

# *Striving Together: Paul's Epistle to the Philippians*

## **Lesson 10: Philippians 4:2-9**

### *Work for Unity* (vv. 2-3)

- “plead” = beseech, beg, implore (*parakaleō* – call alongside)
- Euodia and Syntyche may have been among the first church members
  - Paul calls them by name, which is rare – denotes love(?)
  - This is probably more than just a personal disagreement
- “true companion” may be a name (Syzygos) or description (yokefellow)
  - Some have postulated this as another worker, perhaps Luke
- No other information on Clement or the others
  - Described as having their name in the Book of Life – believers
  - This much attention points to a leadership crisis

*When does a difference of opinion become sinful?*

### *Facing Life Properly* (vv. 4-7) – overarching principles

- Rejoice (v. 4) – a product of God's grace (same Greek word group)
  - Rejoicing does not ignore our circumstances – Paul is in prison
  - “always” – no situation is out of God's control or view
  - In case you didn't get it, Paul repeats himself
- Be gentle (v. 5)
  - Not same as meekness; this means fair, equitable, patient, yielding
  - This is an “others first” attitude – remember 2:3-4
  - “The Lord is at hand” – now, and in the future

*Why do you think this verse is included here?*

- Replace anxiety with prayer (vv. 6-7)
  - “anxious” = worried, consumed with cares, distracted
  - The correct formula is 0% worry, 100% prayer
  - The proper way to pray
    - A spirit of worship (the essence of what prayer is)
    - “supplication” = recognizing our needful state
    - “thanksgiving” = the remedy to joylessness, self-interest, and worry
    - “requests” = petitions; let God know what's on your heart!

*If a new believer was struggling with prayer and asked about this verse, what counsel would you give them from your own experience?*

- Peace promise #1 (v. 7)
  - “peace” = wholeness, healing, safety, rest
  - Peace is not the absence of conflict, but the presence of God
  - We can never fully understand it
  - Through Jesus Christ our hearts and minds are protected (guarded)

*Why do you think rejoicing, gentleness, and honest prayer bring peace to your heart and mind?*

### *Moving Forward* (vv. 8-9)

- Paul gives a list of things that should occupy our minds (v. 8)
  - True – not against God (all truth is of God)
  - Noble – honorable, venerable (respected, dignified)
  - Just – righteous, upright
  - Pure – chaste, modest
  - Lovely – eliciting love (not lust)
  - Good report – spoken of well, drawing praise
  - Virtuous – moral excellence
  - Praiseworthy – to be commended
  - We’re to meditate on these – literally “to take account” or “reckon”
- Add to these godly instruction and mature mentors (v. 9)
  - “learned and received” – discipleship (learn and do) vs. teaching (information)
  - “heard and saw in me” – Paul’s example of Christian virtue
  - Peace promise #2 (v. 9b)
    - Practice leads to peace (!)
    - God will be right there to guide, protect, and comfort

*Why does following the guidance of these last two verses lead to the assurance of God’s daily presence?*

*Next week: Philippians 4:10-23*