

Praying according to Philippians 4

1. Read the entire book of Philippians to get the context of Chapter 4
2. Name the one command in verse 4:1.ⁱ Where you are to focus as you obey this command?ⁱⁱ What word in 4:1 helps you to know what to do with that phrase?ⁱⁱⁱ
3. What is the cultural environment in Philippi at the time of Paul's writing?^{iv} (see Phil. 1:7; 1:27-30; 3:2; 3:18-19)
4. According to verse 4, what is the main heart-attitude Paul commands for the reader?^v How is it possible to have this attitude with such difficulty and suffering?^{vi}
5. According to verse 5, how should you respond to those around you, especially your closest neighbors?^{vii} What would this attribute look like in your daily life? Give some specific examples.
6. Why are we to obey verse 5?^{viii} (See the following verses to see how Paul comments about conflict in Philippians p 1:27; 2:2; 2:14,21; 3:2,18-19; 4:2,5)
7. According to verse 6, from what are we commanded to abstain?^{ix} (to fail to obey in this area is a sin. How do you typically fail in this? What will you do to put this off?)
8. Notice the four aspects that vs. 6 gives the “put-on” for the “put-off” of worry:
 - a. “Prayer” - worship and adoration, right praying begins with the attitude of the heart
 - b. “Supplication”^x – is an acknowledgement and expression of desperate need
 - c. “Requests” – refers to making specific, detailed “lists” of needs
 - d. “with thanksgiving” – refers to having an attitude of accepting God’s responses to your prayers with a thankful attitude, knowing that God only gives good gifts to His children.
9. According to verse 7, what is the first promise of biblical prayers?^{xi}
10. According to verse 8, upon what should your mind be focused, even when you are not praying? (see table; take some time and fill in as many specific items as you can for each phrase as it pertains to your current situation)
11. According to verse 9, what are you supposed to do after you are done praying?^{xii}
12. According to verse 9, what is the second promise of right praying?^{xiii}
13. According to verse 11, how will you learn to live as a result of living out the commands of the above principles?^{xiv}
14. According to verses 13 & 19, what is your confidence?^{xv}

Application:

- a. Verse six commands us to not worry. Make a list of your most common worries/fears.
 - i. Take your list and commit each item to prayer, asking God to help you release them to His care. (1 Peter 5:7)
 - ii. Commit to leaving them “at the foot of the Cross”, knowing that He is in complete control over your life-circumstances. (Matthew 6:25-34)
 - iii. Date your list; check it weekly to see how God answers your prayers.
- b. Make a list of at least 5 reasons for you to rejoice (verse 4; also see Ja. 1:2-5)
- c. Make a list of at least 5 reasons for which you will choose to be thankful. (this may overlap with the list above) Make sure that you include things that you don’t necessarily rejoice in, such as a trial; physical illness, financial problems, etc. (one can be thankful for hardships because they can bring godly results in our lives, see James 1:2-5)
- d. Look at the following table entitled “Philippians 4:8 Think list”
 - i. Take time to review each phrase
 - ii. List as many subjects that apply to each specific phrase
 - iii. Review this at the beginning of each day and periodically throughout the day. This will help you establish thinking patterns that please God as you seek to fulfill the command take *every thought captive to the obedience of Christ* (2 Cor. 10:4-5). This will also help you *put off* sinful thought-patterns of the past. (Eph.4:17-22)

- e. Practice *DOING*, Phil. 4:9 commands action. *Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do:*
- f. Meditate and rejoice in four-fold promise of obedience
 - i. *the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* (vs.7)
 - ii. *and the God of peace shall be with you.* (vs.9)
 - iii. *The strength to do all that God asks of you: I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.* (vs.13)
 - iv. God will *meet all your need* But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. (vs. 19)
- g. Make it a point to discuss your progress with an accountability partner periodically

Philippians 4:8 Think list	
Whatever is true (as opposed to false; anything from God's Word)	Whatever is honorable (worthy of respect or honor)
Whatever is just (righteous; pleasing to God; worthy of God's approval)	Whatever is pure (morally clean)
Whatever is lovely (acceptable; pleasing)	Whatever is commendable (something that God would approve of)
if there is any excellence	anything worthy of praise

See next page for an example of how you might begin to fill this out

Phil. 4:8 Finally, brothers,

Whatever is true	Jn. 14:6 I am the way, the TRUTH and the life... The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever. (Psalm 119:160ESV)
whatever is honorable,	Tit. 1:2 In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;
whatever is just,	Just and right is he, Deut. 32:4
whatever is pure,	The commandment of the LORD is pure Ps.19:8 - today, whenever I sense my heart slipping into worry, anxiety or fear, I will <i>CHOOSE</i> to re-direct my mind to Scripture!
whatever is lovely,	He is altogether lovely S.S. whenever I sense my heart slipping into worry, anxiety or fear, I will <i>CHOOSE</i> to re-direct my mind to thoughts about King Jesus. Jesus' love for me is the same as God's love for Jesus. (Jn.15:9) God's love for me is the same as His love for Jesus. (Jn.17:23)
whatever is commendable,	Mt. 19:17 ... there is none good but one, that is, God: When I suffer for the sake of Christ, even when it is undeserved, this is commendable before God. (1Pet. 2:18-25) I will trust God when I have to suffer, knowing that He knows and is watching.
if there is any excellence,	1 Pet. 2:9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises [same Greek word as 'virtue'] of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:
if there is anything worthy of praise,	Rev. 4:11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.
think about these things.	2 Cor. 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; Col. 3:2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

The following is a table of Paul's heart-responses in his trials (Note: he wrote the Book of Philippians during his fourth year in prison)

Philippians	
1	Comfort
1	Confidence
2	Confident
1	Consolation
1	Expectation
1	Gladness
2	Hope

1	In nothing be terrified
6	Joy
3	Peace
10	Rejoice
1	Rejoiced
1	Rejoicing
1	Thank
1	Thanksgiving
2	Trust
35	Total

Compiled by Kent Kloter 4/21/2008; 8/8/2011; 2/7/2013

ⁱ Stand fast

ⁱⁱ “in the Lord”

ⁱⁱⁱ “therefore” take time to look at all the references in Chapter 3 that expand on what “in the Lord” means, especially vv 3, 7,8,9,10,11,12,14,20

^{iv} Paul’s imprisonment 1:7; Suffering, opposition (Phil. 1:27-30), Roman occupation-declared a Roman colony in 42 B.C.; Erroneous teachers (phil. 3:2); enemies of the Cross (Phil. 3:18-19)

^v Rejoicing. According to Strong’s, this means to be glad, to rejoice exceedingly, to be well, to thrive.

<http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/kjv/choiro.html>

^{vi} Review the following ways Paul describes his focus and goals and see if it’s not obvious to you what “in the LORD” meant to him and how he could command this church to “rejoice”. The rejoicing is “in the LORD” (and the purposes of the LORD and NOT on the circumstances).

Paul’s Pastoral goals in Philippians

1. Partnership in the gospel 1:5
2. Love in God’s people will abound 1:9
3. God’s people would be discerning 1:10
4. God’s people would be pure and blameless 1:10
5. God’s people would be filled with the Fruit of righteousness 1:11
6. That Christ will be honored 1:20
7. The that lives of God’s people would be worthy of the Gospel of Christ 1:27
the gospel of Christ 1:27
8. *for the sake of Christ 1:29; 3:7*
9. *to be with Christ...To die is gain 1:21*
10. the exaltation of Christ 2:11
11. the interests of Christ 2:21
12. the work of Christ 2:30
13. worship of Christ 3:3
14. glorying in Christ 3:3
15. knowing Christ Jesus my Lord 3:8
16. to be found in Christ & his righteousness 3:8-10
17. resurrected with Christ 3:8-10
18. growing to be more like Christ press on to make it my own 3:12; 4:9
19. the prize of Christ 3:14
20. to be transformed [glorified] like Christ. 3:20
21. God’s people would stand firm thus in the Lord 4:1
22. God’s people would Rejoice in the Lord always 4:4
23. God’s people would benefit from bearing fruit 4:17

^{vii} Reasonableness means “gentle, forbearing spirit”

^{viii} The LORD will soon return, you don’t want to be caught fussing over petty differences when He comes back.

^{ix} Anxiety, fear, worry. The word “μεριμνάω” (Strong’s 3309) means:

1. to be anxious
 - a. to be troubled with cares
2. to care for, look out for (a thing)
 - a. to seek to promote one’s interests
 - b. caring or providing for

<http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/kjv/merimnao.html>

don’t miss the point that worry is a sin

- ^x
- 1) need, indigence, want, privation, penury
 - 2) a seeking, asking, entreating, entreaty to God or to man

<http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/kjv/deesis.html>

^{xii} the protection of the **peace of God** that surrounds (literally “guards” like a military garrison) your heart and mind

^{xiii} Practice biblical obedience in everything

^{xiv} The personal presence of the **God of peace**

^{xv} Choosing contentment

^{xvi} 1) I have God’s strength to do all He asks me to do. 2) God promises to supply (out of His boundless storehouses) everything I need.