



Your story matters.



MYRC.CHURCH



“IMPERFECT gifts”

TONY MYLES, STUDENT MINISTRIES PASTOR

MESSAGE NOTES

The Big Picture: You will never embrace your life _____ until you _____ embrace what is right in front of you.

My familiar fable...

What if contentment wasn't a “should” meant to shadow us but a _____ meant to _____ us?

Timely wisdom from **Philippians 4:4-20 NLT**

Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! (v.4)

- **Joy is not found in blind optimism nor a forced mental attitude, but by _____,**
- **_____ - _____ > replacing.**

Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon. (v.5)

- **We're constantly tempted to determine where we are based on where _____ is.**

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. (v.6-7)

- **Anything/Everything: Nothing too _____, nothing too _____.**
- **A peace that exceeds our understanding involves _____ what we do _____.**

And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. (v.8)

- **“What in my life do I focus on that's _____ or _____?”**
- **What if in the next 48 hours...**

Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me—everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you. (v.9)

- **To practice something means the challenge _____.**

How I praise the Lord that you are concerned about me again. I know you have always been concerned for me, but you didn't have the chance to help me. Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. 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. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. (v.10-13)

- **When someone falls short, you get to _____ “_____.”**
- **You can live for the “-er” or “re-”
(in other words, _____ versus _____).**
- **Game changer: Learn to delight in _____.**

Even so, you have done well to share with me in my present difficulty. As you know, you Philippians were the only ones who gave me financial help when I first brought you the Good News and then traveled on from Macedonia. No other church did this. Even when I was in Thessalonica you sent help more than once. I don't say this because I want a gift from you. Rather, I want you to receive a reward for your kindness. At the moment I have all I need—and more! I am generously supplied with the gifts you sent me with Epaphroditus. They are a sweet-smelling sacrifice that is acceptable and pleasing to God. And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus. Now all glory to God our Father forever and ever! Amen. (v.14-20)

- **A blessing is meant to be a _____.**

God wants our holidays to be filled with His light:

- **Step into your _____.**
- **Share your _____... and share your _____.**

Don't miss this...
You'll either look to others for imitation or inspiration—the difference is in your _____.

Tell someone about the next step you took today in your spiritual journey! Let us know, too, and fill out our connect card (digital or in person).



DISCUSSION GUIDE

Icebreaker: Now that Christmas music is officially “legal.” What’s your favorite Christmas song/album?

1. Pastor Tony asked us the question, “What if contentment wasn’t a “should” meant to shadow us but a skill meant to brighten us?” How has contentment been a “should” in your life? How could it become an active skill in your life?
2. Read [Philippians 4:4](#). How is joy a choice in our lives?
3. Pastor Tony states, “We’re constantly tempted to determine where we are based on where everybody else is.” How does comparison kill contentment?
4. Read [Philippians 4:6-7](#). What are three things, no matter how big or small, that God has done in your life for which you are thankful?
5. Read [Philippians 4:8](#). What if in the next 48 hours you took this verse to heart? What would/wouldn’t you do?
6. Pastor Tony explained how thinking in terms of appreciation versus accumulation can be a game changer in our lives. How can you delight in imperfect gifts today?
7. We are blessed to be a blessing. How can you be sharing your story and your stuff during this holiday season?

Day One: [Matthew 6](#)

Day Two: [Matthew 7](#)

Day Three: [Matthew 8](#)

Day Four: [Matthew 9](#)

Day Five: [Matthew 10](#)

PERSONAL GUIDE



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Timely wisdom from Philippians 4:4-20 NLT

Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! (v.4)

- Joy is not found in blind optimism nor a forced mental attitude, but by remembering.
- Re-placing > replacing.

Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon. (v.5)

- We're constantly tempted to determine where we are based on where everybody else is.

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. (v.6-7)

- Anything/Everything: Nothing too big, nothing too small.
- A peace that exceeds our understanding involves piecing what we do understand.

And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. (v.8)

- “What in my life do I focus on that's phony or filler?”
- What if in the next 48 hours...

Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me—everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you. (v.9)

- **To practice something means the challenge isn't going away.**

How I praise the Lord that you are concerned about me again. I know you have always been concerned for me, but you didn't have the chance to help me. Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. 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. For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength. (v.10-13)

- **When someone falls short, you get to choose “why.”**
- **You can live for the “-er” or “re-”
(in other words, accumulation versus appreciation).**
- **Game changer: Learn to delight in imperfect gifts.**

Even so, you have done well to share with me in my present difficulty. As you know, you Philippians were the only ones who gave me financial help when I first brought you the Good News and then traveled on from Macedonia. No other church did this. Even when I was in Thessalonica you sent help more than once. I don't say this because I want a gift from you. Rather, I want you to receive a reward for your kindness. At the moment I have all I need—and more! I am generously supplied with the gifts you sent me with Epaphroditus. They are a sweet-smelling sacrifice that is acceptable and pleasing to God. And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus. Now all glory to God our Father forever and ever! Amen. (v.14-20)

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