

Philippians

A GUIDE TO JOY

Philippians 4:1-9 – Christian Endurance

August 2, 2020

Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved. Philippians 4:1 (ESV)

What does it take to follow Christ for the long haul?

1. I must work for unity and pursue humility.

I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life. Philippians 4:2-3 (ESV)

- Their disagreement was vocal.
- Their disagreement was not theological.
- Their disagreement affected more than just them.

Whenever there is a disagreement in the church, it is always a fight between more than two people.

People choose sides based on friendships, not facts.

- Disagreements in the church lead to wasted sideways energy in the church.
- Disagreements in the church destroys the unity, harmony, and witness of the church.

How do we work out disagreements in the church?

- Unity comes from being humble like Jesus.
- Unity comes from realizing the gospel is more important than the offense.
- Unity comes when we let a church leader mediate conflicts we can not solve on our own.
- Unity comes when we remember our hurt and offenses won't matter when we get to heaven.

2. My attitude matters. I must be a person filled with joy because of Jesus, not grumpiness because of my circumstances.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Philippians 4:4 (ESV)

Where does my joy come from when life is hard?

1. I rejoice in God's sovereignty. No matter what happens to us, nothing is beyond God's control.
2. I rejoice that God saved me, adopted me as his child, and made me the most blessed being in the universe. I deserve none of it.
3. I rejoice because I know God is able to supply all of my needs.
4. I rejoice because I can talk to God in prayer any time and I know he is listening.
5. I rejoice because my death is gain, not loss.

3. I must focus on being gracious to others, even when I am hurt or disappointed by others.

*Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand;...
Philippians 4:5 (ESV)*

*By the humility and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you...
2 Corinthians 10:1 (NIV)*

And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And they cast lots to divide his garments. Luke 23:34 (ESV)

*When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.
1 Peter 2:23 (NIV)*

4. When I face anxiety, I must constantly turn to God in prayer.

...do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. Philippians 4:6 (ESV)

Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down,... Proverbs 12:25 (ESV)

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7 (ESV)

...casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. 1 Peter 5:7 (ESV)

You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. Isaiah 26:3 (ESV)

5. I must guard my thought life if I am to follow Christ for the rest of my life.

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. Philippians 4:8–9 (ESV)

But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.
2 Corinthians 11:3 (ESV)

We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ...
2 Corinthians 10:5 (ESV)

...but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.
Psalm 1:2–3 (ESV)

Conclusion

Life Group Questions

1. What stuck out to you in the message? What is one thing you will apply?
2. Read Philippians 4:4. Paul tells us to rejoice in the Lord, not in our circumstances. Why is it important for Christians to be known as people of joy? In Acts 16:16-34, we read about Paul and Silas' experience in the Philippian jail. They spent part of the night singing to God. Why did they sing when they were hurting? What does that teach us about how we can fix our thoughts on Jesus and find joy in difficult times when we are suffering?
3. Read Philippians 4:5. In tough times, it is hard to be gentle, especially with difficult people. Why is it important for us to be people of peace who are consistently forgiving, especially in these times?
4. Read Philippians 4:6-7. Paul tells us to pray when we feel anxiety. While God doesn't promise to answer take away our problems, He does promised to give us supernatural peace when we give our worries to Him as we pray. Have you experienced that God-given supernatural peace in place of anxiety? What should we do when our anxiety returns? While we often pray for our needs in anxious times, what else does Paul say we should include in our prayers besides our worries and why is that important?
5. When the world is falling apart around us, it is easy to let our imagination spin out of control. Why is it important to take every thought captive and refuse to dwell on evil and dishonorable things? What should we think on instead of unwholesome things?
6. What do these verses teach us about handling anxiety? Psalm 55:22, Isaiah 26:3, Hebrews 13:5-6, Isaiah 43:1-2.