

GOD

Philippians Chapter 4: an overview

Philippians is an epistle of reproof, written by the Apostle Paul to people who lost touch of the great revelation to the Church about our **standing** as members of a family in the Body of Christ and how we are to **function together as a household**. **Chapter 4** is a great summation of how we are to live. Like Paul's **other** epistles, we can insert **our** names: the great truths apply to **us**, as well. We'll begin in **verse 1**:

4:1 **Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.**

Verse 1 starts with "**Therefore**" – this refers us back to what is covered in **Chapter 3, verses 20 and 21**, which tell us that now that we are **born-again**, our **citizenship** (mistranslated "conversation") is **in heaven**, and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ will be **coming back** to get us, and we will be given **perfect bodies** like he has, part of our **Hope** for the Return of Christ and eternal life that we will enjoy.

Because of this great truth ("**Therefore**"), **verse 1** of **Chapter 4** tells **us**, God's "dearly beloved," that we should "**stand fast in the Lord**." We as members of the household are to **stand strong together**, in fellowship with God **and** with each other.

We'll go to **verse 4**:

4:4 **Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.**

If we **know** what we have in Christ, made available through the accomplishments of Jesus Christ, we can **rejoice**.

4:5 **Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.**

This is a very **poor translation**. "**Known**" is from the word for "**to know by experience**," and applies to **us**, not to what other people "know." The verse more accurately reads: "**Learn by experience forbearance toward all men**." As we renew our minds and practice walking on the Word of God, we will be able to be more peaceful as we have more patience and endurance ("forbearance") toward all. We **can** do this because we have **Christ** ("the Lord") **in us** ("at hand") – that **gift of holy spirit within**. **Because** we have Christ in us, we can accomplish what it says in the **next verse**:

4:6 **Be careful ("anxious" in the text) for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.**

We are **not** to have **anxiety** about **anything**: don't be anxious about **any** situation, event, or action that comes along. **Instead** of being anxious, we are to **go to God in prayer**. "**Supplication**" is "**specific, earnest request**" – get **specific** and **believe** when we **pray**. And,

we are to pray “**with thanksgiving**” – be **thankful** to God, thanking Him that He hears your prayer and has already worked out the solution. The word “**requests**” is the word “**demands**” – it’s like going to a bank to cash a check, knowing that the money is in the account of the one who wrote the check, and “demanding” payment. **God’s promises** are like the check: He never backs down on His promises, so we can be **confident** that as we “demand” (like asking for the amount of money indicated on the check) He will always come through. Notice also the word is **not** “**begging**.” When we pray to God, we **never** beg. We, His children, simply **thank** Him for fulfilling His promises to take care of us.

As we do this, going to God in prayer rather than being anxious, we will have **peace**:

4:7 **And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts (*the seat of your personal life*) and minds (thoughts) through (in) Christ Jesus.**

This **peace** we will have, that is so great we can’t even understand or comprehend it, is the **only** true peace that is available in this time we live in. There will never be “world peace” or any other kind of peace that will endure (it says that elsewhere in the Word), **but** we born again believers can experience **true peace** as we **go to God in prayer**.

4:8 **Finally, brethren, whatsoever things *are* true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.**

This verse lists **eight things** that God wants us to **think**, or **dwell on**: things that are **true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous, and praiseworthy**. Spiritually, **eight** is the number for **new beginnings**. As we dwell on these eight things, we can have a new beginning with peace in the face of any unrest we might face. **All eight** of these things actually refer to **God’s Word**, which has all of these characteristics. We are to **keep God’s Word in our minds**.

4:9 **Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and (then) the God of peace (figure of speech for “the God who gives peace”) will be with you.**

We are to “be **doers** of the Word, and not hearers only.” As we **dwell on God’s Word** and **renew our minds** according to it and **live accordingly**, God, the One who gives true peace, can bless us. He’s always with us, but if we’re out of fellowship He can’t bless us with the perfect peace He’s made available.

Rather than going through all the remaining verses of this chapter, here are just **a couple** ones that you’ll be blessed to keep in mind that will help you get through any situation:

4:13 **I can do all things through Christ which (who) strengtheneth me.**

The word “**can**” implies not just our **ability** but also our **permission** and **responsibility**.

The word “**all**” refers to all things God promises in His Word that we can do (and there’s a **lot**). **Literally**, what this verse says is: “**I am ready for anything, and equal to anything, through him who infuses inner strength unto me.**” That’s a great promise that we can keep in mind!

The **final** verse we’ll look at is **verse 19**, another great verse that will help you to be peaceful and to trust God:

4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

In the **context**, Paul was writing about the great **principle** of **giving and receiving**: as we **give** (whether it’s of our money, material things, time, or talent), we can expect to **receive** back. And as we operate this principle, God shall absolutely **supply** all our **needs** (it **doesn’t** say “**greeds**,” though). **And**, He can do this “according to **his riches in glory** by (because of the accomplishments of) Christ Jesus.” “**His riches in glory**” is a figure of speech for “**his glorious riches**,” emphasizing that God’s riches are **glorious**. **Because** of His extremely glorious riches, God, who created the heavens and the earth, is **able** to (and **will** as we apply the principle) **supply all of our needs**. We **don’t** ever need to be **lacking** in **anything**. No matter what comes along, **God will take care of us** as we continue to go to His Word and endeavor to live it.

- Dr. Rick Batt