

No more Chains

Philippians 4:8-23

- Paul continues his thoughts on living out a prayer filled life spoken of in previous verses, where instead of telling his readers that when worry-anxiousness begin to flood your hearts-minds, he doesn't just say pray about it and that's it but uses **3** different words to describe "**right praying**". **1st"prayer"**- recognized the greatness-holiness of God, **2nd "supplication"**-taking specific needs-problems to God, **3rd "thanksgiving"** after adoration and supplication comes appreciation; it gives no place to half hearted, insincere prayer, but an expectation of answered prayer.

V8-23

- **V8-9** Paul is telling the church that if we **think rightly, rejoice regularly, and seek God's will humbly**, then God's **peace** will be with us, this is linked to what he said in **V6-7**. As he tells us instead of meditation on what's wrong in our lives let's focus on what's right and what needs to change, so he gives eight objects of thought that should be the fruit and food of the mind.
- Peace always involves the heart and mind > **Is 26:3-** "**thou will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You**. Wrong thinking leads to wrong feelings, and before long the heart and mind are pulled apart and begin to be strangled by worry and stress. Paul starts with **1st truth-** a study showed that only **8%** of the things people worried about were legitimate matters of concern, the other **92%**, were either imaginary, never happened, or involved things that were the people had no control over anyway wow!
- Satan is a master liar > **Jn 8:44-** he operates in the realm of what if, or maybe, and yea has God said, he avoids truth, because he wants to corrupt the mind and heart, not set it free. **2nd Honest-** worthy of respect, we involve ourselves in so many things that are not respectable instead of just avoiding them, **3rd just-** what's right, **4th Pure-** wholesome, moral, the people like today are being attacked by temptations of sexual impurity, **5th lovely-** what promotes peace not conflict, **6th Good report-** worth talking about, **7th Virtue-** admirable conduct that motivates us to do better, and **8th Praiseworthy-** it is worth commending to others, these two go together.
- **V9** he says of those eight things > **You learned-** their familiar, **You received-** you embraced them, **You heard-** you were instructed in them, **You saw-** they were modeled to you by real life examples, and **Now do-** apply it to your life. These things will allow us to guard our hearts and minds strengthening us to be able to stand fast in the Lord. **V10-12** Paul comments on how the Philippians have shown their care and concern for him by financially supporting the work of God
- Paul says our thankfulness should never be like the Dow Jones that goes up and down based upon response, as whether he was in dire straits or in comfortable surroundings, he would be just as content, so his thankfulness was based upon the church's obedience and not on a person or projects worthiness, I believe that is so important and here's why.

- The world celebrates projects that are need based, the greater the need the more attention it gets, but God simply rewards faithfulness that's based on obedience and not worth. When you think about it who is it that determines what should get the most attention? If you showed up needing surgery as well as some senator and both are life threatening and there was only one surgeon available, who do you think would they operate on first, well we know the answer to that question don't we, Paul says his focus was on the faithfulness which led to contentment.
- **V13 Jn 15:5** says “**without Jesus we can do nothing**” Paul says “**through Jesus there's nothing we can't do**” these two verses are dependent upon each other for clarity. It's interesting that people will quote **Philip 4:13** and wrongly get all pumped up on themselves, and that's when their bound for failure, but when you combine both **Jn 15:5**, with this verse you realize the emphasis is on total dependency on Jesus instead of on ourselves.
- **V14-18** Paul goes back to talking about their financially supporting the work and he tells them that most people only seek the gift and could care less about the fruit **V17**, but not him. He wanted them to know that he was more interested in them understanding that their support of the ministry was them investing in their own inheritance that God would give them in glory. That this was them accruing eternal dividends toward their spiritual accounts. **V15** but sadly many just like today don't quite grasp that concept, even when someone like a Paul who had blessed so many there was very few who although knowing this stood with him financially.
- But they did as evidenced in **V16, 18**, regardless of what others were doing the church at Philippi remained faithful to do their part and Paul wanted them to know that it was not going unnoticed. Earlier Epaphroditus was described as a **fellow worker, fellow soldier**, and now we see he's carrying a package that scripture describes as **sweet smelling, acceptable, and well pleasing**, here is a sweet man carrying a sweet gift that is used to bless a faithful servant.
- **V19** which led him to remind them that even in their sacrifice you can never out give the Lord He will always supply our needs even when it seems that our supplies have run dry. Because God's supply never runs out, His riches are ever lasting you and I or the entire universe can never exhaust His resources, so because of His riches then our supplies will always be full amen! **V20** in conclusion Paul refers back to **1:20** where he asked to be used in whatever way God saw fit to glorify Himself, very few people genuinely feel this way and even less will live this way.
- **V21-23** Paul gives shout outs to all the saints and lets the church know that their prayers are being heard in heaven and felt on earth as through his imprisonment people are being saved even those serving deep within Caesar's household. For believers to be serving within the household of Nero one of the most diabolical, merciless, and ruthless Emperors who ever lived was nothing short of miraculous, which is one reason I believe Paul mentioned it to the church, he wanted them to know that God was still at work behind the scenes doing the unimaginable.