

4-23-16
Session 2

Philippians Notes

Phil 2:5-8

What a challenge! It helps to find a first step, or gateway, or portal - **to the mind, ways and heart of Christ** – clearly laid out in **Phil 4:8**.

Phil. 4:8 follows on the heels of several significant things at the beginning of chapter 4.

Verse one really flows with the end of chapter 3. Start with verse 2 – Euodia and Syntyche are in some form of major disagreement – it's been brought to Paul's attention in Rome just a couple of years before he died and is serious enough to be mentioned in a letter to be read publicly.

Paul first reminds us here to rejoice in the Lord always, (a command, not a suggestion), then to be gentle, not be anxious about anything but in all things, take our concerns to Him in prayer and His peace will guard our hearts. These thoughts and the disagreement between Euodia and Syntyche lead us to v. 8:

Whatever is:

True - the nature of Christ Himself. From John 4:23, 24 we worship in spirit and in truth. God is spirit, but in John's gospel, truth is associated with Christ. So our worship of the Father is through Christ, yes, but since they are one, it's also of Christ and the Holy Spirit. John uses the word "truth" 25 times in his gospel, and always links it with Christ who is the truth.

Examples: John 14:6, I am the way, the truth...

John 1:17, Law given through Moses, grace and truth through Christ.

John 8:32, If you hold to My teaching, you are really My disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

Honorable, inspires awe/worthy of respect, noble

Right, the holy nature of God

Pure, moral purity

Lovely, what's pleasing and beautiful within moral bounds

Good Repute, admirable, acclaimed, celebrated, esteemed

Excellence, outstanding or extremely good

Praiseworthy, commendable, laudable, meritorious, exemplar

Let your mind dwell on these things. What we dwell and reflect upon is what we become. And then Paul says to put it into practice.

First, they all describe Jesus.

Secondly, there are aspects of these in everyone, and we must choose to dwell on their characteristics which most reflect the list of 8 above - rather than on those qualities that are not yet transformed.

Phil. 4:8 is a gateway to Christ:

To dwell on these areas (as opposed to their opposites: cynicism, skepticism, untruth, deficiencies) takes us to focusing **(1)** on Christ, His heart, His values (poor in spirit, pure in heart), His humility and **(2)** focusing on these aspects in our fellow man

Paul gave us a road map to lead us in reflection – to take us to the Savior. By dwelling on these things, our ambitions, greed, insecurities will fade to black.

To think on what is true, right and pure – is a reminder to refocus on the great discourses of Christ where he lays out and teaches through a variety of means – His values, His character, His desires for me to cease being the person I've always been but to become transformed in His likeness.

Because of that, we should regularly go back to the words of Christ Himself in the five great discourses of Matthew (chapters 5-7 – Sermon on the Mount, chapter 10, chapter 13, chapter 18, chapters 24,25) followed by John chapters 14-17. All of these define THE WAYS AND MIND OF CHRIST - how a follower of Christ is to be transformed from salvation to full sanctification when we see Him face to face. They speak to the inner man, the thoughts and intentions of the heart, and whether Christ is Lord – or an accoutrement.

One hope of the gospel is that we are not doomed to be who we have always been.

From Phil 4:8, then move back to Phil 2:5-8, plus verses 12 and 13.

Then Phil 3:7-15, especially 15 – a definition of maturity related to pressing on, dying to self, a long journey in the same direction of becoming more and more Christlike – without giving ourselves passes to be roaming aimlessly in the halls when class is in session – and it is in session until glory.

Heb. 5:14 defines maturity as “those who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.”

St. Augustine: “The Bible was composed in such a way that as beginners mature, its meaning grows with them.”

John Piper: There is nothing I want more than You,
And there is nothing I want that does not show me more of You.

Dallas Willard: God's intention is that His people would be distinguishable by His presence with them.
If we're not distinguishable, then shut-up and give everyone a break.

Eugene Peterson: The main difference between Christians and others is that we take God seriously and they do not. We really believe that He is the central reality of all existence. We really do pay attention to what He is and what He does. We really do order our lives in response to that reality and not to some other.

Dallas Willard: The general human failing is to want what is right and important, but at the same time not to commit to the kind of life that will produce the action we know to be right and the condition we want to enjoy. This is the feature of human character that explains why the road to hell is paved with good intentions. We intend what is right, but we avoid the life that would make it a reality.

Ruth Graham's Tombstone reads: "End of Construction. Thank you for your Patience."

When one really flows with the end of chapter 3. Start with verse 7. The do and by which are becoming part of this - this ground - it's a bit brought to Paul's attention in Rome just a couple of years later. Paul and is serious to write or mentioned in a letter to be read publicly.

Paul's statement is here to rejoice in the Lord always. (A continued, not a suggestion). One who would not be anxious about anything but in all things, take out concerns in prayer and let the Lord's peace guard our hearts. There's a tension and the disagreement between the do and by which are becoming part of this.

Remember to...

True - the nature of Christ Himself. From John 4:23, 24 we worship in spirit and in truth. God is spirit and in John's gospel, truth is associated with Christ. In our worship of the Father, we worship Christ. We worship the Father and the Holy Spirit. John uses the word "truth" to describe the Spirit, and so we unite it with Christ - he is the truth.
Example: John 14:6, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

John 1:17, Law given through Moses, grace and truth through Christ.

John 8:31, If you abide in My teaching, you are really My disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

Reverence, inspires awe/worthy of respect, noble

Right, the holy, abiding of God

Pure, unadorned

Lovely, what pleasing and beautiful where moral bounds

Good Reputation, desirable, venerated, celebrated, esteemed

Excellent, excellence or extremely good

Prize, worthy, commendable, laudable, meritorious, precious

Let your mind dwell on these things. What we dwell and reflect upon is what we become. Let them guide us in our daily practice.

Let's dwell on these things

Secondly, there are aspects of these in deservence, and we must choose to dwell on their characterisation. We should reflect the light of whose, rather than on these qualities that are not your own ones.