

## **GOING DEEPER STUDY NOTES** (For July 18, 2021)

For Community Groups or Personal Study

In our summer series studying Paul's letter to the Christians in Philippi (a Roman colony in the first century located at the north end of the Aegean Sea) we've arrived at chapter four. Paul has such genuine affection for this community of Christians, "whom I love and long for ...". Even as conflict arises Paul encourages the two women named to find common agreement in Jesus. Many have made it their life pursuit to find the "perfect" church. They land at one church for a while but when conflict or difficulty arises they move to another. Those who look for the perfect church will always be disappointed. God's intention for each of us, and for His Church, is that we grow in our love for Him, and our love for others. Going through conflict, working out disagreements, developing patience, learning more about grace and forgiveness, are ALL necessary ingredients for our growth and maturity. Commitment to each other is the beautiful soil that makes friendships, marriages, families, churches places where love grows.

Our common focus is Jesus ... our future is secure (our names mercifully are included in His book of life!) ... our life together real, genuine, challenging, difficult, wonderful, and joy-filled. We rejoice and give thanks. We are not anxious people. We begin trusting God more and more and as we do we discover amazing PEACE. His peace ... even in the midst of conflict.

### **PHILIPPIANS: JOY FILLED - IN CHRIST**

SERMON PASSAGE: PHILIPPIANS 4:1-9

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, my brothers (and sisters), whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

<sup>2</sup> I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. <sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. <sup>5</sup> Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; <sup>6</sup> do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to

God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

<sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me — practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you."

### **WHAT DOES IT SAY?**

1. What does this section of Paul's letter reveal about his feelings towards those who are a part of the Philippian church?
2. What does this passage tell us about conflict in the church and how we should address conflict when it is present?
3. What does Paul encourage us to focus on, and to think about?

### **WHAT DOES IT MEAN?**

4. How does a person experience the peace of God? (Read also Romans 5:1-5)
5. What does Paul mean when he writes, "Do not be anxious about anything"? What is the remedy for anxiousness?
6. Read verse 8, slowly ...? How are Paul's words here different from what most of us regularly fill our minds and hearts with?

### **WHAT IS GOD SAYING TO YOU?**

7. When have you experienced the most growth personally and spiritually? (Has it been when all is well, or has it been when you are in the middle of hardship, conflict, difficult and pain?) Why is that?
8. How do you respond to conflict with friends, in your marriage (if you're married), at your church? Is your response different from how God wants you to respond? Are you currently in conflict with anyone? If yes, what should you do?
9. What do you usually fill your mind with? How can you focus your mind on what is true, honorable, just, pure, and lovely?

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

Spend time in silence, praying (even if just for a moment or two). Prayer is simply a conversation with God. Be honest. If you don't know how or what to pray admit that and ask God to help you pray.

Ask God to help you grow in your love for Him, and your love for others. Ask God for help you thank Him throughout your day. Ask God for His peace. God loves us (you) and He WILL help us (you).