

Philippians

CHAPTER 4:10-13

Lesson 17

Commentaries report that for ten years the Philippian Church had been unable to send material aid to Paul, its beloved founder. It was not because his love for them, or theirs for him, had cooled but they had *lacked opportunity*. In Philippians 4:10, Paul reported that *now at last your care for me has flourished again*. This week we will, among other things, study Paul's response to their generosity.

Read Philippians 4:10-13

1. As we examine Paul's closing remarks, we can glean much about Paul's attitude. He begins this portion by reminding us that he is still *rejoicing* and closes expressing, that although he remains in chains, he is not limited in doing what God had called him to do. Using your Observation Worksheet, mark each occurrence of words that refer to Paul such as *I* and *me* as used in Philippians 4:10-13.

a. List each reference you marked relating to Paul. Following each reference, record the verse in parenthesis. We have done the first one for you.

1. Paul rejoiced in the Lord that their care had flourished again. (10)

2. Summarize Paul's attitude.

Read Philippians 4:10

1. In this paragraph division of Philippians 4, Paul expressed his joy in the care of the believers in Philippi for him. We first see his appreciation for them in Philippians 1:3-5. In what did Paul *rejoice*?
 - a. In what way is caring for someone through material means an expression of *fellowship in the gospel*?

2. Paul used the word *rejoice(d)* eleven times in this letter to the Philippians. Read each of the verses below and record what Paul *rejoiced* in.

Philippians 1:18 *What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.*

Philippians 2:16 *holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.*

Philippians 2:17,18 *Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.*

Philippians 2:28 *Therefore I sent him the more eagerly, that when you see him again you may rejoice, and I may be less sorrowful.*

Philippians 3:1 *Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe.*

Philippians 3:3 *For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh,*

Philippians 4:4 *Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!*

Philippians 4:10 *But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity.*

- a. Summarize Paul's attitude of *rejoicing*.

2. In what ways does giving financially express our care?

3. Paul realized that the believers in Philippi would have sent provision to him before. What did Paul realize about this?
 - a. Define the word *opportunity*.

 - b. What does Galatians 6:10 say about *opportunity*?

 - c. Describe your understanding of the *opportunities* you have to give financially.

Read Philippians 4:11

1. Although Paul *rejoiced in the Lord* in response to their gift, he was not saying that he was in need. What did he write?
 - a. The word translated as *need* in this verse can be better understood as “falling short” or “want”. What did David declare in Psalm 23:1?
 - 1.) Explain what it means that when we acknowledge *the LORD* as our *shepherd, we shall not want*?

 - b. How does the phrase “I do not fall short”, describe a person who is *content*?

2. Define the word *content* using:
 - a dictionary

 - your own words

- a. What are some antonyms for the word *content*?
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3. Paul used the phrase, *I have learned in whatever state I am to be content*. What *states* in your life do you find it most difficult to *be content*?
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4. What do you think Paul *learned* about *contentment*?
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5. There is a “never enough” syndrome that began in the Garden of Eden. Eve lived in paradise. She had it all, so to speak. Yet the serpent was able to draw her away from obedience to God by appealing to this “never enough” component of human nature. How would a *contented* heart have altered Eve’s future?
 - a. Our discontentment may fall into Eve’s category of desiring what God has forbidden or it may just be a never satisfied kind of attitude. How might this lack of contentment be a tool of satan to seduce us away from God’s will for our lives?
 - b. Discontentment can begin a downward spiral in your life. What are some symptoms of discontent?
 - 1.) Record what Philippians 2:14 says about this.
 - 2.) What is the cure?

6. Like joy, *contentment* is independent of external circumstances. Paul wrote that he *learned* to be *content*. What do the following Scriptures reveal about *contentment*?
 - a. Psalm 4:7
 - b. Psalm 63:3-5
 - c. Psalm 131:2
 - 1.) Describe the *contentment* of a *weaned child*.
 - d. Ecclesiastes 5:10
 - e. 1 Timothy 6:6-8

Read Philippians 4:12,13

1. *I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little* (Philippians 4:12 NLT). How do Paul's experiences recorded in 2 Corinthians 6:10 verify this?
2. Paul had endured some very difficult circumstances. According to Philippians 4:13, how could he do this?
3. What do the following verses teach about the *strength* available to us through Christ?
 - a. Isaiah 40:29-31
 - b. John 15:4,5
 - c. 2 Corinthians 12:9,10
 - d. Colossians 1:11
4. In what way is Philippians 4:13 an encouragement to you when you feel like you can't go on?

Review Philippians 4:10-13

1. Describe *contentment* from a Christian perspective.

2. How does acceptance of things we cannot change lead to contentment?

3. Record what (or who) is the focus of our mind when we are:
 - a. discontent

 - b. content

4. *For You, LORD, have made me glad through Your work; I will triumph in the works of Your hands* (Psalm 92:4). Record just a few things that God has done for you.

5. Share something that impressed you about Paul's attitude towards:
 - a. contentment

 - b. Christ's enabling power

 - c. giving

 - d. glorifying God

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

- Ephesians 6:10