

Studies in Contentment #3

Handout

"For You Alone, O Lord, Make Me Dwell in Safety."

- Ps. 4:8

A negative paraphrase of Philippians 4:6-7:

Do not be calm about anything, but in everything, by dwelling on it constantly and feeling picked on by God with thoughts like, "and this is the thanks I get", present your aggravations to everyone you know, but Him. And the acid in your stomach, which transcends all Roloids, will create an ulcer, and the doctor's bills will give you a heart attack, and you will lose your mind."

- A disgruntled servant

"Behind every moment of worry is a war for the heart. This battle is about whether our hearts will be ruled..... by the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of self."

-Paul David Tripp, TABLETALK, January 2010

Philippians 4:2-9

Exhortations

² I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to agree with each other in the Lord. ³ Yes, and I ask you, loyal yokefellow, ^[fn1] help these women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

- 1.) In vs. 2-3, Paul uses the verb “plead” twice. What do you think this says about the magnitude and seriousness of Euodia and Syntyche’s disagreement? What words or phrases does Paul use to describe his depth of feeling for them?
- 2.) Twice in vs. 4, Paul immediately moves toward a call to joy (“rejoice”) in the Lord. How does demonstrating gentleness (vs. 5) follow from finding joy in the Lord?
- 3.) Knowing that Paul had worked so hard, how do you think he felt about there being quarreling within the new church. What might he have thought about the fruit of his work? About the quarrelers?
- 4.) What new “truth” might he have developed out of his feelings?
- 5.) Based on this new “truth”, what action might he have taken, instead of staying focused and doing the right thing?
- 6.) In vs. 6, what does he instruct the fellow believers to do in order to curb their anxiety? What attitude has to be present?
- 7.) What is the resulting outcome (vs. 7)? Is this a feeling?