

# Philippians 4:1-5

## Study Questions – Lesson 8

1. This week's memory verse is Philippians 4:4

"Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice"

2. Read Philippians 4:1-5. What phrase is found three times in verses 1-4? Write out the three commands that include this phrase.
  - o How is this phrase key to the commands given?
3. The Greek word for "stand fast" refers to a soldier standing his ground as the enemy comes against him. What are believers to do that helps them "stand fast"? Philippians 1:27; 2 Thessalonians 2:15
4. In verses 2 and 3, Paul addresses a specific problem between two women not getting along. This letter was not divided up into chapters and verses when Paul sent it. The entire letter would most likely have been read at one time. How do you think these two women felt to hear Paul mention them by name, imploring them to resolve their conflict?
5. The word "implore" in the Greek means, "I exhort, I beg, please." How would Paul's tenderness and love seen in verse 1, help these women receive his exhortation?

6. What was Paul's instruction to Euodia and Syntyche?

- Explain what that means in your own words.

7. How is unity hindered in the following passages? Matthew 20:20-28; Mark 9:38-40; Luke 10:38-42

8. What are some possible consequences in a church if disputes are not resolved?

9. What do the following quotes teach about unity?

- "Believers are never told to become one; we already are one and are expected to act like it." Joni Eareckson Tada
- "Be united with other Christians. A wall with loose bricks is not good. The bricks must be cemented together." Corrie Ten Boom
- "Let us live near to Christ, for this is the best way of promoting unity. Divisions in churches never begin with those full of love to the Savior." Charles Spurgeon

- “We need not all agree, but if we disagree, let us not be disagreeable in our disagreements.” M.R. DeHaan

## **Christian Unity**

### **One Body**

The dictionary defines “unity” as “the state of being united or joined as a whole; the state of being one.” How can so many different and diverse Christians come together as one spiritual body? Our unity is based on Christ, not ourselves. Our differences are not what we are to focus on, our focus is to be on Christ.

Galatians 3:28 says, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” These examples listed in this verse are very different from each other, and yet those differences did not keep them from being one in Christ. The differences among believers may be great, but what we have in common in Christ is greater.

The moment we put our faith in Christ as Savior, we are placed in the body of Christ. We begin to enjoy the unity of being one with Him and other believers. 1 Corinthians 12:13, 27 says, “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body... Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.”

As believers we already have unity with Christ and other believers; our part is to see the importance of this unity and seek to maintain it. Ephesians 4:3 states, “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” The word “endeavor” means to exert oneself, to diligently seek.” We are to put forth effort in maintaining unity with other Christians.

### **Why is Christian unity important?**

It is important to Christ! In John 17:20-21 Jesus prayer to the Father, “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.”

Jesus said He and His Father were one and He expressed the same desire for His followers. Unity is beautiful, it is peaceful, it is loving. When believers live in unity, it brings glory to God.

Christian unity is also important because it is a witness to the world; it shows we are His followers. In John 13:34-35, Jesus said, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

To live in unity with other believers, is a testimony of what Christ can do with a life given to Him. The love that binds us together is not something we manufacture; it is from the Lord. Romans 5:5 says, “... the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.” It is the love of Christ that binds us together.

10. What helps to promote unity among Christians? Romans 14:19; 15:7; Philippians 2:2-3; Colossians 3:12-14; 1 Peter 3:8-9
  
11. The command to “rejoice in the Lord” is given in 3:1 and 4:4. What word is added in 4:4?
  - Why do you think many believers struggle to obey this command?
  
12. How does the following help a believer to rejoice in the Lord?
  - Trust/faith – Psalm 5:11, 33:21; 1 Peter 1:6-8
  
  - Right living – Psalm 68:3, Proverbs 21:15
  
  - Knowledge of the Lord and His ways – Psalm 33:4-5; Jeremiah 9:24
  
  - Scripture – Psalm 19:7-8, 119:162

13. The word “gentleness” in verse 5 describes someone who yields to others and displays a sweet reasonableness, even when provoked. How do you usually respond when others are rude, ungrateful, or thoughtless?
- What encouragement does Jesus have for anyone who lacks gentleness? Matthew 11:29

# Philippians 4:1-5

## Discussion Questions - Lesson 8

1. Philippians 4 begins with "Therefore." What is it there for?
  
2. What can you conclude from verse 1 about Paul's affection for the believers at Philippi?
  - In what other ways (found throughout our study of Philippians) does Paul show his love and care for the body of Christ?
  
  - What are some ways that you can show that you care about others?
  
3. Paul encouraged these believers, who he dearly loved, to live for Christ, to be like Christ, to continue in Christ, and to remember all that Christ had done for them. What does Paul encourage us, as believers, to do in verse 1?
  - What are some things that can shake our steadfastness?
  
4. Paul says, "Stand fast in the Lord." How is that different from simply saying, "Stand fast"?

**“People don’t really care how much you know, until they know how much you care.”**

5. Paul cared enough about Euodia and Syntyche to address an issue between them. What did he implore them to do in verse 2?
- How can this resolve *any* conflict, no matter what it is, between Christians?
  
  - What does Matthew 18:15 add to this?
6. In verse 3, Paul asks for help for these women. When a conflict arises in a church, there are things that can be done to help to solve the conflict or cause it to spread. List some of those things:

**Solve**

**Spread**

“Rejoice in the Lord always [delight, take pleasure in Him]; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit [your graciousness, unselfishness, mercy, tolerance, and patience] be known to all people. The Lord is near.”  
(Philippians 4:4-5 from the Amplified Bible)

7. How do unresolved conflicts affect our ability to rejoice in the Lord?
- How do conflicts within the church affect our witness to the world?
  
  - Does knowing the Lord is near help you to obey the commands in verses 4 and 5? Explain your answer.