

THE PRACTICE OF PERSONAL PEACE

PHILIPPIANS 3:17-4:9

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INTRODUCTION

- Personal Peace – a universal need for every individual
- Substitute Strategies for Obtaining Peace (Eastern Meditation, Substance Abuse, Vacations, etc...)
- Peace is a condition of personal contentment that God provides all His children who choose to live according to, and rest in, His will despite circumstances. Jesus promised it, modeled it and provided it through the Holy Spirit.

TEXT - Philippians 3:17-4:1 (ESV)

3:17 *“Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. 18 For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. 20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.*
4:1 *Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.*

TEN DIRECTIVES FOR MAINTAINING PERSONAL PEACE (3:17-4:9)

1. _____ the examples of godly people. (3:17,18)
 - An Ancient Axiom: “More is CAUGHT than TAUGHT!”
 - “The Company that we keep determines the Choices that we will make, the Content of our Character, the Courses that we Chart, and the Consequences we will face.” – AC
 - Who are the people that you look up to? Do they demonstrate godly character?
 - Who is following YOUR example? What kind of example are you leaving?
2. Remember the _____ of living for and against the cross of Christ. (3:19-21)
 - Enemies of the Cross will face coming destruction.
 - Citizens of Heaven will face salvation and the transformation of their bodies like that of Christ’s.
3. _____ in the Lord. (4:1)
 - Anxiety robs us of the stability we need to live at peace with God.
 - Standing firm means having a confident assurance that your thinking and behavior are in alignment with the will of God despite the uncertain circumstances around you.

Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. – Jesus, as recorded in John 14:27

Philippians 4:2 I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. **3** 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. **4** Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. **5** Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; **6** do not be anxious about anything, 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 your minds in Christ Jesus.

8 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. **9** What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.”

TEN DIRECTIVES FOR MAINTAINING PERSONAL PEACE (3:17-4:9) - Continued

4. Resolve _____ with Christian brethren. (4:2,3)
 - One of the consequences of interpersonal conflict is personal anxiety.
5. _____ in the Lord at all times. (4:4) – NOTE: This command is repeated for emphasis!
 - Even painful times can be endured if we understand that God is sovereign and loving.
6. Be _____ in all your relationships. (4:5)
 - “Reasonable” = clemency, gentleness. Synonymous with longsuffering, patience, self-restraint in provocation
7. _____ over all that brings anxiety. (4:6) - (See also 1 Peter 5:7 “Cast all your anxieties on Him...”)
 - Prayer (talking to God) and Supplication (asking, entreating God for wants and needs)
 - Is anyone among you suffering? *Then* he must pray. Is anyone cheerful? He is to sing praises. (James 5:13)
8. Express _____ to God for His personal blessings and answers to past prayers. (4:6)
 - This reminds us of the faithfulness of God in our past that we may trust Him with our future.
9. _____ on positive things. (4:8)
 - Anxiety focuses our thinking on the bad things that might occur.
10. Put into _____ the Christian teachings you’ve been taught. (4:9)
 - “But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.” (James 1:22)

ANALYZE YOUR ANXIETY (Ask yourself the following questions)

- What exactly am I feeling worried/anxious about?
- How much of my anxiety can I realistically do anything about?
- To what extent am I practically resting in the God’s sovereignty in my anxiety?
- Am I in good standing with the Lord right now? (Directives 1-3, 5, 7-10)
- Am I in good standing with others right now? (Directives 4,6) Am I humble and reasonable with others?
- Am I thanking God for His many personal blessings and past prayer answers in my life?
- Am I laying my burdens down at His feet in prayer and then leaving it all with Him to resolve?
- Am I living an applicational Christian life? Which biblical directives might I not be obeying?