

Study of Philippians – Philippians 4:1-23
Bellevue Church of Christ – Winter 2011 / 2012

General exhortation that concludes the charge given in 3:17-21

Acts 16:13-15
Phil 2:1-11

Finding Contentment Through the Power of Jesus Christ (4-13)

Power through...

- a) **Praise** Toward God (4)
- b) **Preference** for the Needs of Others (5)
- c) **Prayer** with Thanksgiving (6,7)
- d) **Practice** of God's Word (8,9)

How?

Book of Life - Rev 3:5; 17:8; 20:12,15; 21:27; 22:19; cf. Luke 10:20; Heb 12:23

¹ **Therefore**, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, **stand firm thus in the Lord**, my beloved.

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.

¹⁰ I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity.

¹¹ Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be **content**.

¹² I know how to be **brought low**, and I know how to **abound**. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.

¹³ I can do all things through **him** who **strengthens me**.

Reasonableness (5)

-ἐπιεικῆς / epieikēs

*Carries with it the idea of a king or someone in authority who gives up their rights for the good of others.

Praise (4)

*Eph 2:4-7
*Rom 2:1-2
*Isa 40:28-31
*II Chron 14:9-11
*Matt 6:9

Preference (5)

*Phil 2:1-4
*Matt 22:34-40
*James 2:8

Prayer (6,7)

*Acts 16:25
*Rom 8:28
*I Sam 1:11

Practice (8,9)

*Spend time filling your minds with the Word of God, then put these things into practice.
*Jam 1:19-27
*Phil 3:17

The world says that happiness and contentment are somewhere other than where we are right now...
*Ecc 2:1-11
*II Cor 11:24-25

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¹⁴ Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble.

¹⁵ And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into *partnership with me* in giving and receiving, except you only.

¹⁶ Even in **Thessalonica** you sent me help for my needs once and again.

¹⁷ Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that *increases to your credit*.

¹⁸ I have received *full payment*, and more. I am well supplied, having received from **Epaphroditus** the gifts you sent, a **fragrant offering**, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God.

¹⁹ And my God will supply *every need* of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

²⁰ To our God and Father be glory forever and ever.

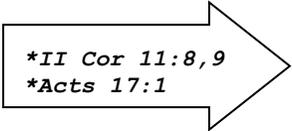
Amen.

²¹ Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you.

²² All the saints greet you, especially those of

Caesar's household.

²³ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.



*II Cor 11:8,9
*Acts 17:1

Note Paul's Use of Business Terminology:

*Partnership with me (15)

*Increases to your credit (17)

*Full payment (18)

Epaphroditus

*Phil 2:25-30

Fragrant Offering

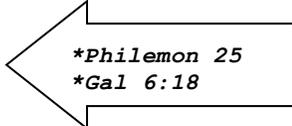
*Ephesians 5:2

*Lev 1:9,13,17; 2:12

Need

*Implies that the Philippians gave sacrificially to the point of real need

*II Cor 9:6-11



*Philemon 25

*Gal 6:18

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Conclusion to Charge

Philippians 3:17-21 (ESV)

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.

Women at Philippi / Unity

Acts 16:13-15 (ESV)

¹³ And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to the riverside, where we supposed there was a place of prayer, and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together. ¹⁴ One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. ¹⁵ And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.” And she prevailed upon us.

Philippians 2:1-11 (ESV)

¹ So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ² complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Book of Life

Revelation 3:5 (ESV)

⁵ The one who conquers will be clothed thus in white garments, and I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels.

Revelation 17:8 (ESV)

⁸ The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to rise from the bottomless pit and go to destruction. And the dwellers on earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world will marvel to see the beast, because it was and is not and is to come.

Revelation 20:12 (ESV)

¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done.

Revelation 20:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 21:27 (ESV)

²⁷ But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

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Revelation 22:19 (ESV)

¹⁹ and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

Luke 10:20 (ESV)

²⁰ Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

Hebrews 12:23 (ESV)

²³ and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect,

Contentment is Somewhere Other Than Where We Are Right Now

Illustration: “Lazy” Fisherman

Philip Parham tells the story of a rich industrialist who was disturbed to find a fisherman sitting lazily beside his boat. “Why aren’t you out there fishing?” he asked.

“Because I’ve caught enough fish for today,” said the fisherman.

“Why don’t you catch more fish than you need?” the rich man asked.

“What would I do with them?”

“You could earn more money,” came the impatient reply, “and buy a better boat so you could go deeper and catch more fish. You could purchase nylon nets, catch even more fish, and make more money. Soon you’d have a fleet of boats and be rich like me.”

The fisherman asked, “Then what would I do?”

“You could sit down and enjoy life,” said the industrialist.

“What do you think I’m doing now?” the fisherman replied as he looked placidly out to sea.

Ecclesiastes 2:1-11 (ESV)

¹I said in my heart, “Come now, I will test you with pleasure; enjoy yourself.” But behold, this also was vanity. ²I said of laughter, “It is mad,” and of pleasure, “What use is it?” ³I searched with my heart how to cheer my body with wine--my heart still guiding me with wisdom--and how to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was good for the children of man to do under heaven during the few days of their life. ⁴I made great works. I built houses and planted vineyards for myself. ⁵I made myself gardens and parks, and planted in them all kinds of fruit trees. ⁶I made myself pools from which to water the forest of growing trees. ⁷I bought male and female slaves, and had slaves who were born in my house. I had also great possessions of herds and flocks, more than any who had been before me in Jerusalem. ⁸I also gathered for myself silver and gold and the treasure of kings and provinces. I got singers, both men and women, and many concubines, the delight of the children of man.

⁹So I became great and surpassed all who were before me in Jerusalem. Also my wisdom remained with me. ¹⁰And whatever my eyes desired I did not keep from them. I kept my heart from no pleasure, for my heart found pleasure in all my toil, and this was my reward for all my toil. ¹¹Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun.

When we play the “I’ll be happy when...” game, it is as though we are telling God that we don’t trust him to bring us contentment. We are demonstrating our dependence on ourselves.

Philippians 4:10-13 (ESV)

¹⁰I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. ¹¹Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. ¹²I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. ¹³I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

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II Corinthians 11:24-25 (ESV)

²⁴Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. ²⁵Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea

Philippians 4:4-9 (main text)

I. Power Through Praise Toward God

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

Ephesians 2:4-7

⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ--by grace you have been saved-- ⁶and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Romans 5:1-2

¹Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ²Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

God is bigger than anything we are going to face in this life...

Isaiah 40:28-31

²⁸Have you not known? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. ²⁹He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. ³⁰Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; ³¹but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

How can we cultivate this feeling in our lives?

- Study of God's Word
- Praising God in Prayer

II Chronicles 14:9-11

⁹Zerah the Ethiopian came out against them with an army of a million men and 300 chariots, and came as far as Mareshah. ¹⁰And Asa went out to meet him, and they drew up their lines of battle in the Valley of Zephathah at Mareshah. ¹¹And Asa cried to the LORD his God, "**O LORD, there is none like you to help, between the mighty and the weak.** Help us, O LORD our God, for we rely on you, and in your name we have come against this multitude. O LORD, you are our God; let not man prevail against you."

Matthew 6:9

Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

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II. Power Through Preference For the Needs of Others

⁵Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand;

“**reasonableness**” = ἐπιεικῆς - epieikēs - *ep-ee-i-kace'* - appropriate, that is, (by implication) *mild*:—gentle, moderation, patient.

- Carries with it the idea of a king or someone in authority who gives up their rights for the good of others.
- *Other Translations - NIV: “Gentleness”, KJV: “Moderation”, ASV: “Forbearance”*

Giving way to the rights and wishes of others in this life. It does not mean a compromise in doctrine. It does mean that you have a willingness to take the back seat in favor of other people.

If the focus of our lives is on ourselves, then when people hurt us, slight us, cross us, etc, there will be a desire to retaliate and get vengeance. When we are focused on those around us, we will be less likely to hurt by what other people do. What they say won't sting us so bad. How they act can be passed over more easily.

When we adopt the mentality of self-love that is all around us, we will always look at the things people do and say as a personal attack. It will cause us to wear our feelings on our sleeves and to be more easily hurt by the words and actions of others. This will cause us problems in the mind as we dwell on what was done or what was said. If we can learn to accept others just as they are and overlook how they act and what they do, it will protect the mind from dwelling in negative areas. It will build a wall of protection around the mind that others cannot penetrate!

Philippians 2:1-4

¹So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ²complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Matthew 22:34-40

³⁴But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. ³⁵And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. ³⁶"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" ³⁷And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

Romans 13:9

⁹The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

James 2:8

⁸If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well.

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III. Power Through Prayer with Thanksgiving

⁶do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Acts 16:25

²⁵About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them,

Romans 8:28

²⁸And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

I Samuel 1:11

¹¹And she vowed a vow and said, "O LORD of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your servant and remember me and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a son, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall touch his head."

IV. Power Through Practice of God's Word

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

Everything that Paul tells his readers to think about is a characteristic of God. He is saying that we should fill our minds with the things of God.

Practical application: Spend our time filling our minds with the Word of God, then put these things into practice. If our focus is on God, how can our focus be on the things of this world?

James 1:19-27 (ESV)

¹⁹Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; ²⁰for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. ²¹Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. ²²But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. ²⁴For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. ²⁵But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing. ²⁶If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless. ²⁷Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.

Philippians 3:17 (ESV)

¹⁷Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.

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Partnership

2 Corinthians 11:8-9 (ESV)

⁸ I robbed other churches by accepting support from them in order to serve you. ⁹ And when I was with you and was in need, I did not burden anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied my need. So I refrained and will refrain from burdening you in any way.

Acts 17:1 (ESV)

¹ Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews.

Epaphroditus

Philippians 2:25-30 (ESV)

²⁵ I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need, ²⁶ for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. ²⁷ Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. ²⁸ I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. ²⁹ So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, ³⁰ for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.

Fragrant Offering

Ephesians 5:2 (ESV)

² And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Leviticus 1:9 (ESV)

⁹ but its entrails and its legs he shall wash with water. And the priest shall burn all of it on the altar, as a burnt offering, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the Lord.

Leviticus 1:12-13 (ESV)

¹² And he shall cut it into pieces, with its head and its fat, and the priest shall arrange them on the wood that is on the fire on the altar, ¹³ but the entrails and the legs he shall wash with water. And the priest shall offer all of it and burn it on the altar; it is a burnt offering, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the Lord.

Leviticus 1:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ He shall tear it open by its wings, but shall not sever it completely. And the priest shall burn it on the altar, on the wood that is on the fire. It is a burnt offering, a food offering with a pleasing aroma to the Lord.

Leviticus 2:12 (ESV)

¹² As an offering of firstfruits you may bring them to the Lord, but they shall not be offered on the altar for a pleasing aroma.

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Giving to the Point of Need

2 Corinthians 9:6-11 (ESV)

⁶ The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷ Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. ⁹ As it is written, “He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.” ¹⁰ He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹ You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.

Conclusion

Philemon 1:25 (ESV)

²⁵ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Galatians 6:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brothers. Amen.