

Philippians 4:1-9

Vertical and Horizontal Peace

Image Church // Philippians Week 11

MPS: Understanding that the peace found in Christ is what leads to peace in everyday life.

Introduction

Well good morning image family and friends that are joining us this morning!

I want to thank all of you who filled out our **survey** that we put out in our **weekly update**, it was extremely helpful in evaluating what it looks like to begin gathering again- by the way if you haven't signed up for the weekly update- *you need to go and do that ASAP!*

So, here's the deal, the **countdown's on** for when we're going to be moving to **Phase 2** – we're really Just several weeks away!

You can find out more detail on our website at **imageatl.com**... But let me give you the overview of how this is going to work...

Starting **July 19th**, we're launching **Watch Parties** for the weekend Gathering...

These are groups of **12-15 people** gathering in homes all over the city to watch our gathering together... I am really excited about this; it's going to look a lot like the first church in **Acts 2:42-47** which is incredible!

We're going to be **fellowshipping** together, we're going to be having **breakfast** together and we're even going to be having **Image Kids** at some select Watch Parties...

- Each host home is application based and approved to make sure they are safe, healthy and low risk spaces...

- We're going to be providing a kit for each host home with **Image Church Content**, masks and **cleaning supplies** for each week...

We are taking a step forward and want to invite those of you that feel comfortable to you to join in!

So, here's the first thing that I need for you to do, if you're interested in **hosting a watch party**, go to **imageatl.com/watchparty** and click on **host a watch party**...

And for those of you that are interested in finding the **Watch Party** closest to you, go to **imageatl.com/watchparty** and click on **find a watch party!**

Ok so, **July 19th**, be excited and be ready, I believe that this is going to be one of the most fun and fruitful seasons in the life of our church!

Alright if you have your bibles go ahead and turn to Philippians 4... We're almost through our study on the book of Philippians... We're going to be picking up in **verse 1**...

As you're turning there, what Paul's about to do is show us the key to **practical** and **personal** peace...

- **Practical** as it relates to one another, and **personal** as it relates to our ability to experience the effects of peace in our own lives...

I feel like **peace** is something that's thrown out a lot but there's a lot of ambiguity around it- and most of the time it's conveyed as a feeling... **And many times, the wrong feeling!!**

- I can't tell you how many times people have shared with me a horrible decision and couched it under the fact that they have a **peace about it**... Even unbiblical things

Example: I had a friend who had someone that was engaged tell him that they prayer about whether or not to live with their fiancé before

they got married and he said that he had a peace about it and so they went forward with it...

And then what happens is things don't turn out well and they're like man I don't know what happened I had such a peace about it!

Well this morning we're going to get a more practical as we look at the implications of peace in our lives...

Philippians 4:1-9

1 So then, my dearly loved and longed for brothers and sisters, my joy and crown, in this manner stand firm in the Lord, dear friends.

Paul does **2 things** here; he points back reminding us of what he just said... **Which is:** in light of the fact that we are **citizens of heaven**, we're to eagerly wait for our Savior Jesus, who will transform our lowly bodies into the likeness of His glorious body...

And then **secondly**, with the words **in this manner**, he points us forward to the practical application that he's about to lay out here for what it looks like to **stand firm**...

- **Stand firm:** the imagery is Roman soldiers who never retreated...

Look at, verse 2... To where Paul comes back to unity, and the importance of unity so that they can stand firm together as he sets up this idea of **practical peace**...

2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to **agree** in the Lord. **3** Yes, I also ask you, true partner, to help these women who have contended for the gospel at my side, along with Clement and the rest of my coworkers whose names are in the book of life.

Here's what's happening here... There is disunity between **2 women in the church**...

- Paul says that they need to be urged to **agree in the Lord**
- Literally: to set their mind on the same thing, to think the same way...

- This idea of thinking the same way being of the same mind has been a theme throughout the book...
 - The goal is to **have the same mind as Christ**

Remember Paul's goal in this letter to the Philippians is Christian maturity, and one of the main areas that he presses on throughout the letter, in fact it's in every chapter, is being unified but thinking the same way, be united together in the faith...

- It's been evident that there were issues of division in the church here in Philippi and here again we see it very clearly...

And Paul is calling them to be at peace with one another- to be of the same mind- to think the same way...

And look what he grounds it in... Their identity – **agree in the Lord (v.2)**... they are in the lord... Their **names are in the book of life (v.3)**...

Meaning they are believers... They are Christians, Christ followers...

- Trusted in the finished work of Jesus...
- **Side note:** One thing to remember is that this is a reminder that there are those whose names are not in there...
 - That's scary- and we forget that...
 - You can't earn your way in, it is a gift through Jesus...

Ok so back to Euodia and Syntyche... Paul ground the call to peace in their identity as a reminder of their identity...

- You're on the same team! You're part of the same family! Keep the main thing the main thing!

Again, pointing to the same idea of considering others more than yourself, being willing to lay down preferences and personal agendas for the sake of peace and unity in the church...

- The church is the one places that gives us the grounds to be able to do this...

1. Peace with one another happens on the foundation of your identity in Christ.

Listen the easiest way the enemy can derail the mission is to stir up division...

Example: Think about a football team here for just a second...

- 2 Offensive line get into it in the middle of the game... the ball isn't moved up the field...

We have to be unified, ageing together, thinking the same way, being united around the main thing...

- Less time on preferences and more time reaching people
- We have to remember the purpose of the church- not to cater to consumers but to cater to God's mission!

This is huge – we have to understand that we're part of the same family, we're on the same team!

- Now this **doesn't** means be dismissive toward sins- that would go against the rest of Paul's teachings- **Let me be clear here:** the point here isn't to deal with how to deal with/address sin, but rather the importance of **being of the same mind!**

Would we be a church that comes from different back grounds with different opinions, different preferences, and yet in the midst of all that we agree in the Lord- we understand that those things are not primary, and they don't define us...

- You want to talk about **putting the gospel on display**- have a bunch of different people agree on something!!

And now Paul's going to show us how we can make that happen, how to create an environment or atmosphere for peace... Look at **verse 4...**

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! **5** Let your graciousness [or gentleness] be known to everyone. The Lord is near. **6** Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **7** And the **peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.**

2. Vertical peace leads to personal peace

Paul says that when we rejoice in the Lord, when we stop worrying and start trusting – which by the way, that's what prayer is- it is a posture of trust...

- I cant, God you can...

Let's talk about **the peace of God** for a minuet because this is important... Paul says here that

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Peace is something **that comes through the person of Jesus...** It's isn't primarily a feeling; it's a person...

- Let me show you what I mean...
 - Gospel...

And it's because of the peace you've experienced in Christ that there is a personal confidence that we get to experience ...

- A **tranquility... A calmness... A serenity** that characterizes God's very nature and that Christians get to partake in as Children of God.¹

Example: my daughter when she gets scared and Daddy walks in...

- She doesn't know the ins-and-outs of why she feels the way she does, she just knows that daddy's there...
- She gets the chance to experience peace because of the presence of her daddy...

We get to experience personal peace as a result of who our daddy is...

One Scholar says it like this: **God's peace, like a garrison of soldiers, will keep guard over our thoughts and feelings so that they will be as safe against the assaults of worry and fear as any fortress.**²

¹ Hawthorne, G. F. (2004). *Philippians* (Vol. 43, p. 246). Dallas: Word, Incorporated.

² Hawthorne, G. F. (2004). *Philippians* (Vol. 43, p. 247). Dallas: Word, Incorporated.

And here's the thing about this **peace**, it's not just a warm feeling, it's a district confidence in who God is and that He's in control... It's a trust you give and the result of that trust is a **tranquility**... A **calmness**... A **serenity**... As you submit and surrender all that you are before Him...

Jesus says in **John 14:27**

27 "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Don't let your heart be troubled or fearful.

God's peace is able to produce exceedingly better results than human planning, or it is far superior to any person's schemes for security, and it's more effective for removing anxiety than any intellectual effort or power of reasoning³

Appeal- some of you need to need to lean into the personal peace that Christ purchased for you...

Here's the other thing: **when you're walking in personal peace, but there will be an external effect...**

Paul says **The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.**

- There will be external effects that flow out of this...

Again, Paul's showing us how to create and environment of peace, an atmosphere of peace...

When we're **at rest in the faithfulness of God** internally it will manifest itself externally in the way that we relate to others...

You'll see the implications of this in what Paul says next here... Look at **verse 8**...

8 Finally brothers and sisters [*preacher joke*], whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is

lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is anything praiseworthy—dwell on these things. **9** Do what you have learned and received and heard from me, and seen in me, and the **God of peace** will be with you.

3. The peace of God doesn't produce passivity it produces proactiveness

Peace doesn't = complacency... Not freedom to do nothing... It is empowerment to follow Christ...

Then what does this look like?

Paul hold up 2 things:

A. Focus your mind on the things of Christ

dwell on these things (v. 8)...

...whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is anything praiseworthy

- **How?**
 - o Word of God...
 - Read it
 - o people of God...
 - be encouraged by it

B. Keep putting into practice the ways of Christ

Do what you have learned and received and heard from me, and seen in me (v.9)

- **Word of God**
- **People of God**

Conclusion [VAMP]

YOU NEED THE CHURCH in order to live out what Paul's pointing us to...

And with that as the church we have to be unified together in **peace** with one another **around one purpose**...

³ Hawthorne, G. F. (2004). *Philippians* (Vol. 43, p. 247). Dallas: Word, Incorporated.

- **Knowing God and making him known...** Not 2 things, its one thing... you cant have one without the other...

Would we walk in the peace of God together both corporately and personally... *That we would understand...*

1. Peace with one another happens on the foundation of your identity in Christ.

2. Vertical peace that leads to personal peace

3. The peace of God doesn't' produce passivity but proactiveness

Some of you need to receive the peace offered in Christ...