

No More Chains

Philippians 4:1-7

- Paul has warned the church not to be led and moved by the carnal nature of the flesh, where the natural things of the world become our motivation for why we live the way that we do. So don't live for fleshly pleasures of the mind and body for in the end you will be greatly and sadly disappointed because > **Prov 27:20**- tell us **"that as the grave is never satisfied neither will the eyes of man"**, **translation**: we can never fulfill what God created for himself to satisfy.

V1-7

- **V1 "therefore"** links together what Paul wrote before to what he is writing now, as he continues the thought of **Ch 3**, and links it together with what he is writing here. Reminding the saints that a better home awaits us both > (**spiritually**) - as this world is not our home), and (**physically**) - this fleshly body will be changed to a glorious body), one without any flaws. So on this basis Paul wants that hope to remain on the minds and hearts of the believers, desiring that it will encourage and motivate us to finish our race by standing fast in our walks with the Lord.
- As Paul is writing this he tells the saints in Philippi that they were not just some people that he spent time with and shared the gospel to, but that they were his joy and his crown. When Paul thought about his ministry of evangelism and whether it was a success or not he could look at the church in Philippi as a source of encouragement, that what God was doing with him was effective. For in saying this he tells this church that they did two things for him > **1st** they blessed him in the here and now, by being his joy at the present time, **2nd** they'll bless him in the future by being one of his crowns at the judgment seat of Christ in glory.
- So no wonder Paul called them his beloved, a people that he longed to see, because he knew that they were both his joy and his crown, blessing him both in the present and in the heaven lies. Now you can see why Paul was so dogmatic in telling them to stand fast in the Lord, don't be moved by the false claims of the false teachers that you need more that Christ and Him crucified, that you have to be circumcised in order to be accepted by the Lord. That you need to live for the temporal and make a name for yourself as the spiritual won't be enough for you, stay the course, stay on the path, stay steadfast in the Lord and He will guide us to truth.
- **V2-3** here are two women who were having difficulty getting along together, and interestingly we are not given the details or cause of their disagreement only the solution. Paul didn't try and bring witnesses to what was said, he didn't ask either of them their side of the story, he wasn't interested in getting into who or what started it, he simply told them to **"be of the same mind in the Lord"**. Whatever the dispute was about, these ladies had forgotten the most important thing, that God and His testimony was greater than any slight or wrong that they had endured.

- **V3** we don't know for sure who "**true companion or yoke fellow** is" but tradition tell us it was the Philippians jailor who Paul led to the Lord earlier. What's important for us is not the person's name as the Lord knows who they are, but the meaning of "**yoke fellow**" it pictures two oxen what are harnessed together side by side and pulling the same heavy load. Spiritually believers are harnessed together for the same purpose > "**to glorify God**" by pulling the same load > "**preaching the gospel, and denying self**" this is what links us all together.
- Yoke fellow is asked by Paul to help these two women who were workers with Paul in establishing the church in Philippi to get over their dispute and get back to the work that they previously was engaged in. The enemy is always trying to get us distracted by things that have no eternal value whatsoever, and one of those is fighting amongst each other over nonsense. He reminds everyone from Lydia and the rest of the ladies who helped establish the church that their names are written in the book of life so keep your eyes on the upward call of God.
- **V4** Paul gets back to the theme of the letter that despite all the turmoil, distractions, difficult circumstances, in which this letter is being written, we are still to make sure that we are to "rejoice in the Lord always, again I say rejoice!" This has nothing to do with having a positive attitude or a sunny disposition, this is Paul showing confidence that God was still in control and everything that they were going through was working toward His greater plan, so just to be a part of all this was in his mind an absolute joy in the Lord.
- **V5** here are two reasons Paul gives for why he said **V4** twice > **1st people are watching**- known to all men, **2nd The Lord is coming**- The Lord is at hand, so with that in mind I not only need to continue to rejoice keeping mind that I am a part of God's great plan, but that I need to live a life of moderation and not extravagance > "**gentleness**"- modesty, remembering that this world is not my home so I don't need to become too comfortable in it, or satisfied by it.
- **V6** this is a command not an option, if we were given a choice most of us would avoid these commands believing that it's impossible to do. The way to not be anxious and to have undue worry is to have a "**living prayer life**", as Prayer means to take all things to God, it's a broader communication with the Lord, but "supplication" is directly asking God to do something specific. Many of our prayers go unanswered because we don't ask God for anything, in this verse God says "**let our requests be made known to God**" as He wants to know what we want from Him.
- Don't do it with a complaining doubting spirit but one that is thankful for the opportunity to come before the Lord and speak with Him. **V7** this leads to one of the great benefits of Christianity (peace). The bible speaks of three aspects of peace that relates to God > **1st Peace from God**- tells us that peace only comes from God not circumstances or situations, **2nd Peace with God**- relationship that we enter into through Jesus Christ once we get saved, **3rd Peace of God**- it goes beyond the mind or power of thinking, and enters the spiritual. Notice once you have it then it takes military action of protection, being on guard over our hearts and mind.