

Relational Peace

Philippians 4:1-9

vs. 1, Family, stand firm.

As Jesus followers we are a family whose citizenship is in heaven.
A big part of standing firm is to live in harmony with one another.

vs. 2, Euodia and Syntyche

Remember Lydia -> first believer in Europe, leader in the church at Philippi.
Women knew and followed the example of Lydia's leadership in the church.
In fact, Macedonian women specifically had a much larger role in public life than what might take place in other parts of the Empire. (Acts 16:14, 40; Acts 17:4, 12)

These women Euodia and Syntyche

- Were prominent people in the Christian community.
- Held important positions of leadership in the church.
- Had been united, labored (contended, struggle along side) side by side with Paul in the difficult task of spreading the gospel.
- They were co-workers along with Clement and others.

But something has splintered their relationship.

Their division is not only unhealthy for them, but it is unhealthy for the entire church in Philippi.

Agree in the Lord -> have the same mindset.

2:2 complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

3:15 Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.

The gospel is worth it. Work out your differences. Be an example of reconciliation.

vs. 3, True companion (yolk fellow)

Paul appeals to a third party to intervene.

Help these sisters find a solution.

Who is this true companion? Whoever it is they are close with Paul, they are trusted, and they are present.

Is it Timothy?

Is it Epaphroditus?

Could it possibly be Luke?

There is a strong likelihood that Luke was in Philippi for most of the time between the establishment of the church and Paul's brief visit to it prior to his last journey to Jerusalem (Acts 16:17, 20:5).

Is True Companion a proper name? It is possible...

Or, is Paul referring to the entire church. One mind, one spirit, striving side by side.

Corporate responsibility -> the church as a whole

The "one another" found in scripture is taken very seriously. We are family.

Clement -> possibly another influential leader in the church in Philippi.

Remember: this letter is being read out loud to the entire congregation.

Life as we wait matters. Because we are waiting, have the same mind.

Live the future now!

As a church, stand firm.

The call of God's people (who have assurance, whose names are in the book of life), are to truly live (a gospel shaped life), now!

Our true living started at the moment of our salvation.

Whatever your circumstances, hardships, challenges, don't wait to live.

Cling to Jesus and to each other.

The church living out the genuine gospel demonstrates "true living" in the face of all sorts of opposition.

vs. 4, Rejoice

Because of Jesus.

- Don't allow circumstances to diminish your rejoicing.
- The Lord has the power, authority, and will.
- Jesus is our hope!

vs. 5, Reasonableness

The Lord is at hand -> Jesus who is returning is very near. He has given us the Holy Spirit.

vs 6, Do not be anxious.

In relational strain, in the circumstances of life, in the unknowns, and in the heartache don't be overcome by anxiousness.

Spend all of that nervous energy in prayer.

- The power of God will rise and cover your anxious thinking.
- Have a grateful heart.
- Read God's word and allow it to remind you of what it is you are grateful for.
- Record how God has demonstrated his steadfast love in your life.
- Practice the discipline of thanksgiving!

vs. 7, The result is peace.

What does scripture say relieves worry / anxiousness?

vs. 8, Deliberately filling our minds and hearts with heavenly things.

Whatever is true

Whatever is honorable

Whatever is just

Whatever is pure

Whatever is lovely

Whatever is commendable

The things that are excellent

The things that are praise worthy

vs. 9, Look to the examples that have been placed right in front of you.

#1 -> Jesus

#2 -> Paul

#3 -> The Church (all of the saints). Men and Women of faith.

In summary, what relieves stress in a follower of Jesus?

- Prayer and Thanksgiving
- Deliberately filling our minds and hearts with heavenly things
- Putting into the practice the gospel as demonstrated / revealed by others.

Peace -> Complete fullness

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons and daughters of God.

As adopted sons and daughters our Heavenly Father will rise and cover our anxious thinking.

Remember Paul's prayer:

- I pray that you overflow with an intelligent and perceptive love.
- I pray that you grow in the ability to recognize and choose the truly essential things of life.
- I pray that you will be a people (a church) that is pure and blameless and never a means of hurting others.
- I pray that you remain committed to honoring and praising God. This display (a life amplified) will result in others honoring and praising God.

Question:

Who do you contend along side with for the sake of the gospel?

How do you seek reconciliation in your relationships that experience strain?

Do you take responsibility and action as a family member to intercede for others who might be in conflict?

How are you in the area of rejoicing? Do circumstances diminish your rejoicing?

How do you deal with feeling of anxiousness? Have you considered and implemented what Paul describes as bringing relief?

Is your heart and mind focused on heavenly things? Who are your examples?

Are you full of peace?