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**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.

1. 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.
6. 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)

1. 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)

1. 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.

This is a trustworthy saying, and everyone should accept it: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners”—and I am the worst of them all. 1 Timothy 1:15 (NLT)

I urge you, then, be imitators of me. 1 Corinthians 4:16 (ESV)

And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit,… 1 Thessalonians 1:6 (ESV)

1. Follow the example of others who are mature in Christ.

…keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. Philippians 3:17 (ESV)

Pastors and elders are to be examples for the church to follow.

Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity,… Titus 2:7 (ESV)

Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. 1 Timothy 4:12 (ESV)

Follow the example of spiritually mature living people.

Follow the example of spiritually mature dead people.

1. Don’t follow ungodly people who don’t love Christ.
2. Don’t follow obvious enemies of the cross.

For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. Philippians 3:18 (ESV)

Entertainment

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)

Non-Christian Friends

One who is righteous is a guide to his neighbor, but the way of the wicked leads them astray. Proverbs 12:26 (ESV)

Do not be deceived: “Bad company ruins good morals.”   
1 Corinthians 15:33 (ESV)

1. Don’t follow subtle enemies of the cross.

Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. Philippians 3:19 (ESV)

How do recognize subtle enemies of the cross?

1. Their God is their stomach.

Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. Hebrews 13:4 (ESV)

2. Their glory is their shame.

3. They set their mind on earthly things.

For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.   
Matthew 16:27 (ESV)

1. Instead of living for earthly life, live for our eternal life.

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 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. Philippians 3:20–21 (ESV)

Our citizenship is in heaven

For this world is not our permanent home; we are looking forward to a home yet to come. Hebrews 13:14 (NLT)

In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. John 14:2–3 (ESV)

Jesus is coming back

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil. 2 Corinthians 5:10 (ESV)

Jesus will transform our bodies to be like His body by His awesome power.

…when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.   
1 John 3:2 (ESV)

…after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 1 Corinthians 15:24–26 (ESV)

Conclusion

Life Group Questions

1. What stuck out to you in the message? What is one thing you will apply?
2. How does the media in our culture try to lead us away from Jesus by giving us poor examples to follow? How should we combat that trend?
3. Are there people you need to cut out of your life because you are following the example of their life and they are leading you away from Jesus? How can you make that tough choice in a wise way?
4. Paul tells us we can recognized subtle enemies of the cross by their desire to live for immediate pleasure in life with no desire for self-denial to please Christ and be rewarded by Christ in the next life. Is that truth personally convicting? What is one choice you can make this week to live with more of an eternal instead of an earthly focus in your life?
5. Who are people you want to model your life after because you are impressed by the way they follow Jesus in their life? They can be living or dead?
6. Read 1 Corinthians 15:35-58. What do these verses teach us about eternal life and why we should long for it more than anything this world offers?