Philippians 4

v. 1 – My Joy and Crown

“my joy” = Paul says that the Christians at Philippi are his source of joy. This is not just saying that he has joy but where that joy originates.

“crown” = that which is an ornament and honor to one. The church is an honor to Paul.

Are we an honor to God? To Christ? How do we become this joy and a crown? Paul goes on in the first verse to say is “stand fast in the Lord” = this means to persist, persevere. Even in days like we are in today with this corona virus and are being smothered with discouragement we must remain steadfast in faith.

v. 2-3 – Settle conflicts with love

There seems to be some sort of conflict in the church at Philippi. We see this with Paul saying “to be of the same mind.” This is not directed at the whole congregation but only towards Euodia and Synthyche.

In verse 3, Paul urges the rest of the disciples of Christ to work together to help these two women to come together. They seem to be faithful Christians (Euodia and Synthyche) and have even helped Paul when he was present in Philippi to do the work of the church. Even in faithful churches there can be those who tend to not get along or see things clearly.

v. 4-7 – Rejoice in the Lord and in His peace

v. 4 – “Rejoice” = This rejoicing is to be displayed in our day to day life. We must rejoice “in the Lord always” = This rejoicing is to be constant and at all times. Even in hard times we can rejoice in the Lord.

v. 5 – “gentleness be known to all men” = gentleness means to be fair, mild, gentle. This is a difficult attribute for a Christian to practice at all times. But our gentleness must be known. There are times when we get “angry and do not sin” (Eph. 4:26). But our reputation must be that of being gentle.

v. 6 – “anxious for nothing” = Does Paul say that we are never to worry about or be concerned about something or someone? Well if that were the case then he violated his own words when he was concerned for Epaphroditus and his ailment. The word “anxious” means “to be trouble with cares, distracted.” Paul is telling the Christians that they should not be distracted away from God by being overly troubled by the cares of the world. But rather Christians should always go to God through prayer. Peter writes, “casting all your care upon Him for He cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7).

v. 7 – When we cast our cares upon God then He will give us the “peace of God, which surpasses all understanding” = “surpasses” means to excel, be superior or better than ours. “all understanding” = That which God delivers His peace is beyond our intellective faculty, our understanding or knowledge. This peace is so special and superior that it will guard our “hearts” and “minds” through Christ Jesus. “Hearts” = passions or emotions. “minds” = That which thinks. “Guard” = to protect, that we might not escape from its power. We cannot be separated from this power unless we walk away from it. If we are anxious about things in this life and we turn away from God then this power cannot help us. But if we turn to God then He will provide the peace we desire.

v. 8-9 – Meditate on the good things in life

v. 8 – Paul provides a list of things that we must set our mind to:

“true” = honest, not hidden

“noble” = honorable; for good character

“just” = that which regard for duty demands, keeping the commands of God

“pure” = from every fault, immaculate

“lovely” = acceptable, pleasing

“good report” = sounding well, gracious, uttering good words about

“virtue” = of particular moral excellence

“praiseworthy” = commendation

“meditate on these things” = to gather, take account, to consider, to fill yourself with these things.

v. 9 – In order to continue to have the peace of God we must “do” these things mentioned in verse 8. The church in Philippi saw Paul as an example of these things. So, they should know how to accomplish each one of them. They must not lack any of these spiritual qualities.

v. 10-20 – I can do all things through Christ and be content.

v. 10 – The church did take care of Paul in his mission work needs. Even though they did not have every opportunity.

v. 11 – Paul had developed the character of being content. “content” = to be satisfied with one’s means, though the slenderest.

v. 12 – Paul did not always have enough and at other times had more than enough and sometimes just enough. But it did not matter to him, his focus was on heaven.

v. 13 – This verse has been abused over the years. It has been used for sporting events as if God gave the one competing more strength over someone else. Sometime it has been used to say that God gave a certain team the victory over another team. As if God was a fan of one team or one person or another. This verse has to do with the spiritual strength and not the physical strength we receive. Notice what Paul says this strength is “through Christ.” We all can receive the same spiritual strength. But God does not give us the same physical strength.

v. 14 – Paul commends the church for what they have done for him.

v. 15 – There were those who did not share in the physical help for Paul and only the Philippians.

v. 16 – He had needs while on his missionary journey and Philippi helped him.

v. 17 – He did seek after a gift but received one from their “fruit” = profit, advantage.

v. 18 – “sweet-smelling aroma” = That which is well-pleasing to God.

v. 19 – “my God shall supply all your need” = this is not physical but spiritual needs. We may not always get what we need physically due to certain circumstances but we will always have enough spiritual needs.

v. 20 –

v. 21-23 – Conclusion

v. 21 – Paul starts his conclusion with telling the brethren to greet each other.

v. 22 – All other saints in the churches throughout the modern world greet them. And a special group, “those who are of Caesar’s household” = People who worked for the Caesar all the way to even members of his own family. This could account to some of the vicious wrath the Caesar had for Paul and the church in general.