



05

PHILIPPIANS 4:1-9

JOY & PURPOSE



THIS WEEK'S focus

The things we enjoy most will fill our thoughts and minds when we're bored or need to do less exciting things. When we are doing chores, working, or studying for a test in our least favorite subject, it's easy to instead get lost in thoughts about the things we enjoy doing more. We don't even really have to try—our thoughts will naturally drift to things like playing our favorite sport or going to a concert for our favorite band. As we approach the end of Philippians, we will see Paul challenge us to turn our thoughts to those things that are lovely, honorable, excellent, and true (Phil. 4:8-9). This isn't to say we shouldn't daydream about our favorite activities. Rather, Paul is pointing out that Jesus gives us a clear purpose and lasting joy.



CENTRAL truth

Trusting Jesus gives us clear purpose and lasting joy.



EXPLORE

scripture

PHILIPPIANS 4:1-9

PHILIPPIANS 4:1-3

1 So then, my dearly loved and longed for brothers and sisters, my joy and crown, in this manner stand firm in the Lord, dear friends. **2** I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to agree in the Lord. **3** Yes, I also

ask you, true partner, to help these women who have contended for the gospel at my side, along with Clement and the rest of my coworkers whose names are in the book of life.

PHILIPPIANS 4:4-7

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! **5** Let your graciousness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. **6** Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition

with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **7** And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

PHILIPPIANS 4:8-9

8 Finally brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is anything

praiseworthy—dwell on these things.

9 Do what you have learned and received and heard from me, and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

DAILY devotions

MEMORIZE PHILIPPIANS 4:6

7 ARROWS FOR BIBLE READING



What does this passage say?



What does this passage tell us about God?



What did this passage mean to its original audience?



How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



What does this passage tell us about man?



How does this passage prompt me to pray?



What does this passage demand of me?

day 1

PHILIPPIANS 4:1-3

DWELL

Since it is impossible for us to avoid conflict in this life, it's important that we learn how to deal with it in a way that is honoring to God. Paul mentioned two women by name—Euodia and Syntyche—who were apparently having some kind of disagreement. Rather than telling the church that these women needed to “get their act together” or taking sides with one of them, Paul urged the women to agree because of their common love for Christ. He also asked the church at Philippi to help these two women. Paul's words remind us that Christian love and fellowship rely on mutual encouragement and support for one another.



How did Paul know these women? Why did he care about their disagreement?



What can we learn from these verses about how we should handle conflict in the church—even if we're not directly involved?

MEMORIZE

Write Philippians 4:6 on a sticky note and place it somewhere you'll see it every day, like your bathroom mirror, a notebook, or inside your locker. Read it to yourself each time you see it.

PRAY

Pray that God would use you as a peacemaker within your church, your friend group, and your community.

day 2

PHILIPPIANS

4:4-7

DWELL

Paul gives several more instructions here for how the church is to experience peace. First, we should rejoice in the Lord. Even in times of trouble, we can have joy in knowing that no trouble is too big for God. Second, Christians should be gracious—acting selflessly and respecting others—in such a way that even those outside the church take notice. And third, when we are worried or anxious, we should take those concerns to God in prayer. God’s peace is bigger than any of our worries, fears, or troubles. This doesn’t mean it’s wrong to be anxious—that’s only human. It means that instead of being trapped by those anxieties, we can seek God as a refuge.

← What does it mean for God’s peace to guard our hearts and minds?

↔ What are some ways you can be more gracious or gentle toward other believers or people in your community this week?

MEMORIZE

Take a slip of paper or index card and draw or write Philippians 4:6 using markers or colored pencils. Use it as a bookmark in one of your text books or notebooks this week.

PRAY

Spend some time telling God about your anxieties and fears. Ask Him to fill you with His peace.

day 3

PHILIPPIANS

4:8-9

DWELL

When we are troubled, anxious, or fearful, it is easy to remain focused on the things that are troubling us. Sometimes we even convince ourselves that focusing on these things is helping us somehow—that we’re “working through” our problems or preparing for the worst-case scenario. But Paul suggests that we do the opposite. Instead of focusing on our fears, we should focus on the things of God: things that are true, lovely, honorable, and just. By doing so, we aren’t avoiding our problems or pretending they don’t exist—instead, we’re allowing God’s goodness to shine in our lives and give us new perspective.

↻ List the things from these verses that Paul says we should think on and practice in order to experience God’s peace.

↻ What do you tend to focus on when you are anxious or troubled? How can Paul’s instructions here help you change your perspective?

MEMORIZE

Write each word from Philippians 4:6 on a different index card. Mix them up and then place them in order.

PRAY

Say a prayer thanking God for some of the beautiful, true, pure, or honorable things that you have experienced in your walk with Him. If this is difficult, ask Him to help you cultivate an attitude of gratefulness and joy.

day 4

ISAIAH 26:1-4

DWELL

The city that this song describes is a metaphor for a state of mind rather than an actual city, and “that day” in verse 1 refers to the time that God would restore the nation of Israel because the people had returned to following Him. A mind that is focused on righteous living—living in a way that honors the Lord—can rest in peace and security. When we trust in God’s ways and in His love for us, we can trust that He will be our “rock”—our strong, unmovable foundation.

↑ How does Isaiah describe the city of the righteous? What do you think it would be like to live in that city?

→ What are some ways in which God is a refuge in your life? What are some areas of your life where you could trust in Him more?

MEMORIZE

Find a recording of Philippians 4:6 on the web, in a podcast, or on a Bible app. Listen to it every day this week.

PRAY

Pray that God would reveal Himself when you feel like you are living in chaos, and that He would show you how He is a safe, secure refuge.

day 5

HEBREWS 12:1-2

DWELL

When we are running a race, we need to focus single-mindedly on the goal. We will only win if we concentrate on the finish line and on doing all the things it takes to get there. Likewise, in our experience of following Christ, we must set aside the things that get in the way and trip us up, including our anxieties, quarrels, and self-centered desires. We will still experience all of these things in life, but the author of Hebrews says that instead of focusing on things that would make us trip, we should keep our eyes facing forward and run towards Christ, our example in godly living.

↻ Why does the author of Hebrews use the metaphor of a race here? Explain the different parts of the metaphor.

→ Are you living your life with Christ as the goal? What one step can you take to live more this way in the coming week?

MEMORIZE

Practice reciting Philippians 4:6 from memory with a friend or family member. Ask them to follow along as you recite, and prompt you with words from the verse if you need help remembering.

PRAY

Ask God to show you the things that are hindering you and tripping you up in your walk with Christ this week.