



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



The Letter of St. Paul to the Philippians

Chapter 4

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Introduction

- In this chapter, St. Paul is exhorting them to live in unity, joy, and peace
- He exhorted them also to meditate on things of virtue and worthy of praise
- He also addressed the concept of giving and contentment
- He concluded the epistle by sending his greetings and giving them his benediction and blessing



Preserving The Unity (4:1-3)

- Since we have such glorious hope (3:20,21), we need to stand fast in the Lord
- He addressed them with all affection reflecting his great love to them
- The flock is the joy and the crown of the servant in the Day of the Lord



Preserving The Unity (4:1-3)

- Most probably Euodia and Syntyche were deaconesses who had conflict
- St. Paul is admonishing them to have the same mind as befits those who are in the Lord
- True companion could be either Timothy or Silas (Acts 15:40, 16:19) or the Bishop of Philippi

Preserving The Unity (4: 1-3)



- Help them: in the work of their reconciliation since they labored in preaching the gospel
- There should be consistency between preaching and living the gospel
- It is not right to waste all the labor and efforts of preaching because of conflict



Preserving The Unity (4:1-3)

- St. Paul is concerned about them lest they lose their heavenly reward
- He is also concerned in keeping the peace of the church
- Clement could be the bishop of Rome
- Those whose citizenship is in heaven: have their names registered in the Book of Life (ancient tradition)



Rejoice In the Lord (4:4-5)

- The true joy is in the Lord
- It is in the middle of affliction
- Gentleness is the fruit of joy
- Gentleness is to be patient with others and to forbear their weakness
- This has to be known to all men including enemies
- The Lord is at hand is the motive to rejoice and be gentle



Overcoming Anxiety (4:6-7)

- Get rid of the wrong attitude: Be anxious for nothing
- Let your concerns and requests be made known to God in everything through:
 - ❖ Prayers: communicating with God
 - ❖ Supplications: presenting your requests
 - ❖ Thanksgiving: Praising Him for everything



Overcoming Anxiety (4:6-7)

- The inseparable consequence of laying everything before God in "prayer with thanksgiving" is the peace of God
- The blessedness of this peace exceeds all man's powers of understanding
- This peace guards and protects the minds and the hearts in the Lord Jesus Christ

The Meditation Of The Christian (4:8-9)



- As believers living in the world, we should meditate (have a continual regard to do) only on whatever is:
- True: sincere, in words
- Honest: dignified
- Just: towards others
- Pure: chaste in relation to ourselves
- Lovely: lovable

The Meditation Of The Christian (4:8-9)



- Of good report: referring to the absent; as "lovely" refers to what is lovable face to face
- Virtue: Piety and true morality are inseparable
 - ❖ Piety is love with its face towards God; morality is love with its face towards man
- Praiseworthy: this is not the aim but Christians should live so as to deserve men's praise

The Meditation Of The Christian (4:8-9)



- Follow my example according to The things which you have learned as catechumens and received by continual instructions and heard and seen in my life and conversation
- Not only "the peace of God," but "the God of peace" Himself "shall be with you."

Gratitude For Assistance (4:10-20)



- Their gift was a source of joy (in the Lord) to St. Paul
- He was expecting their gift not out of selfishness but as fruit of their faith
- At last: owing to Epaphroditus' sickness and other delays (lacking of opportunity), but he does not imply their gift was too late

Gratitude For Assistance (4:10-20)



- St. Paul explains that he had no need because he learned to be content
- Content: independent of others, and having sufficiency in one's self
- In Christianity it is not the haughty self-sufficiency
- The contentment and sufficiency of the Christian is not in self, but in God

Gratitude For Assistance (4:10-20)



- Contentment needs training and grace
- I can do (training) all things through Christ who strengthens me (grace)
- The main difference between the happy person and the unhappy person is contentment
- When I abound, I relieve others

Gratitude For Assistance (4:10-20)



- He in verse 14, guards against their thinking from what he has just said, that he makes light of their bounty
- In the beginning of the gospel: at the first preaching of the gospel at Philippi
- When I departed from Macedonia (Acts 17:14). The Philippians had followed St. Paul with their bounty when he left Macedonia and came to Corinth 2 Cor 11:8,9

Gratitude For Assistance (4:10-20)



- However, the supply meant here is not that which he received at Corinth, but the supply sent to him when "in Thessalonica, once and again"
- "The giving" was all on your part; "the receiving" all on mine
- We are not to wait for others in a good work, saying, "I will do so, when others do it." We must go forward, though alone

Gratitude For Assistance (4:10-20)



- When the church encourages us to give she is seeking our spiritual good, in the abounding of fruits of our faith which shall be put down to our account, against the day of reward (Heb 6:10)
- Though "the gift" is not what I chiefly "seek after," yet I am grateful for the gift
- Their gift being in faith was not so much to him, as to God before whom it "came up for a memorial" sweet-smelling in God's presence

Gratitude For Assistance (4:10-20)



- Our gifts are accepted before God as sacrifice
- St. Paul's prayer for them is the basis for the litany for the oblations
- The measure of His supply to you will be the immeasurable "riches of His grace"
- Not to us, but to Him be "the glory"

Greetings And Benediction (4:21-23)



- The brethren who are with me: St. Timothy and other fellow-laborers, who were now in Rome
- Many people from the Palace were converted through St. Paul's teaching while he was a prisoner in Rome
- He concluded by giving him the final benediction



Conclusion

- How could we keep peace between the servants?
- What are the characteristics and fruits of godly joy?
- How could the Christian overcome the anxiety?
- What are the things that we should meditate on?
- Explain the concept of giving and contentment according to the teaching of St. Paul in this chapter?