (See Acts 16:22-28). The conduct of Paul and Silas was so incredible that the jailor was even converted to Jesus Christ (Acts 16:29-30). **If you are ever tempted to give in to some discouragement at what seem to be the darkest hours of your life—dark as midnight though they be—don’t!** Instead, pray and sing to Jesus as did Paul and Silas! Drive that dark of discouragement—Satan’s darkness away from you by praise to Jesus! Recite even the words in your mind **“Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice!”** In Jesus Christ, we have reason to be glad. Do not give in to the tempter or be overcome by him. Let your joy and sunshine in Jesus Christ be full and overflowing!
- c. (v.5) Have a gentle spirit that will be known to all men. Let them see Jesus living in you! May all people know that you have “...been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13).

II. Do not be anxious for anything but rather, experience the Peace of Jesus Christ (v.6,7)

- a. We must be people who abide in God’s peace. God will keep us in “perfect peace” if our minds are fixed upon Him (Isaiah 26:3). We should not let our “heart be troubled” (John 14:1). The world worries, having stress, and heart attacks, but we need not (Luke 21:25,26). Our shelter, our safety and our high tower is in God—our Rock and Provider! “A very present Help in time of trouble” (Psalm 61:1-4; 46:1-3) is God to us. **When troubles come, take it to the Lord in Prayer and find His everlasting peace!** When trials and difficulties of all sorts seem to arise upon you, take it to the Lord in prayer!! God will be your refuge and strength! You need not to fear with Him as your helper (Isaiah 41:10). In “everything” we must have “prayer” “...with supplication [request]” and “thanksgiving” to God! Then we’ll have that true peace that is beyond understanding. The world cannot understand it exactly, but in God, we may understand it. “My peace I give unto you...” Jesus says, “...not as the world gives do I give unto you...” (John 14:27).

Though trials will surely come our way, yet, we are not to be overcome for Jesus has given us His peace, and He has overcome the world (John 16:33). Pray now and always that you may know this God of peace, and when trials do come along, you'll know who to rest in!! Even in the final moments approaching death, God's faithful servants have died with a peace that is not of this world. It was from far above, in God (ref. Acts 7:54-60). "Cast all your cares upon God; for He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

III. Meditate upon heavenly themes, do righteousness and dwell in God's peace (v.8,9)

- a. *(v.8,9) This Bible verse is entirely worthy for our memorization! As a Christian, we ought to apply these principles of truth to everything that comes before our eyes or ears. We, as followers of Christ, are not to allow ourselves to dwell upon any and every theme that might come before us! No, no. We must not let our minds dwell upon the sinful and evil things of this wicked world, but rather upon the purity and holiness of Christ. It is a law of nature that the things we allow our minds to dwell upon will gradually transform us into that exact same image. By beholding, we become changed (See 2 Corinthians 3:18). Whether it is reading, a picture, a film, or music, whatever the case may be, we need to apply these principles! How will this thing change me? If you know it is not good for your spiritual mind, character, and life, then you had better rid yourself of it! Remember, to take in those things which are "true" as well! Do not allow yourself to be all wrapped up in the world of fantasy and fiction which is so destructive to mind and soul. Settle yourself upon the truth! True things educate the mind in a much better way, than ever fantasy or fiction could. You must live in reality, so be real with your mind! It is a sin to violate these principles of holiness (See Isaiah 33:14,15). Do righteous things "...and the God of peace will be with you" (v.9).*

IV. Let us rejoice in God and learn in Him how to have true contentment (v.10-13).

- a. *Whether wealthy or poor, let us learn to rejoice in God and to be content! Do not be a complainer before God or others. Just be thankful because you have been very blessed in God! If you have life, and if you have food and clothing, then you ought to be content in God. Certainly, it's okay to seek for more (though actually, you should seek first God's Kingdom and righteousness—Matthew 6:31-33). Nevertheless, we must learn to have an attitude of contentment!*
- b. *(v.13) **We can do "all things" through Christ who strengthens us, and let us never forget that promise and secret to life's success!***

V. The giving and mission supportive church was a church blessed by Jesus (v.14-20) *Philippi had this special blessing from God! The people in this church had supported Paul and his mission labors from the very beginning (v.15)! God would surely "supply" all of their need as they were putting the Lord first (again see Matthew 6:33). God takes care of His faithful ones in all things. Notice how this situation played out in the days of Old with Elijah and the widow (1 Kings 17:11-16).*

VI. Greetings and blessings were wished and exchanged upon the church in Philippi (v.21-23)

Taking it Home: Will you choose to rejoice in God, to pray for His peace, and to be satisfied in Him? ____