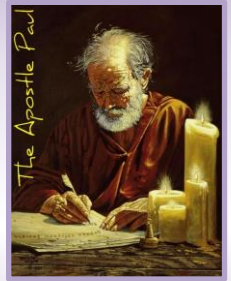


PHILIPPIANS

Joy In Christ



Lesson 12: The Joy of Peace ... [PHILIPPIANS 4:1-9]

PREVIEW

Paul starts with a direct address to two of the members of the Philippian church, asking that they resolve their differences and walk in Christian unity. He follows once again with a command to rejoice and gives them a message on attaining a lasting personal peace through **"PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION WITH THANKSGIVING."** Paul finishes with instruction on how to order one's thought life to bring glory to the Lord.

BE UNITED, JOYFUL AND IN PRAYER: (4:1-7)

JOY OF PEACE THROUGH LOVE (4:1)

Paul expressed his affection for the Philippian believers with **five** forms of address.

- (1) They were his **BRETHREN**. Both he and they had been born again into the family of God.
- (2) They were **BELOVED**. He not only loved them because they were his brothers/sisters, but because he wanted to (1 Thessalonians 4:9-10).
- (3) They were longed for. Paul earlier had expressed that he longed after them (1:8). He did not desire their money; rather, he wanted them.
- (4) They were his **JOY**. Paul felt this way about all of his converts (1 Thessalonians 2:19-20). He rejoiced in them personally, not just in what they had done for the Lord. Real joy is rejoicing in people.
- (5) They were in his **CROWN**. A victorious runner in the Greek games received a festive garland on his head (1 Corinthians 9:24-25). To the apostle, the Philippian believers represented his joy of victory because he knew that his race and labor in Philippi had not been in vain (2:16).

JOY OF PEACE THROUGH UNITY (4:2)

The two women mentioned here were the thorns in the apostle's crown. The purpose of the appeal was to show no partiality. Both share equal blame for their disruptive conduct. Although believers have distinctive

personalities and will naturally have differences of opinions, they should strive for unity in spiritual issues.

JOY OF PEACE THROUGH HELP (4:3)

These women needed assistance to resolve their differences. Paul made a personal request to a close friend to give help. In spite of the friction between the two women, Paul still appreciated who they were and what they had done for the Lord in the past. **First** they labored with him in the gospel ministry. **Second**, their names were in the Book of Life.

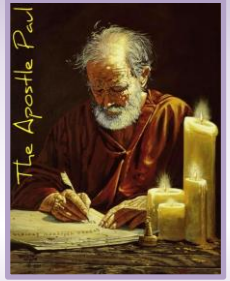
JOY OF PEACE THROUGH THE HEART AND MIND (4:4-7)

Complaint and anxiety are the opposites of joy and peace. God wants His children to have the latter, but they must also want them so badly that they will do what the Bible says they must do to get them. The joy of inner peace will come automatically if one's behavior follows the following.

- (1) **REJOICE IN THE LORD ALWAYS (4:4)** - The joy of the Lord gives strength to the people of God. Rejoicing must always be **IN THE LORD**.
- (2) **BE GENTLE (4:5)** - A gentle person bears trouble calmly and rejects revengeful meanness. Jesus Christ was both meek and gentle (2 Corinthians 10:1). A forbearing person will be both a glad and godly person.
- (3) **BE ALERT TO DIVINE PRESENCE (4:5)** - The presence or absence of inner peace will be in direct proportion to one's awareness of the presence of Jesus Christ.
- (4) **DO NOT WORRY ABOUT ANYTHING (4:6)** - There is a difference between genuine care and false anxiety. Timothy had a constructive concern for the church (2:20). A false care is self-destructive. False cares should be cast on the Lord because He genuinely cares for His own (1 Peter 5:7).
- (5) **PRAY ABOUT EVERYTHING (4:6)** - A worrying Christian will waiver, but a trusting believer will be stable and triumphant.

PHILIPPIANS

Joy In Christ



Lesson 12: The Joy of Peace ... [PHILIPPIANS 4:1-9]

When believers have joy within, gentleness around, and prayer above, they will experience peace. True peace is **THE PEACE OF GOD**. God's peace **SURPASSES ALL UNDERSTANDING** and it is totally foreign to the experience of the unsaved. Christ said that His peace is different from that given by the world (John 14:27).

Paul presents **three** facts about divine peace.

(1) It will **GUARD** the believer. This term is a military term used of a garrison of soldiers or sentries on duty (2 Corinthians 11:32).

(2) The peace of God will guard the hearts and minds of believers. Christians can enjoy emotional and mental stability if they rest in this divine protection.

(3) The peace of God will guard believers **THROUGH CHRIST JESUS**. They must have both their position (Justification) and practice (Sanctification) in Christ.

MEDITATE ON THESE THINGS: (4:8-9)

RIGHT THINKING (4:8)

Paul lists six objects of right thought. Each is introduced by the phrase - **WHATEVER**.

(1) **TRUE**: true things are the opposite of lies and false witness. A true issue is that which corresponds to the true nature of God (Romans 3:4). Believers must surround their hearts and minds with the girdle of truth (Ephesians 6:14), must produce the fruit of the Spirit in truth (Ephesians 5:9), and must speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15, 25).

(2) **NOBLE**: comes from a verb that means to worship or revere. Honorable thoughts are dignified and serious, prompted by holy morals and motives. Believers should be marked by such honorable thinking and conduct (1 Timothy 2:2; 3:4; Titus 2:2, 7).

(3) **JUST**: those things that are correct in relation to God and man are "*right*."

(4) **PURE**: pure things are those that will not contaminate you or others. They are stainless and morally chaste.

(5) **LOVELY**: a pleasing thought is "*lovely*". It is ethically beautiful and attractive, and leads to concord, peace and rest.

(6) **GOOD REPORT**: wholesome, constructive thoughts are "*of good report*". They contain no immoral or sexually suggestive innuendo (Ephesians 5:4).

All of the objects of right thoughts are characterized by virtue and praise. The imperative **MEDITATE ON THESE THINGS** (think) stresses the idea of a constant thought process. Believers must strengthen daily the moral integrity of their thought life (Proverbs 23:7).

RIGHT DOING (4:9)

The verb **DO** emphasizes constant practice, the development of habitual lifestyle or discipline. Paul wanted the Philippian believers to emulate him. Paul presents **four** actions.

(1) They **LEARNED** from his oral instructions in their midst; he disciplined them.

(2) They **RECEIVED** truth as it was transmitted to them by way of this epistle and by his associates who had ministered to them.

(3) They **HEARD** from others how Paul was responding to his Roman imprisonment. He was not anxious before the government authorities.

(4) They **SAW** Paul in action. They knew that he had prayed and praised God during his Philippian imprisonment. They knew from intimate acquaintance that the apostle practiced what he preached.

If believers do these things, they have the guarantee that the God of peace will always be with them. They have the peace of God within them and around them. They have both the presence and protection of peace, because wherever God is, so are His essential attributes.

