

Philippians

CHAPTER 4:1-5

Lesson 13

Philippians 2 began with an exhortation towards unity: to be *like-minded* and *of one mind*. As we study Philippians 4, we will see that it begins with Paul imploring two believers in particular *to be of the same mind in the Lord*. Paul revealed to us his perspective of life in the first three chapters of Philippians. In chapter 4, he has provided us with the practical tools to walk in the victory of the life that *presses on*. We pray that as you study this paragraph division, which marks the beginning of this glorious chapter, you will apply its truths and allow the Lord to use them to condition you for the race.

Read Philippians 4

1. The contrasting word *but* is used 6 times in this chapter. Mark the word on your Observation Worksheet each time it is used. Choose one instance of its use and record what is being contrasted.
2. Key words are helpful for understanding the text. *Rejoice* and *joy* are key words in Philippians 4. Mark each reference to these words on your Observation Worksheet and record what each reference indicates about them.
3. Philippians 4 begins with the instruction, *stand fast in the Lord*. Continue reading through this chapter and list the instructions to the recipients of the letter. Following the example, record the verse reference in parenthesis after each instruction.
 1. Stand fast in the Lord (1)

4. What impressed you most as you read and meditated upon Philippians 4?

Read Philippians 4:1

1. Philippians 4:1 begins with the word *therefore*. To what does the *therefore* refer?

a. Based on these facts, Paul exhorts believers to *stand fast in the Lord*. Look up and define the phrase *stand fast*.

b. I Corinthians 15:51-58 also describes the transformation of our bodies which will take place. Read these verses and record Paul's instruction in verse 58.

1.) How does the promise of your transformation encourage you to *stand fast in the Lord*?

2. What things might pull a believer from *standing fast*?

3. *Stand fast* in Greek is a word which is used for a soldier standing in the midst of a battle with the enemy coming after him. Read 2 Timothy 2:3,4 and record the exhortations in your own words.

4. Notice the tender ways Paul addresses the Philippian believers in Philippians 4:1. List them below.

a. How would knowing how much Paul loved them open their hearts to receive his instructions?

b. Consider what you have learned about Paul as you have studied the previous chapters. What have you discovered about him that encourages you to heed his teachings?

- c. We, as Christians, are given opportunity to share instructions from the Word with others. What attitude do they need to see in us before they are willing to receive?

*Give me, O Lord, a steadfast heart, which no unworthy affection may drag downwards;
Give me an unconquered heart, which no tribulation can wear out;
Give me an upright heart, which no unworthy purpose may tempt aside.
- Thomas Aquinas*

Read Philippians 4:2,3

1. Throughout Philippians, Paul has stressed the importance of unity. Record his urgent plea from Philippians 4:2.
 - a. In a practical sense, what do you think Paul was urging *Euodia* and *Syntyche* to do?

2. The news of this disagreement between these two women had traveled all the way to Paul in Rome. Out of all the subjects Paul addressed, he chose to specifically address this problem. Why are quarrels within the church so detrimental?

3. In Philippians 4:3, Paul called upon a *true companion* to help these women. As Christians, what can we do to help fellow believers who are quarreling?

Challenge: What Scriptures might be helpful in this kind of a situation?

*Be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other,
Making allowance for each other's faults because of your love.
Try always to be led along by the Holy Spirit,
And so be at peace with one another.
- Ephesians 4:2,3 TLB*

Read Philippians 4:4

1. Write Paul's instruction in Philippians 4:4.
2. Note the word *always* in this verse. Look up the following Scriptures and note how often we are to *rejoice* or *bless* the Lord:

Psalm 34:1

Psalm 145:1

Psalm 146:2

1 Thessalonians 5:16

- a. What does this say to you?
 - b. Our lives are not always filled with happy circumstances. There are many hurts and hard times. How are we to effectively apply this command to *rejoice in the Lord always*?
3. One phrase is repeated three times in Philippians 4:1-4. Record the phrase and the exhortation concerning it.

Verse	Exhortation	Phrase
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- a. Why is our standing fast, our unity, and our rejoicing so dependent on this phrase?

To rejoice is to behold God in everything!

Read Philippians 4:5

1. Paul follows his exhortation to *rejoice* with another exhortation that involves action. What does Paul tell believers to do in Philippians 4:5?
 - a. This word *gentleness* indicates a sweet reasonableness, a satisfaction with less than one's due, yielding, moderation. List some words that are opposite of these traits.

2. This same word *gentle* is used in Titus 3:2. What other behavior is encouraged in this verse?

3. The phrase *all men* in Philippians 4:5 includes everyone. What does Jesus say about this in Luke 6:35?

4. The second sentence in Philippians 4:5 reminds us that *the Lord is at hand*. Some believe this refers to the soon return of Jesus Christ for His church. Others interpret this to mean that *the Lord is near* or *the Lord is standing by*. How does the awareness of His coming or the awareness of His presence affect the way to treat others?

Review Philippians 4:1-5

1. Summarize Paul's instructions in this paragraph division.
 - a. Which one do you most need to work on? Why?

2. Describe an attitude of *rejoicing in the Lord*.

3. *Gentleness* is often not a praiseworthy quality in today's world. How does the world seem to view *gentleness*?
 - a. Why do we not need to be afraid to *let our gentleness be known to all men*?

4. Every rebuff is an opportunity to put Scripture into practice. What has impressed you from this lesson and encouraged you towards *being of the same mind and gentleness*?

*And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved,
put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;
bearing with one another, and forgiving each other,
whoever has a complaint against anyone;
just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.*

- Colossians 3:12,13 NASB