

Text Outline **Philippians 4:1-9**

- I. Therefore, my brothers and sisters,**
- A. you**
- 1. whom I love**
 - 2. and long for,**
 - 3. my joy**
 - 4. and crown,**
- B. stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!**
- II. ²I**
- A. plead**
- 1. with**
 - a) Euodia*
 - b) and I plead with Syntyche*
 - 2. to be of the same mind in the Lord.**
- B. ³Yes,**
- 1. and I ask you, my true companion,**
 - 2. help these women since they have contended**
 - a) at my side in the cause of the gospel,*
 - b) along with Clement*
 - c) and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.*
- III. ⁴Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!**
- A. ⁵Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.**
- B. ⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation,**
- 1. by prayer**
 - 2. and petition,**
 - 3. with thanksgiving,**
 - 4. present your requests to God.**
 - 5. ⁷And the peace of God,**
 - a) which transcends all understanding,*
 - b) will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*
- IV. ⁸Finally, brothers and sisters,**
- A. whatever is**
- 1. true,**
 - 2. whatever is noble,**
 - 3. whatever is right,**
 - 4. whatever is pure,**
 - 5. whatever is lovely,**
 - 6. whatever is admirable—**

- B. if anything is**
 - 1. excellent**
 - 2. or praiseworthy—**
 - 3. think about such things.**
- C. ⁹Whatever you have**
 - 1. learned**
 - 2. or received**
 - 3. or heard from me, or seen in me—**
 - 4. put it into practice.**
- D. And the God of peace will be with you.**

Scripture taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. NIV®. COPYRIGHT© 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Conceptual Outline

Theme: Exhortation to Stand Firm in the Lord

I. Unity

- A. Personal plead to Euodia & Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord
- B. Help for these women

II. Rejoice

- A. The Lord in near
- B. Turn anxiety into prayer
 - 1. prayer
 - 2. petition
 - 3. thanksgiving
 - 4. request
 - 5. promise of peace of God

III. Focus of Thoughts

- A. Holy/towards God
 - 1. true
 - 2. noble
 - 3. right
 - 4. pure
- B. Attractive/towards self
 - 1. lovely
 - 2. admirable
- C. Reputable/towards others
 - 1. excellent
 - 2. praiseworthy

IV. Practice the Word

- 1. learn
- 2. received
- 3. heard
- 4. seen
- 5. Promise: God of peace will be with you

Questions & Potential Answers:

1. Share a recent situation that makes you feel worry, sad, down, angry, guilty, or depressed. When you were stuck with these emotions, what seems to help? What tend to make you feel worse?
2. Today's passage contains many suggestions for believers of all generations to handle their practical daily challenges that affect them emotionally. Let look at the passage:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XQwI_HOHkOonvNrhbgqBT4nHtZl5EtJl4nHI8RDgICE/edit?usp=sharing

3. Beginning this portion, Paul starts with a very affectionate address. What is his relationship with the Philippians like? Why is this address important to the Philippians in their struggles? (How does Paul's feeling about them help them cope with difficulties?)

v. 1 my brothers and sisters,

- whom I love
- and long for,
- my joy
- and crown,
- dear friends

Paul loves and cares for the Philippians dearly & is deeply passionate about their welfare. His deepest desire is for them to stand firm in the Lord & not lose heart as they see his suffering and as they also face internal conflicts and external attacks.

For them to know that Paul cares, loves, trusts, supports, and have pride and confidence in them will strengthen their hearts as they face hardships.

4. What are some of the commands/instructions he gave in this passage? With all these instructions, what is the overarching theme (Paul's hope) in these 9 verses? Why is this theme so important for the Philippians?
Plead for reconciliation, help these women, rejoice, let gentleness be evident to all, not be anxious, present your requests to God, think of all the "whatever"s, put into practice.

Paul's hope/theme for this passage is for them to stand firm in face of the trials they were facing – external attacks, danger in imprisonment, their emotional discouragements, false teachers, mixed motive “members” of the church, internal conflicts from genuine colleagues.

4. His overall intent is for believers to stand firm. How are we to stand firm? What does it mean to stand firm in the Lord in this way? What aspects about the Lord mentioned in the previous chapters that can help us stand firm? What has he already mentioned in previous chapters about "this way"?
 - v.1: in the Lord in this way

- The Risen Lord who is exalted above all things has power to help us.
- His servant hood and humility calls us to learn from him, be united and serve others.
- His return prompts us to live as citizens of heaven and consider earthly possessions as garbage & transform our values.

5. Paul goes on to give specific instructions to help us stand firm. In vs. 2-3, Paul addresses one of the key reasons of this letter which he mentioned in 1:27, i.e., conflicts. Paul introduces two women. How does Paul describe these two women?

- Women who have contended with him in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers (they have been partners, co-laborers with Paul.)
- Names are in the book of life (True believers)

How are they to resolve their conflicts? What does same mind in the Lord mean?

- To be of same mind in the Lord meaning to put down their self-centeredness & to seek reconciliation according to the Lord call for us to have peace & be united with one another.
- Same mind = mind of Christ, humility (Phil 2:5-11)

Why is it so important for them to reconcile?

- It is important because we are one in the Lord, fellow citizens of His Kingdom with names in the book of life, beloved brothers and sisters, & fellow co-workers of the gospel. [Mark 3:25](#); [John 13:35](#); [Philippians 2:15](#)

What are the other brothers & sisters to do? What principle can we draw from these two women's conflict about Christian reconciliation?

- They are to help these women.
- Principles: Our reconciliation is based on what Christ has done for us & our belonging & obedience to Him. We need to work hard at letting go of our own self-centered pride & mind Christ's mind. We need to help one another and allow other to help us.

* no record of specifics of their conflicts.

** Clement – not mentioned in other parts of the Bible. After Paul and Peter were martyred at Rome, Clement become a leader, in fact, bishop, of the church there. You can visit the Church of San Clemente in Rome today, thought to be built over Clement's house. Tradition has it that about the year 100 AD he was martyred by being cast into the sea tied to an anchor. Not much detail is known about Clement of Rome, but some of his writings provide valuable insight into the early church. His letter to the church at Corinth may be the earliest document we have outside of the New Testament.

6. Read vs. 4-7 What are some of the practical commands Paul offers for handling our emotions?

- Rejoice always, let our gentleness be a witness to others, don't be anxious but pray.

By giving us a positive command to rejoice & a negative command to not be anxious, is

Paul telling us to ignore our emotions and put up a big happy face? Why/why not?

- No, because he does recognize these emotion but is pointing a way out.
- Yes, because we do have to turn from emotions that can disturb our hearts. He is inviting to make a conscious choice to turn around.

Instead of being anxious & unhappy, what should a believer do?

- present our requests to God

Paul used several different descriptions of prayer. What are they? How do they each add to our prayer?

- **Prayer** - conversation, communication, dialog with God;
- **Petition** - appealing to a higher authority for yourself or others;
- **Thanksgiving** - recognize & remember God's grace, His deeds, & His perfect plan for us;
- **Requests** - not rights or demands but letting God know our hearts' desire & giving Him the full right to do His will trusting that He knows best.

7. In v. 5, Paul pointed out that the Lord is near. In what sense is He near? How does His nearness help us stand firm as we struggle with our emotions?

- Nearness can be His presence being close by. He is near to understand, help, comfort, guard, & guide so that we're never lonely.
- Nearness can be His return being soon. This is our ultimate hope. When He returns, He'll make all things right & save us. His nearness also means the end of time is near. Then, our gentle, joy-filled witnesses should be more evident to all so that they can believe while there's still time.

8. What is the promise if we learn to rejoice always?

- The peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard our hearts & minds in Christ Jesus.

In the context of this chapter, describe "peace of God." How is this peace different from the emptiness of the mind as in Transcendental Meditation? How do we attain this peace?

- This is real peace of heart & mind which will prevent us from wallowing in sadness & anxiety, not a temporary escape from reality. It is also peace of reconciliation with God and our fellow brothers & sisters as in vs. 2-3. It is also peace of mind to be able to focus on good things, a mind that's pure without guilt & shame. vs.8-9

How do we attain this peace?

- The only way to have this peace is to start by acknowledging Christ as Lord and reconciling with Him by believing in Him. This passage repeated "in the Lord/Christ Jesus" 4X. The only way we can have real peace to handle our troubled life is to be in Christ. When we trust in Him and hold on to His promises, He is our Hope & Help. When He is near, we should have no fear of all evil. We can claim the promise of Psalm 121.

How can we experience this peace in our COVID 19 era?

Downward Arrow Natural Response:

I'll contract COVID ▶ I'll get sick ▶ I'll get others sick ▶ I'll lose my job ▶ I'll

lose my health/my life ▶ I'll die alone

Downward Arrow Faith response:

If I have COVID ▶ I'll pray ▶ If God heals me, I'll praise ▶ If God doesn't heal me ▶ I'll still believe ▶ He can use adversity to bring out His Best (Rm 8:28)

▶ His power is sufficient for my weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9) ▶ I can be a more powerful witness ▶ If I die, Jesus will welcome me on the other side of eternity and will give me a perfect body.

What examples can we learn from Paul or OT characters who practiced faith response to crises? What have Abraham, Daniel's 3 friends, Esther...taught us:

- Believe that God will save us ▶ even if He doesn't, we'll still believe. Daniel 3:17
- God saves/heals ▶ God can raise from the dead (Heb 11:19)
- If I die, I die (Esther 4:16)
- God doesn't save and die ▶ go to heaven (Phil 1:23)

9. Is there any activity that you question whether you should do/think as a believer? What guideline would you use to see if you should/should not participate in the activity? If you were to stop doing/thinking about doing these things, what might you do/think instead?
- Read vs. 8-9 What are the next 2 commands?
 - Think: 6 Whatevers + 2 (Fun Acronym: Tiff Ng Ran Passed LAX Parking)
 - Put into practice – what we heard and seen in the Apostle
10. If we are to categorize all the things we are to think about in 3 categories from true-pure, lovely & admirable, and excellent & praiseworthy how are they similar? Hint: Whose favor would you gain when you practice them? How would thinking these things help us?
- True, noble, right, pure can be categorized as holiness, towards God & fulfill His standard
 - Lovely & admirable can be categorized as good attractive, towards the self and fulfill our aspiration
 - Excellent & praiseworthy can be categorized as good reputes, towards others and fulfill societal/cultural standards
11. The words "whatever" & "if anything" are all inclusive, leaving nothing out. What are we to include among these brackets?
- Learned - lessons taught physically by the apostle; received - instructions & letters received from the apostle; heard - verbal communication, including instructions or other content, of the apostle;
 - Seen in me - example of the apostle.
 - In other words, we are to follow all verbal & written instructions of the apostle & his example.
12. What is the promise if we put these commands into practice? What's the difference between the promise in v. 9 & the one in v.7?
- God of peace will be with you. This is similar to v. 5 "The Lord is near." Here, the emphasis is on God as peace & giver of peace. His presence can give us

peace and help us to live in peace with Him and others. When our hearts & minds are in the right place, we can experience God not just near us, not just give us peace, but be with us.

- There's a progression from having God's gift (peace), to God being near, to being with us.

13. Complete Chart in Google Drive to consider practical examples of these godly characters

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XQwI_HOHkOonvNrhbgqBT4nHtZl5EtJl4nHI8RDgICE/edit?usp=sharing

14. In what area(s) do you need to work on to stand firm? How can you practice resolving conflicts, regulation your emotions, or realigning your thoughts and behaviors?