

Philippians 4 God's Agenda

Jesus

Book of Philippians Theme: Availability of Joy and Contentment in Any Situation

▪ Keys to Joy

1. Conscious choice to see the good in every situation
2. Conscious choice to humble ourselves before others
3. Conscious choice to trust in Jesus alone...have no confidence in the flesh
4. **Conscious choice to learn/know contentment**
 - a) Exchanging our Agenda for God's Agenda
 - b) Meditating on What is Good
 - c) Finding All We Need in Christ who Strengthens me

Philippians 3:20 ...our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ...

I. Exchanging our Agenda for God's Agenda

1 Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.

- **Therefore...**because our citizenship is in heaven
 1. My Beloved
 2. My longed-for Brethren
 3. My Joy and my Crown...

Stand fast in the Lord while we eagerly wait for Him

Philippians 1:27b ...stand fast in **one spirit**, with **one mind** striving together for the faith of the **gospel**...

- **Stand fast in the Lord:** One spirit, One mind, one purpose

It is a great joy to a minister, as it was to the apostle Paul, to have converts; but that joy is greatly diminished when they **do not stand fast**...then joy becomes a sorrow, and instead of the roses which yield a sweet perfume to the Lord's servant, thorns begin to prick and wound his heart. [Spurgeon]

- **Paul gets personal:** I hear a couple of people are not unified...

2 I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord.

- **Implore you:** gr. *pä-rä-kä-le'-ō* Calling you to my side to instruct you...

Lay down your pride. Be of the same mind; i.e. Mind of Christ

Philippians 2:2 ...fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. **3** Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. **4** Let each of you look out not

only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.⁵ **Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus**

- **Be of the Same mind:** Mind of Christ

Unity is only found in Humility. Ladies...Lay down your pride
Your Disobedience is affecting the whole church

1 Corinthians 12:26 ... if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it...

- Paul calls others at Philippi to intervene...

3 And I urge you also, **true companion, help these women** who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life.

What seemed a small matter had the potential to split the church

Song of Solomon 2:15 Catch us the foxes, The little foxes that spoil the vines...

- Once Labored w/Paul in Gospel/Now worthless to the Gospel
- **Help these women:** True companion/Guy named Clement

Don't pick sides...Help them by pointing them to Christ
After all, all our names are written on the Book of Eternal Life!

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

"I am glad that we do not know what the quarrel was about; I am usually thankful for ignorance on such subjects; – but **as a cure for disagreements, the apostle says, 'Rejoice in the Lord always.'** People who are very happy, especially those who are very happy in the Lord, are not apt either to give offense or to take offense. Their minds are so sweetly occupied with higher things, that they are not easily distracted by the little troubles which naturally arise among such imperfect creatures as we are. Joy in the Lord is the cure for all discord." [Spurgeon]

We can't be humble and offended at the same time

- **Conscious choices in Philippians**
 1. Ch. 1 See the good in every situation
 2. Ch. 2 Humble yourselves before God/each other
 3. Ch. 3 Trust in Jesus alone
 4. **Ch. 4 Rejoice in the Lord...Rejoice.** More of a command than choice

Practical instruction for Peace/Joy

5 Let your **gentleness** be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.

- **Let your gentleness be known:** Don't wait for the other person

This word describes the heart of a person who will let the Lord fight his battles. He knows that vengeance is [[God's], says the Lord [Romans 12:19]. It describes a person who is really free to let go of His anxieties and all the things that cause him stress, because **he**

knows that the Lord will take up his cause. [Guzik]

- Let your gentleness be known **because...**
- **The Lord is at hand:** Do we want to be **Caught** of **Found**?

Caught Backbiting /Arguing with one another
Found Gentle/Encouraging one another?

- How much hurt/wasted time caused by digging in? Let it go.

1 Corinthians 6:7 ... it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not **rather accept wrong**? Why do you not **rather let yourselves be cheated**? 8 No, you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and you do these things to your brethren! **[Don't you remember who you were?]** 9 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And **such were some of you**. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

Do we repay the Lord by treating fellow believers like garbage?

- **Gentleness:** Opposite of contentious. Associated w/meekness. Sacrificing own rights

CC Paraphrase: Chill-out
The Lord is at hand...let Him find you loving

Hebrews 10:37 "For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry."

- Don't quit 5 minutes before the Lord comes

6 Be anxious for nothing...

Practical instructions for Joy/Peace so far?

Be Gentle to All ... **Be Anxious for Nothing**

- **Anxious:** Troubled by cares **while** seeking to promote our own agenda

If we are anxious it is always because we are seeking our agenda and not God's

Luke 10:38 ... [Jesus] entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who also **sat at Jesus' feet** and heard His word. 40 But Martha was **distracted** with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, **do You not care** that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore **tell her to help me.**" 41 And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are **worried and troubled about many things**. 42 But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

Martha was anxious because she had her own agenda
We become anxious when we seek our own agenda and not the Lords

- **Be anxious for nothing**

1. If it's your agenda and not happening...then it's good that it's not
2. If it's the Lord's agenda ... then it will happen His way in His time. Relax.

6b... but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; **7** and the **peace of God**, which surpasses all understanding, will **guard your hearts** and minds through Christ Jesus.

Our hearts and minds are vulnerable to depression/demonic manipulation
When we continue to complain/continue being ungrateful

- **Instead:** Replace Anxiety/complaining w/ Prayer/Thanksgiving?
 3. God's peace beyond understanding
 4. God's protection of heart/mind: Protect w/military guard from hostile invasion

Isaiah 26:3 You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose **mind is stayed on You**, Because he trusts in You.

We can't be Anxious and Thankful at the same time

SUMMARY Exchanging our Agenda for God's Agenda; encouraging the best in others. Stop fighting. Rejoice. Display gentleness to all. Be anxious for nothing...instead pray with thanksgiving in everything.

- **Result of thanksgiving?** Peace beyond understanding/protection of God

II. Meditating on What is Good

8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are **true**, whatever things are **noble**, whatever things are **just**, whatever things are **pure**, whatever things are **lovely**, whatever things are of **good report**, if there is any **virtue** and if there is anything **praiseworthy—meditate on these things.**

- **Conscious choice of Mind/Will**
 1. **Mind:** 10 x in Philippians
 2. **Think:** 4 x in Philippians
- **Meditate:** dwell on things that are...
 1. True vs False
 2. Noble vs Dishonorable/Base
 3. Just vs Unjust
 4. Pure vs Dirty/Polluted
 5. Lovely vs Ugly
 6. Good Report vs Gossip/Slander
 7. Virtuous vs Promiscuous
 8. Praiseworthy vs Disgraceful
- Garbage in/garbage out. Good stuff in/good stuff out

9 The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the **God of peace will be with you.**

- **Be a doer of the Word not simply a hearer...**

1. Find the good in every situation
2. Humble yourself before God and man
3. Put no confidence in the flesh
4. Get on God's Agenda

John 13:17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

**When you do these things then the God of peace will be with you
His Holy Spirit empowering/enabling you**

- Our God is the God of Peace...and desires peace for us

Romans 15:33 Now the **God of peace** be with you all.

Hebrews 13:20 ...may the **God of peace** who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, **21 make you complete** in every good work to do His will

SUMMARY Meditating on What is Good. Do this and the God of peace will be with you.

III. Finding All We Need in Christ

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. 11 Not that I speak in **regard to need**, for **I have learned** in whatever state I am, **to be content**: 12 **I know how to be abased**, and **I know how to abound**. Everywhere and in **all things** I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

**Poor Old Mr. Flesh. Never satisfied. Never content. Always Scoochie
Always wanting. Always complaining. Always miserable**

- **Paul learned how to be Content:**

1. How to be content with nothing or with everything
2. How to be content wherever I am/ in whatever I'm doing

13 I can do **all things through Christ** who strengthens me.

John 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for **without Me you can do nothing.**"

- **Paul knew how to abound...**

"There are a great many men that know a little how to be abased, that do not know at all how to abound. When they are put down into the pit with Joseph, they look up and see the starry promise, and they hope for an escape. But when they are put on the top of a pinnacle, their heads **grow dizzy, and they are ready to fall.**" [Spurgeon]

- Key? Basking in the Light of Jesus Christ and living for His glory/His agenda.

Still Paul appreciated the gift from the Philippians brought by Epaphroditus

14 [I have learned to be content] Nevertheless you have done well that you shared in my distress. 15 Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but **you only**. 16 For even in Thessalonica you sent aid **once and again for my necessities**.

- **Paul appreciated the gift**

1. You were generous in giving when no one else did
2. Don't stop giving...**not for my sake but yours...**

17 **Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account**. 18 Indeed I **have all and abound**. I am **full**, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a **sweet-smelling aroma**, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.

- Gift even small was a sweet-smelling aroma to Paul and to God

Instead of worrying about getting...Rejoice in giving

- **Paul's Motives to encourage Philippians to give?**

1. Their account in heaven would increase: Rewards in heaven
2. Their fruit in earth would increase: Rewards on earth. **Salvation of others**

Luke 16:9 "... make friends for yourselves by unrighteous [money], that when you fail [it fails; i.e. money's gone], they may receive you **into an everlasting home...**

- Good stewards of time/resources as we wait to hear...

Matthew 25:21 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

- Philippians, don't stop giving...no matter how little. Sweet-smelling aroma [gift]

19 **And my God shall supply all your need** according to *His riches* in glory by Christ Jesus.

As you give to each other God shall supply all your need

- As the poor widow gave to Elisha first, then poured oil from one small vessel into all the empty vessels she had...as God supplied all her need

All your need according to God's riches in Glory and by Jesus

Luke 6:38 **Give, and it will be given to you:** good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."

2 Corinthians 9:5 [Let your giving be...] a matter of **generosity and not as a grudging obligation**. 6 But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for **God loves a cheerful giver**.

Give to others and receive back from God. Cannot out give God

20 Now to our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

- Eyes on God's glory. God's agenda.

SUMMARY Finding All We Need in Christ How much I have/don't have does not phase me. I have learned to be content **basking in the light of Jesus Christ and living for His glory.**

21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren who are with me greet you. **22 All the saints greet you, but especially those who are of Caesar's household.**

- **Saints greet you:** Those who work for Caesar who will eventually take Paul's life

These especially greet you

"Nero was at this time emperor of Rome: a more worthless, cruel, and diabolic wretch never disgraced the name or form of man; yet in his family there were Christians: but whether this relates to the members of the imperial family, or to guards, or courtiers, or to servants, we cannot tell." [Clarke]

- **New believers here greet you:** Those who are close to Caesar
- **Recipients in Philippi:** Lydia, Jailer, Demon-possessed fortune teller

23 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

- **Paul begins/ends this letter of Joy/Peace with Grace**

Philippians 1:2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Theme: Availability of Joy and Contentment in Any Situation

Result: Ability to seek the best for others

- **4 Keys to Joy**

1. Finding good in any/every situation: Since God's intent is good
2. Humbling ourselves before God and man: No chance of being offended
3. Putting no confidence in the flesh: Walking in assurance of what Jesus did
4. Learning Contentment as we...

- **Exchange** our Agenda for God's Agenda
- **Meditate** on What is Good
- **Find** all we need in Christ