

Monday 2/14**Phil. 4:1-4**

1 So then, my brothers, beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, in the same way stand firm in the Lord, beloved.

2 I exhort Euodias, and I exhort Syntyche, to think the same thing in the Lord.

3 Yes, I ask you also, genuine yokefellow, assist them, since they contended with me in the gospel, as well as with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.

Related Verses**Phil 1:27**

27 Only, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, that whether coming and seeing you or being absent, I may hear of the things concerning you, that you stand firm in one spirit, with one soul striving together along with the faith of the gospel,

Phil 2:2

2 Make my joy full, that you think the same thing, having the same love, joined in soul, thinking the one thing,

Rom 12:2-5

2 And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to every one who is among you, not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but to think so as to be sober-minded, as God has apportioned to each a measure of faith.

4 For just as in one body we have many members, and all the members do not have the same function,

5 So we who are many are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

1 Thess. 5:16-18

16 Always rejoice,

17 Unceasingly pray,

18 In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Portions from the Life-study messages

After writing chapter three, Paul's burden was discharged. Therefore, chapter four serves as a conclusion.

In this conclusion, Paul does not present any additional main points. The contents of chapter four are related to what Paul has already written and are a confirmation of these points. Furthermore, the points in chapter four function as a charge to the believers....The words "so then" [at the beginning of verse 1] indicate that what Paul is about to say is a conclusion.

Here Paul speaks of the brothers as the "beloved and longed for," his "joy and crown." These words indicate that Paul was filled with emotion, full of feeling.... The believers were his joy within and his crown without. Joy is inward, whereas a crown is manifested outwardly. In this verse Paul was saying that the believers were both his inward happiness and his outward glory.

Paul charges the believers: "In the same way stand firm in the Lord." The expression "in the same way stand" means to stand in a particular way, in the way presented in the foregoing chapters. In this verse Paul was urging the believers in Philippi to stand in the way he had shown them.

[Verse 2] indicates that these two sisters, [Euodias and Syntyche], were dissenting from one another. They were not of the same mind. Hence, there was the exhortation to strive together with one soul for the gospel (1:27), to be joined in soul, thinking the one thing (2:2), and to have the same mind to pursue after Christ (3:14-15).

According to verse 3, these were very good sisters who had been helpful to Paul....The Greek word rendered "contended" is an athletic term; it means to labor with, to strive together for, to wrestle in company with, as a team of athletes. These sisters were a help to Paul and the other workers, contending with them in the gospel. However, even these sisters needed help to be one by thinking the same thing in the Lord.

In 4:3 Paul uses the term yokefellow. In ancient times farmers used two oxen to pull a plow. The term yokefellow thus refers to being yoked together with another to bear a common burden. In writing to the Philippians, Paul was seeking a genuine yokefellow, one who would bear the same burden as he, under the same yoke. If we do not seek Christ to the uttermost, we have not yet been yoked. Rather, we are still quite free in our thinking. If we have truly been yoked, we shall think the same thing as Paul....Because Paul was in a Roman prison far away from Philippi, he needed someone there in Philippi to be yoked together with him to bear this burden. Paul expected that among the saints

in Philippi there would be at least one who was the same as he was in pursuing Christ.

Today there is also the need for a genuine yokefellow. The Lord's ministry is hated and rejected by many. You may accept this ministry and even love it, but to love the ministry is one thing, and to be yoked under the mind to pursue Christ is another. We all need to be yoked by having "this mind."

According to Paul's word [in verse 4],...rejoicing affords us the strength for the oneness spoken of in verses 2 and 3. In order for Euodias and Syntyche to think the same thing, it was necessary for them to learn to rejoice. (Life-study of Philippians, pp. 221-223, 224)

Corporate Reading of "How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God" Chapter 12 – Sections: Enjoying God By Praying At Set Times; Needing A Set Time Of Prayer; Set Times of Prayer Being Worthwhile

Tuesday 2/15**Phil. 4:4-7**

4 ¹Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.

5 ¹Let your ²forbearance be known to all men. The Lord is ³near.

6 In nothing ¹be anxious, but in everything, by ²prayer and petition ³with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known ⁴to God;

7 And the ¹peace of God, which surpasses every man's understanding, will ²guard your ³hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

Related Verses**Psa. 62:8**

8 Trust in Him at all times, O people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge to us. Selah

1 Sam. 1:11

11 And she made a vow and said, O Jehovah of hosts, if You will indeed look upon the affliction of Your female servant and remember me and not forget Your female servant, but give to Your female servant a male child, then I will give him to Jehovah for all the days of his life, and no razor will come upon his head.

Exo. 15:25a

25a And he cried out to Jehovah, and Jehovah showed him a tree; and he cast it into the waters, and the waters became sweet.

Eph. 6:17-18

17 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which Spirit is the word of God,

18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

1 Thess. 5:23-24

23 And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly, and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

24 Faithful is He who calls you, who also will do it.

Portions from the footnotes**Phil. 4:4¹ Rejoice**

Rejoicing affords us the strength for the oneness spoken of in vv. 2 and 3. Furthermore, rejoicing in the Lord is the secret of having the excellent virtues listed in vv. 5-9.

Phil. 4:5¹ Let

The apostle's charge in vv. 5-9 should be the outward expression of the inner reality of the experience of Christ spoken of by him in chs. 1 — 3.

Phil. 4:5² forbearance

I.e., reasonableness, considerateness, and consideration in dealing with others, not being strict in claiming one's legal rights. It is in contrast to selfish ambition and vainglory (2:3) and to murmurings and reasonings (2:14). It is Christ Himself as an excellent virtue lived out of the believers.

Phil. 4:5³ near

Near in space and time. With respect to space, the Lord is near us, ready to help. With regard to time, the Lord is at hand, coming soon.

Phil. 4:6¹ be

I.e., worry. Anxiety, coming from Satan, is the sum total of human life and disturbs the believers' life of living Christ; forbearance, coming from God, is the sum total of a life that lives Christ. The two are opposites.

Phil. 4:6² prayer

Prayer is general, having worship and fellowship as its essence; petition is special, being for particular needs.

Phil. 4:6³ with

Not and but with. Both our prayer and our petition should be accompanied by our giving thanks to the Lord.

Phil. 4:6⁴ to

The Greek word is often translated with (John 1:1; Mark 9:19; 2 Cor. 5:8; 1 John 1:2). It denotes motion toward, in the sense of a living union and communion, implying fellowship. Hence, the sense of to God here is in the fellowship with God.

Phil. 4:7¹ peace

The result of practicing fellowship with God in prayer is that we enjoy the peace of God. The peace of God is actually God as peace (v. 9) infused into us through our fellowship with Him by prayer, as the counterpoise to troubles and the antidote to anxiety (John 16:33).

Phil. 4:7² guard

Or, mount guard over. The God of peace patrols before our hearts and thoughts in Christ, keeping us calm and tranquil.

Phil. 4:7³ hearts

The heart is the source; the thoughts are the issue.

Portions from the Life-study messages

This portion of Philippians presents the expression of a life that lives Christ—a life that takes Christ as the pattern and counts all things refuse in order to gain more of Christ. The first aspect of the expression of a life that lives Christ is forbearance [v. 5].... [In verse 6 we] see that a second aspect is the absence of anxiety. In a life that lives Christ there will be forbearance, but no anxiety, no worry. Paul considers forbearance and the lack of anxiety as the first two aspects of the expression of a life that lives Christ.

Compared with what Paul has already covered, forbearance seems to be a secondary matter. However, in a very practical way, forbearance is a test of whether or not we live Christ.... [Verse 6 says], "In nothing be anxious." Often when we hear bad news, we worry and fall into anxiety. Anxiety undermines the living of Christ. Instead of being anxious, in everything by prayer and petition with thanksgiving we should make our requests known to God. Then the peace of God will guard our hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus (v. 7). The peace of God saves us from worry and anxiety. Paul's word here proves that our interpretation of these verses according to our experience is correct. Being free from anxiety is for the purpose of keeping us calm and tranquil. (Life-study of Philippians, pp. 226-227, 228-229, 229-230)

Corporate Reading of "How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God" Chapter 12 – Sections: How Saints of

Old Set Aside Time to Pray; The Time to Pray Being Determined by One's Own Choice; Extra Grace That Comes with Set Times of Prayer

Wednesday 2/16**Phil. 4:8-9**

8 Finally, brothers, what things are ¹true, what things are ²dignified, what things are ³righteous, what things are ⁴pure, what things are ⁵lovely, what things are ⁶well spoken of, if there is any ⁷virtue and if any ⁸praise, ⁹take account of these things.

9 The things which you have also learned and ¹received and heard and ²seen in me, ³practice these things; and the ⁴God of peace will be with you.

Related Verses**1 Thess. 1:5**

5 For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and in much assurance, even as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

Heb. 13:7

7 Remember the ones leading you, who have spoken to you the word of God; and considering the issue of their manner of life, imitate their faith.

2 Cor. 13:11

11 Finally, brothers, rejoice, be perfected, be comforted, think the same thing, be at peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

2 Pet. 1:3-4

3 Seeing that His divine power has granted to us all things which relate to life and godliness, through the full knowledge of Him who has called us by His own glory and virtue,

4 Through which He has granted to us precious and exceedingly great promises that through these you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust.

Rom 15:33

33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Portions from the footnotes**Phil. 4:8¹ true**

Truthful ethically. It does not mean true in matter of fact.

Phil. 4:8² dignified

I.e., venerable, worthy of reverence, noble, grave; implying the idea of dignity, which inspires and invites reverence.

Phil. 4:8³ righteous

Right, not just, before God and man.

Phil. 4:8⁴ pure

I.e., single in intention and action, without any mixture.

Phil. 4:8⁵ lovely

I.e., lovable, agreeable, endearing.

Phil. 4:8⁶ well

I.e., of good repute, attractive, winning, gracious.

Phil. 4:8⁷ virtue

Meaning excellence, that is, ethical energy exhibited in vigorous action. See notes 3¹¹ and 5⁴ in 2 Pet. 1.

Phil. 4:8⁸ praise

I.e., things worthy of praise, as the companion of virtue. The first six items are categorized under what things are; the last two, under if any. This indicates that the last two items are a summing up of the first six, in all of which are some virtue or excellence and something worthy of praise.

Phil. 4:8⁹ take

Think about, ponder, consider.

Phil. 4:9¹ received

Not only learned but also received.

Phil. 4:9² seen

Not only heard but also seen.

Phil. 4:9³ practice

Not only should the believers think about the things mentioned in v. 8; they should also practice the things they have learned, received, heard, and seen in the apostle.

Phil. 4:9⁴ God

The God of peace is the source of all the things mentioned in vv. 8 and 9. By our fellowshiping with Him and having Him with us, all these virtues will issue forth in our life.

Portions from the Life-study messages

It certainly would not be logical for Paul to speak so much about the experience of Christ and then in chapter four mention human virtues in a purely ethical way. The excellent characteristics of the Christian life given in these verses must be more than natural human attributes—they must be the very expression of the Christ who lives in us.

Human virtues were created by God as a...vessel to contain Christ as the divine content....Unless our virtues are occupied by Christ and express Him, they are empty and devoid of true life....It is important for us to see the difference between a living that is according to ethical teachings and a living that is the expression of Christ....God's economy is not to develop our virtues, but to add Christ to them. When Christ is added to our virtues, they are no longer empty, but are filled with Christ as their content and reality.

How wonderful it is to realize that 4:5-9 shows us the clear expression of a life that lives Christ! In this portrait we see that we need forbearance and also an antidote for anxiety. Moreover, we need the six governing aspects of a life that lives Christ. It is truly marvelous to see these things! I hope that many among us, especially the young people, will pray about these matters, pray-read the verses which speak of them, have fellowship concerning them, and testify to one another about them. Here in Philippians there is a vast territory for us to explore and inexhaustible riches for us to search out and experience. (Life-study of Philippians, pp. 240-242)

Corporate Reading of “How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God” Chapter 12 – Sections: *The Way to Enjoy God Through Set Times Of Prayer; Seeking After God; Beholding God*

Thursday 2/17**Phil. 4:10-13**

10 But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly because now at length you have caused your thinking for me to ¹blossom anew; for which matter you had indeed taken thought, but lacked opportunity.

11 Not that I speak according to lack, for I have learned, in whatever circumstances I am, to be ¹content.

12 I know also how to be ¹abased, and I know how to ²abound; ³in everything and in all things ⁴I have learned the secret both to be ⁵filled and to hunger, both to ⁶abound and to ⁷lack.

13 I am able to do all things ¹in Him who ²empowers me.

Related Verses**Phil. 3:9**

9 And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God and based on

faith,

Col. 1:27-29

27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory,

28 Whom we announce, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man full-grown in Christ;

29 For which also I labor, struggling according to His operation which operates in me in power.

Eph. 3:16

16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

Heb. 13:5

5 Let your way of life be without the love of money, being satisfied with the things which are at hand; for He Himself has said, "I shall by no means give you up, neither by any means shall I abandon you";

1 Tim. 6:6, 8-9

6 But godliness with contentment is great gain;

8 But having food and covering, with these we will be content.

9 But those who intend to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge men into destruction and ruin.

Portions from the footnotes**Phil. 4:10¹ blossom**

The Greek word means to sprout and bloom, implying that the Philippian believers' thinking toward the apostle was a matter of life. For some time their thinking for Paul had been dormant. But when Paul wrote this Epistle, their thinking for him had begun to blossom anew, just like a plant's sprouting and blooming.

Phil. 4:11¹ content

Self-sufficient, satisfied in oneself. This is a word used by the Stoics, who taught that a person should be content in all circumstances. Being content is the opposite of the Epicurean practice referred to in 3:18-19.

Phil. 4:12¹ abased

Humbled, in lowly circumstances.

Phil. 4:12² abound

To live in abundance.

Phil. 4:12³ in

In everything means in each matter; in all things means in all matters. Together, these two phrases encompass all the things in the course of human life. Paul learned the secret of experiencing Christ — to experience Him in everything and in every place.

Phil. 4:12⁴ I

Lit., I have been initiated. The metaphor here refers to a person's being initiated into a secret society with instruction in its rudimentary principles. After Paul was converted to Christ, he was initiated into Christ and the Body of Christ. He then learned the secret of how to take Christ as life, how to live Christ, how to magnify Christ, how to gain Christ, and how to have the church life, all of which things are rudimentary principles.

Phil. 4:12⁵ filled

Satisfied.

Phil. 4:12⁶ abound

To have abundance, sufficiency, more than enough.

Phil. 4:12⁷ lack

To be in want, to suffer privation.

Phil. 4:13¹ in

Paul was a person in Christ (2 Cor. 12:2), and he desired to be found in Christ by others. Now he declared that he was able to do all things in Him, the very Christ who empowered him. This is an all-inclusive and concluding word on his experience of Christ. It is the converse of the Lord's word in John 15:5 concerning our organic relationship with Him, “Apart from Me you can do nothing.”

Phil. 4:13² empowers

The Greek word means makes dynamic inwardly. Christ dwells in us (Col. 1:27). He empowers us, makes us dynamic from within, not from without. By such inward empowering Paul was able to do all things in Christ.

Portions from the Life-study messages

According to 4:10-13, Paul applies the secret he has learned to his circumstances in prison....In 4:13 we find the secret to which Paul refers in verse 12. Here Paul says that he is in Christ, in the One who empowers him. In chapter three Paul testified that he pursued Christ in order to gain Him and be found in Him. Now in 4:13 Paul says that he is in Him. In Christ as the One who empowers him Paul could do all things.

To appreciate Paul's word we need to join the phrase "in Him" in 4:13 to the same phrase in 3:9. In 3:9 Paul aspired to be found in Him; in 4:13 Paul declared that being in Him he could do all things in the One who empowered him. This is the secret....Our circumstances may change,... [but] the enjoyment of the Lord is the same. (Life-study of Philippians, pp. 245, 249)

Corporate Reading of “How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God” Chapter 12 – Sections: Inquiring of God (paragraphs 1-4)

Friday 2/18**Phil. 4:14-20**

14 Nevertheless you did well to have ¹fellowship with me in my ²affliction.

15 And you yourselves also know, Philippians, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I went out from Macedonia, no church had ¹fellowship with me in the ²account of giving and receiving except you only;

16 For even in Thessalonica you sent both once and again to my need.

17 Not that I seek the ¹gift, but I seek the ²fruit which increases to your ³account.

18 But I have received in full all things and abound; I have been ¹filled, receiving from Epaphroditus the ²things from you, a ³sweet-smelling savor, an acceptable ⁴sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.

19 And ¹my God will ²fill ³your every need ⁴according to His riches, ⁵in glory, ⁶in Christ Jesus.

20 Now to ¹our God and Father be the ²glory forever and ever. ³Amen.

Related Verses**Heb. 13:16**

16 But do not forget doing good and sharing with others, for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.

Eph. 5:1-2

1 Be therefore imitators of God, as beloved children;

2 And walk in love, even as Christ also loved us and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor.

2 Cor. 8:1-2

1 Furthermore we make known to you, brothers, the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia,

2 That in much proving of affliction the abundance of their joy and the depth of their poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality;

2 Cor. 11:9

9 And when I was present with you and lacked, I was not a burden to anyone; for the brothers who came from Macedonia filled up my lack, and in everything I kept myself from being burdensome to you, and will keep myself.

Portions from the footnotes**Phil. 4:14¹ fellowship**

This was the fellowship unto the furtherance of the gospel (1:5), by their supplying of material things to the apostle (v. 18).

Phil. 4:14² affliction

Referring to Paul's imprisonment (1:17).

Phil. 4:15¹ fellowship

This fellowshiping (sharing) is the fellowship unto the furtherance of the gospel mentioned in 1:5 and 4:14.

Phil. 4:15² account

The Philippian believers' supplying of material things to the apostle opened an account with the apostle.

Phil. 4:15³ giving

The supplying and receiving of material things to meet the apostle's need in his gospel work.

Phil. 4:15⁴ you

The church in Philippi was a unique example in the supplying of the sent one's needs for the furtherance of the gospel.

Phil. 4:17¹ gift

The material things given to the Lord's servant for the Lord's interests.

Phil. 4:17² fruit

The result of their fellowship, participation, in the apostle's gospel work. This will be a reward in the day of the Lord.

Phil. 4:17³ account

The account opened in v. 15. We should follow the Philippians' example by opening such an account and keeping its credit side continually increasing in the fruit of our giving.

Phil. 4:18¹ filled

Fully supplied.

Phil. 4:18² things

The material things given as a supply to the apostle.

Phil. 4:18³ sweet-smelling

The same Greek phrase as in Eph. 5:2. A sweet-smelling odor of sacrifices offered to God (Gen. 8:21).

Phil. 4:18⁴ sacrifice

The Philippians' material gift, given to supply the apostle's need, was considered by him a sacrifice to God, acceptable and well pleasing (Heb. 13:16). Paul indicated in his appreciation that what the Philippians did toward him was done toward God. This implies that he had the assurance that he was one with God and that his work was by God and for God.

Phil. 4:19¹ my

The apostle in his experience had the conviction and assurance that he was one with God and that God was his God. Since he considered the Philippians' material gift to him a sacrifice to God, he believed with assurance that God, who was one with him and who was his God, would richly repay the Philippians.

Phil. 4:19² fill

Fully supply, satisfy to the full.

Phil. 4:19³ your

Since the Philippians cared for God's sent one, God would care for their every need.

Phil. 4:19⁴ according

God supplies us according to His riches, not according to our needs. His riches exceed our needs.

Phil. 4:19⁵ in

In glory modifies fill. Glory is the expression of God; it is God expressed in splendor. God's rich supply to the believers, who are His children, expresses God and bears the glory of God. The apostle assured the Philippians that God would abundantly supply all their needs in a way that would bring them into His glory.

Phil. 4:19⁶ in

In Christ Jesus also modifies fill. Christ, the all-inclusive One, is the base, the element, the sphere, and the channel in and by which God cares for His people according to His riches and in glory. This indicates that even the believers' giving and receiving of material things are intimately related to the experience of Christ.

Phil. 4:20¹ our

God is not only the apostle's God but also the believers'.

Phil. 4:20² glory

Glory is God expressed in His splendor and excellency for our appreciation. For glory to be to God means that God is expressed in this way. Our giving in Christ, which is to God for God's interests, brings in God's glory, not only for our enjoyment but also for God's glorification.

Phil. 4:20³ Amen

See note 13⁵ in Matt. 6.

Corporate Reading of “How to Enjoy God and How to Practice the Enjoyment of God” Chapter 12 – Sections: Inquiring of God (paragraphs 5-6); Allowing God to Finish Speaking

Saturday 2/19**Phil. 4:21-23**

21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you.

22 All the saints greet you, and especially ¹those of Caesar's household.

23 The ¹grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your ²spirit.

Related Verses**Titus 3:15**

15 All who are with me greet you. Greet those who love us in faith. Grace be with you all.

2 Cor. 13:14

14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

2 Tim. 4:22

22 The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

Phil. 1:19

19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

1 Cor. 6:17

17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

Rom. 1:9

9 For God is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of His Son, how unceasingly I make mention of you always in my prayers,

Portions from the footnotes**Phil. 4:22¹ those**

Caesar's household comprised all who were attached to the palace of Nero. Some of these were converted through contact with Paul and became believers in Christ in Rome.

Phil. 4:23¹ grace

God in Christ as our supply and enjoyment, conveyed to us and realized through the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ (1:19). To experience Christ as Paul did, we need this grace.

Phil. 4:23² spirit

Our regenerated spirit, which is indwelt by the Spirit of Christ. It is in this spirit of ours that we experience and enjoy Christ as Paul did.

This book, which is concerned with the experience of Christ, points out to us at the beginning, in ch. 1, that it is the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ that enables us to live Christ, even to magnify Christ under any circumstances, that we may enjoy Him as the uttermost salvation. Here, at the end of the book, we are told that our experience and enjoyment of Christ must take place in our spirit, which has been regenerated to be the dwelling place and vessel of the Triune God. Therefore, this is altogether a matter of the union and mingling of the processed Triune God, who has become the all-inclusive life-giving Spirit, and the spirit of us, the tripartite men, who are being transformed by such a Spirit. We must live and act in our wonderful spirit by the Triune God as the wonderful Spirit. Only then can we experience and enjoy the Triune God, who was processed through incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, as the inexhaustibly sufficient grace and thus become His fullness, His expression.

Portions from the Life-study messages

In the closing verses of chapter four Paul extends a brief word of greeting (vv. 21-22) and blessing (v. 23). In verse 20 Paul exclaims, "Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen." Then in verse 21 he goes on to say, "Greet every saint in Christ Jesus."...Paul's words of greeting here are related to what he says in verse 20 about glory to our God and Father. This indicates that he greeted the saints with the very weight of glory spoken of in verse 20.

In verse 21 Paul also says, "The brothers who are with me greet you." The brothers who were with Paul certainly must have greeted the saints in the same way Paul did. This means that they greeted the believers not with their best regards, but with the assurance of God's repayment and with His glory.

In verse 22 Paul continues, "All the saints greet you, and especially those of Caesar's household." Caesar's

household included all who were attached to the palace of Nero. Some of these were converted through contact with Paul and became believers in Christ in Rome.

In his word of blessing Paul says, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit." Grace is God in Christ as our supply and enjoyment conveyed to us and realized through the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ (1:19). To experience Christ as Paul did we need this grace.

According to Paul's word in verse 23, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is with our spirit. The spirit here is our regenerated spirit indwelt by the Spirit of Christ. It is in this spirit of ours that we enjoy Christ and experience Him as Paul did. Many Christians today have missed the mark of the regenerated spirit. They speak much about the Holy Spirit, but not of the human spirit. Because of this neglect of the regenerated human spirit, there is very little experience of Christ or enjoyment of the all-inclusive grace.

If we would enjoy the grace which is with our spirit, we need to exercise our spirit. The way to exercise the spirit is to pray, pray-read the Word, and call on the name of the Lord Jesus. Whenever we call on the Lord,...pray in a proper way, and pray-read the Word, we truly exercise our spirit. Exercising our spirit in this way is the secret to enjoying the grace which is with our spirit. (Life-study of Philippians, pp. 267-268, 269, 270, 271)

Hymns, #839, #717, #403, #539

Outline

- V. Having Christ as the secret of sufficiency (4:1-20)
 - A. Thinking the same thing and rejoicing in the Lord (vv. 1-4)
 - B. Excellent characteristics in living (vv. 5-9)
 - C. The believers' fellowship with the apostle and the apostle's secret of sufficiency (vv. 10-20)
- VI. Conclusion (4:21-23)

Crucial points

Philippians 4:1-20 is on having Christ as the secret of sufficiency. Verses 1 through 4 are on thinking the same thing and rejoicing in the Lord. First Paul exhorted the believers to stand firm in the Lord according to the way presented in the foregoing chapters. Then in verses 2 and 3

Paul was seeking a genuine yokefellow, one who was the same as he was in pursuing Christ, to help the dissenting sisters, Euodias and Syntyche, to think the same thing in the Lord. Verse 4 indicates that rejoicing affords us the strength for the oneness spoken of in verses 2 and 3.

Verses 5 through 9 reveal the excellent characteristics of the Christian life, that is, the expression of a life that lives Christ. Paul considered forbearance (v. 5) and the lack of anxiety (v. 6) as the first two aspects of a life that lives Christ. Forbearance is a test of whether or not we live Christ, and anxiety undermines the living of Christ. Instead of being anxious, in everything by prayer and petition with thanksgiving we should make our requests known to God (v. 6). Then the peace of God will guard our hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus (v. 7).

In addition to forbearance and the lack of anxiety, Paul presents six governing aspects of a life that lives Christ: true, dignified, righteous, pure, lovely, and well spoken of (v. 8). In each of these items is some virtue, or excellence, and something worthy of praise (v. 8). Not only should the believers take account of these things, they should also practice the things they have learned, received, heard, and seen in the apostle (v. 9). The God of peace is the source of all the things mentioned in verses 8 and 9. By our fellowshiping with Him and having Him with us, all these virtues will issue forth in our life.

Verses 10 through 20 show us the believers' fellowship with the apostle and the apostle's secret of sufficiency. In the believers' fellowship with Paul, they not only sent the material supply to him, but also ministered life to him. The blossoming (v. 10) of the believers' thinking toward Paul was a matter of life, issuing in their fellowship with him (v. 14). In verses 15 and 16 Paul refers to those times in the past when the believers in Philippi supplied him materially. Then in verse 17 he goes on to say, "Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit which increases to your account." The Philippians' supply to the apostle opened an account with him. This account was kept in the heavenly bank (Matt. 6:20). In this account there was the side of giving and receiving (v. 15). They sent gifts to Paul, and in return they received God's repay-ment (v. 19). Eventually, God comes in to visit both the ones who give and the one who receives in such a way as to express His splendor, His glory (v. 20).

In verse 12 Paul says, "I have learned the secret." This secret is found in verse 13. Here Paul says that he is in Christ, in the One who empowers him. In 3:9 he aspired to

"be found in Him." Now in 4:13 he is in Him. In Christ, as the One who empowers him, Paul could do all things. This is the secret. Our circum-stances may change, but the enjoyment of the Lord is the same.

In concluding chapter four Paul extends a brief word of greeting (vv. 21-22) and blessing (v. 23). According to this blessing, the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ is with our spirit. It is in our regenerated spirit that we enjoy Christ and experience Him as Paul did.

Lord's Day 2/20

Related Verses

Rom. 12:6-18

6 And having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

7 Or service, let us be faithful in that service; or he who teaches, in that teaching;

8 Or he who exhorts, in that exhortation; he who gives, in simplicity; he who leads, in diligence; he who shows mercy, in cheerfulness.

9 Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.

10 Love one another warmly in brotherly love; take the lead in showing honor one to another.

11 Do not be slothful in zeal, but be burning in spirit, serving the Lord.

12 Rejoice in hope; endure in tribulation; persevere in prayer.

13 Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality.

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep.

16 Be of the same mind toward one another, not setting your mind on the high things but going along with the lowly; do not be wise in yourselves.

17 Repay no one evil for evil; take forethought for things honorable in the sight of all men.

18 If possible, as far as it depends on you, live in peace with all men.

Further Reading:

Life-study of Philippians, msgs. 26, 27, 28, 29, 30