

The Book of Philippians
“One Hundred Percent”
Philippians 4:4-7

Introduction

1. Paul dealt with issues of antinomianism (3:18, 19), the incredible privileges for the genuine believer (3:20, 21) and the problems in the Philippian Assembly (4:1-3). These matters concern the immediate context.

2. Now the Spirit directs the apostle to address some very important concepts relating to positive Christian life. It is clear that the Bible presses us to a full commitment to the Lord.

3. Regretfully, there are different ways to view Christian living. Some see their relationship with Christ as being present. Others see Him as prominent and a few view Christ as pre-eminent (Col. 1:18). Obviously, Scripture teaches the latter -- a converted believer as one who is 100 percent for Christ. Consequently, the text sets forth three specifics of the ideal Christian life.

1. UNFAILING JOY

a. Command

The verb “rejoice ()” is found 11 times in the four chapters of Philippians and now “joy” is five times. Here is a divine imperative just like comfort or strengthen. The plural means it is common to all Christians (cf. 3:1).

b. Context

There is really only one way to rejoice -- “in the Lord.” This means He Himself is the source of it all. To rejoice one must be in living fellowship with Him. It had to be this way with Paul because of his own situation:

1) His fetters. At this very moment he was chained to a Roman soldier. He was a prisoner, yet “in the Lord” he could exhort to rejoice!

2) His future. Paul was awaiting trial and he did not know how things would go (2:23). What a context!

c. Constant

The particle “always” connotes reality and not just some fancy rhetoric. This is what Paul did at midnight (Acts 16:25). Our Lord did the same the night before His betrayal (John 15:11).

d. Consistent

The phrase “again I say rejoice” makes it clear that Paul has not misspoken. He means what he has said: “rejoice!” Note that the verb is future, hence, no matter what, “I will say, rejoice.”

2. UNENDING MODERATION

a. Something Commanded

The aorist passive imperative verb is clear (). This is no option. It is a must. Like the verb “rejoice,” this is patently a divine command -- do it!

b. Something Commended

The noun “moderation” () has a definite article and a personal pronoun. This is a quality which the Philippians are urged to demonstrate. The term is variously translated as gentleness, reasonableness, having no self-seeking or contention. This contrasts with the problem above (4:1-3). The appeal is that this virtue be known to “all men.” Any sort of secrecy is rejected.

c. Something Compelled

That the Lord is near () may be spatial i.e. the Lord is right here (Ro. 10:8; Eph. 2:13, 17) or eschatological i.e. He is returning (Ro. 13, 11; James 5:9). Whichever is the correct understanding, the fact is our Lord should make the difference in how we live!

3. UNRUFFLED PEACE

a. Steps to it

1) Careful for nothing

“Be careful for nothing” () is really “in nothing be anxious.” Distracting care must be absent. It harasses the soul.

2) Prayerful for everything

Contrary to the all-inclusive negative “in nothing” there must be the all-inclusive positive “in everything” ().

a) Prayer ()

Always sacred and prayer to God -- right to His face.

b) Supplication ()

Has no limitation to sacred uses. Concerns petitions for desired benefits.

Note: The repetition of the definite article before the above two nouns gives a certain emphasis.

c) Requests ()

These are things asked for. The petitions themselves are in view (cf. Lk 13:24 for singular; 1 John 5:15 for same plural).

Note: The verb “be known” () is a present passive imperative. It is ours to keep God up to date. Not as if He needs information, but He delights to have that expression of our total confidence in Him. He will reconcile our “making known” with His sovereign infinity. Mark the prepositional phrase “unto God” ().

3) Thankful for any thing

Thanksgiving ()

is the temper and attitude expressed should always be with this. This is an essential element.

b. Supply of it

1) Divine

This comes as a legacy from the Lord (Jn 14:27) and is the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22).

2) Total

The participle “passes” is literally “the surpassing thing.” In this instance it surpasses the “understanding” or mind, hence it comprehends all thinking powers (cf. Eph. 3:20).

3) Secure

The verb “guard” is a military term () to keep a garrison (2 Cor. 11:32) and is used of a believers security (1 Pet. 1:5).

4) Personal

The hearts () or the seat of feeling and the minds () or the mental actions of the heart are cared for.

5) Provided

The One in whom all is available is Christ Jesus. Only in communion with Him can the peace be enjoyed.

Note: Scripture, therefore, has the answer for what everyone needs -- peace!

Conclusion

Salvation is 100% the work of God. Once saved -- really saved -- we are expected to give the Lord 100% of ourselves. Is He worthy of that sort of commitment? A thousand times YES! Amen.