

1. **Introduction:** In chapter 3, Paul emphasized difficulties arising from living “in the flesh” by which he means living a self-centered, sinful life. He contrasted that with living “in the Spirit” by which he means living in a way that is God-centered and oriented toward caring for others.
 - Paul wants to be found secure “in Christ,” not through a righteousness of his own that comes from the law, but through the righteousness of God that comes by faith in Christ.
 - His goal is to know Christ in the power of His resurrection. Although he admits he has not yet attained the perfection for which he yearns, he presses on toward that goal because he knows that Christ Jesus has made him His own.
 - He says, many people walk as enemies of Christ, but we believers walk with Him. As believers, “*our citizenship is in heaven*” although we are currently on earth.
2. **Philippians 3:20:** *“We await (the return of) a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.”*
3. **Philippians 4:1:** *Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.*
 - “*Therefore,*” because our citizenship is in heaven, and we await the return of our Savior, “*stand firm in the Lord.*”
 - These words provide a wonderful bridge between chapter 3 with its doctrinal statements and the intensely practical orientation of chapter 4.
 - Stand firm, united with our Savior against the spiritually hostile environment we live in.
 - In several letters, Paul writes about standing firm. Examples (NIV):
 - (1.) **Gal.5:1:** *It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not ... be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.* (2.) **1 Corinthians 16:13:** *Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong.* (3.) **1 Thessalonians 3:8:** *For now we really live, since you are standing firm in the Lord.* (4.) **2 Thessalonians 2:15:** *So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold fast to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter.* (5.) **Ephesians 6:11-14:** *“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ... ¹³ Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand therefore”*
 - All these references to Paul’s use of “stand firm” relate to believers having a permanent commitment to Jesus – knowing, understanding, and living the way He taught us.
 - In the Ephesians passage, God does not tell believers to hurry into battle. He says to “stand” dressed in the full armor of God.
 - The armor of God includes: The belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of the gospel, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit.

- ***“The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”*** is both a defensive and offensive weapon. It is the only thing mentioned that has offensive capability.
 - The implication is, God has already done or is doing the conquering. Jesus fought and won the battle against physical and spiritual evil. Believers are to defend the “ground” He conquered.
 - The weapon we are to use is the “Word of God” which provides the knowledge base we need and encourages us in evangelizing others. Not everyone will accept and believe the Word of God, so we need the other protective elements of armor that God provides.
4. **A Delicate Matter**: In the Philippian church there is a problem Paul must deal with. The problem deals with a sensitive situation involving several key people. Throughout the letter, Paul has from time-to-time written things to prepare the way for the subject which he will deal with in 4:2-5.
- Here are some of the preparatory things Paul has done.
 - In 1:9 Paul said his prayer was that the Philippians love for one another might ***“abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment.”*** In 1:27, ***“Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.”*** In 2:2-3, he said, ***“complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.”*** In 3:17 ***“Brothers, join in imitating me.”***
5. **The Issue**: In 4:2-5, Paul gets to the hinted issue. There is disharmony within the church.
- Paul is quite tactful. He does not elaborate on the issue, nor does he reprove those involved. He simply tells them they have available the means through which the issue can be resolved.
6. **Philippians 4:2-5**: ***I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. ³ Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.***
- Paul asks the two women to ***“agree in the Lord.”*** Then Paul asks his ***“true companion”*** to help the women. They have all worked together side-by-side in the gospel.
 - The “true companion” mentioned in 4:3 may well be Clement or Epaphroditus or Luke. Perhaps the most likely is Epaphroditus whose conduct seems to be a good example of true harmony.
 - Euodia and Syntyche were both well-acquainted with Paul and had worked with him perhaps from the first day he met Lydia and other ladies at the prayer meeting by the river. They were respected in the church. Paul expected them to be knowledgeable and reasonable.

- The two women had labored side-by-side with him in the gospel along with Clement, and others. It is not enough to be united in words. Believers must work together in a spirit of unity.
 - Paul asks that others in the congregation encourage the women in a harmonious way.
 - Disharmony among those “in Christ” is not good especially is that true among members of one congregation. They are all brothers and sisters “in Christ.”
 - They need to work together in such manner that their unity can be seen in their actions.
7. **Philippians 4:4-5: *Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. ⁵ Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand;***
- The third thing Paul asks the congregation to do is to “*rejoice in the Lord always,*” be reasonable with everyone, and bring any issues before the Lord in prayer asking for resolution.
 - The word “rejoice” is a variant form of the word “joy” which is a fruit of the Spirit and a great Christian virtue. That means that “rejoicing” like “joy” is an internal, supernatural gift from God. The world replaces God’s supernatural gift of joy with “happiness.”
 - There is a world of difference between the two. While the source of “joy” is an internal work of God, “being happy” depends on the external “things” we have or can acquire. Thus, “happiness” is entirely a circumstantial response to externals.
 - Happiness for some is money or fame, for others it is power or good looks. When you have such things and they go away, happiness goes with them.
 - The way of joy is different. A believer’s joy comes from the nature of God through the work of the Holy Spirit, not by circumstances. Unhappy events or circumstances do not eliminate joy.
 - If you have supernatural joy that comes from the Lord, you are unlikely to spend time, money, and effort on obtaining external things simply because you think they will make you happy.
 - Be reasonable with everyone. Reasonableness does not imply compromising on doctrine or direct commands from God. Paul says, live such “*that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation*” (Phil 2:15).
 - Being reasonable implies exercising moderation in dealing with people, especially children.
8. **Philippians 4:6-7: *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.***
- Everyone’s “as born” natural state of being is at enmity with God. “Peace with God” results from being reconciled with God through redemption and adoption into His family. We are then firmly and eternally “at peace” with God. He leads us in the path of

righteousness and sustains us through trials and tribulation as we walk with Him toward the goal of being with Him in eternity.

- The “peace of God” can be ours only after we have “peace with God.” Then, He walks with us, guards our faith, and enables us to be transformed into a moral image of Jesus Christ. The “peace of God” is the gift of tranquility produced by God’s watchful care over us as we strive to live in accordance with His will.
 - Paul is writing to people in Philippi who are converted and have “peace with God” so he writes to them about living in such a way that the “peace of God” is a sustaining force in their lives.
 - He says they should “*not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*”
 - In placing everything in the hands of God and keeping Him informed by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, they can make their requests known to God “*And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*”
 - “Peace with God” will lead them through prayer and supplication to the peace of God.
9. **Prayer:** “*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*”
- Prayer is talking with God through Jesus who alone provided access to God’s presence. Jesus said, “*I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*” Prayer offered to God apart from faith in the Lord Jesus does not reach the Father.
 - One way to pray that is suitable for all believers is characterized by the acronym ACTS.
 - 1. **Adoration:** Begin by adoring and praising God for who He is, what He has done and will do.
 - 2. **Confession:** Knowing that all fall short of God’s holiness, we confess both sins we know we have committed and those of which we may not be aware. We ask forgiveness for present sins even though as believers we have been justified and are being sanctified.
 - 3. **Thanksgiving:** Give thanks for specific instances of grace and mercy and for His constant grace and mercy of which we may not even be aware. Thank Him for being creator and sustainer of the universe and all that is in it. Thank Him as redeemer, savior, Lord, King, and friend.
 - 4. **Supplication:** Supplication or petitions in which we bring our requests for the needs of others and ourselves to God.
 - **Next:** Philippians 4:8-9.