

## “Peace by Peace” (Philippians 4:1–9)

Police first contacted the man at the Lamplighter Motel in Longmont, CO after a guest in the next room called police because the man was ranting for more than an hour about killings, graveyards, and people getting “what’s coming to them.” Officers spoke to the man, who said he would be quiet. Police then waited for a few minutes, and then they heard more ranting about killings and graveyards, complete with incessant expletives. When police spoke to the man again, he threatened his own life. He wouldn’t answer the door or several phone calls to his room. That’s when officers decided to call in SWAT teams. Police evacuated about a dozen guests from the motel. When all the guests were out of the motel, police fired a 12-gauge beanbag round to smash the window. SWAT teams then maneuvered a remote-controlled robot to break out the rest of the window and pull down the drape. SWAT officers broke down the door and arrested the man for failing to leave when ordered. He was then taken to Longmont United Hospital before being transported to Boulder County Jail. The great irony in this account is that the man’s name is Lovall Peacen Bliss—when put together is “Love all, peace, and bliss.”<sup>1</sup>

Tragically, as Christians, we often don’t live up to our name either. We often lack love, peace, and bliss. Peace is particularly elusive. Today your life may be anything but peaceful. You may have interpersonal conflict in your marriage, family, workplace, and church, yet there is hope for you. Peace is not the absence of conflict; it is the presence of Christ. In fact, “*peace of mind comes through the mind of Christ.*” In Philippians 4:1–9 Paul provides two challenges to deal with conflict and experience Christ’s peace.

**1. Turn your conflict into compassion (4:1–3).** In this first section Paul discusses the glory of the church and then quickly transitions into its gore. He begins with some of the most passionate and intimate words in the New Testament: “**Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.**”<sup>2</sup> The conjunction “therefore” (*hoste*) is not the typical word translated “therefore” (*oun*).<sup>3</sup> In this context, this word may be better rendered “so then” (NET, HCSB) because it both draws on previous material and expresses a logical conclusion from it. Verse one serves as a “hinge” verse that swings back and forth between the preceding and following contexts.<sup>4</sup> Paul reminds his readers that they are citizens of heaven who are just passing through this life (3:20–21). The phrase “in this way” confirms this link back to 3:20–21. Yet 4:1 also looks ahead to 4:2–9 and encourages believers to maintain unity and treat Christians with love and respect.

Paul definitively expresses his love for the church in 4:1. Perhaps you’re thinking, “Paul sure is sappy!” Indeed, he loves the body of Christ. Twice in this verse Paul uses the description “beloved” (*agapetoi*). He loves these believers with all his heart. He also addresses the Philippians as “brothers and sisters.”<sup>5</sup> They are members of the family of God. Finally, he tacks on that he longs to see these brothers and sisters (cf. 1:8; 2:26). Paul is not afraid to verbalize his affection for these believers. Can you honestly say that you love your church? If so, how do you communicate this to them? There should be some verbal expression of your love for other believers. Maybe you’re thinking, “I’m not an encouraging person.” Well, then, become such a person! You don’t have to say, “I love you” or “I am longing for you” like Paul did. However, you do need to verbally stretch yourself so that the body is aware of your love.

Paul also calls the Philippians his “joy and crown” (4:1). These believers are his present source of joy in life. Moreover, they are his future crown when he stands before the judgment seat of Christ (cf. 1 Thess 2:19).<sup>6</sup> Paul receives significance in this life and in the life to come for establishing the Philippians in the faith. Many American Christians pursue pleasure, position, power, prestige, popularity, possessions, and performance; however, Paul pursues people. He recognizes that only people and God’s Word are eternal. Everything else will fade away like a mist in the night. Are you spending your time or are you investing your time? How would you answer if Jesus returned today and asked, “Who is your joy and your crown?” Who have you personally mentored and discipled? Who have you invested in?

Paul closes out 4:1 with a call for the church to “stand firm” (*stekete*). This refers to a soldier remaining at his post no matter what happens around him. Let the enemy attack as it will, the soldier’s orders are clear: Stand firm! This command is necessary because we struggle standing firm. Left to our own devices we will retreat or surrender. As we age, our physical bodies begin to sag and droop. That’s bad, but it is somewhat expected. Do you know what’s far worse? When we age and begin to sag and droop spiritually. Sometimes it has nothing to do with age; we just let ourselves go spiritually. This is a grave danger because in our conflict with Satan and others, we will be sitting spiritual ducks—weak, anemic, and lethargic. We must always remember: *Peace of mind comes through the mind of Christ.*”

In 4:2–3, Paul transitions from the glory to the gore. The church is a family and Paul confronts his family members directly.<sup>7</sup> He writes, **“I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche<sup>8</sup> to live in harmony in the Lord. Indeed, true companion,<sup>9</sup> I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle<sup>10</sup> in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.”**<sup>11</sup> Paul calls two ladies out by name! These ladies’ names have been in Scripture for a long time, and they are going to remain for an even longer time. So why did Paul do this? Apparently, he is lovingly sending a message. These ladies are not mere pew potatoes; instead, they are influential ladies who likely played a prominent role in the church.<sup>12</sup> At the very least, they were coworkers with Paul in the advancement of the gospel.<sup>13</sup> Thus, Paul knows that this conflict needs to be dealt with quickly. So he confronts tenderly, but directly by first urging<sup>14</sup> both ladies to “live in harmony in the Lord” (lit. “to think the same thing”).<sup>15</sup> He is saying, “You’re both at fault. You need to be of the same mind. You may have all kinds of differences. Live in harmony with the Lord. Disagree agreeably. You don’t need to have uniformity, but you do need to have unity.” He then calls in reinforcements: a “true companion,” most likely an elder. He asks this leader to “help these women” settle their problems.<sup>16</sup> To use modern slang, Paul says, “Help a sister out!” This is imperative because a little schism can bring down the whole church. Better to nip these fights in the bud.

The grizzly bear is the meanest animal in the forest. It can terminate the life of any other creature with one swipe of its paw. There is one animal that the grizzly bear will not attack, however. He has even allowed this animal to share a meal with him, even though it is his adversary. The animal I am talking about is the skunk. The grizzly bear does not like the skunk, but he has decided it is better to coexist with him than to create a stink! Sometimes it is better to learn how to get along with the skunk in your life than fight him and make your situation even worse.<sup>17</sup> If the truth be known, there are skunks in every church, and you are one of them (and so am I). Since we are all skunks at one time or another, it makes sense for us to grant one another grace and strive to be at peace, so far as it depends upon us (Rom 12:18). Please seek to avoid the temptation to run away from your conflicts. When things are tough, it is easy to assume that you would have it so much better somewhere else. We all feel this way from time to time. It’s a miracle we are still here. However, at the next church you’re going to have more problems. There is no escape from problem people. At least here you know who the problem people are. Why start over?

The key to this section is found in the phrase the “book of life.” This phrase refers to a book in heaven where the names of believers are recorded (Rev 21:27).<sup>18</sup> Before humankind was created, God wrote the names of His children in this book. I should add that there is no eraser on His cosmic pen. The “book of life” is like a family photo album that contains the names of all those who are heaven bound because they have believed in Christ. Paul’s idea is that we believers ought to do everything we can to get on the same page, because we’re in the same book. You can choose your friends, but you’re stuck with your family. And healthy families aren’t defined by the absence of conflict, but by the way they work through it.<sup>19</sup> Since you and I are going to spend eternity with brothers and sisters in Christ, we need to ensure that we are in harmony down on earth. We must maintain the unity of the church. We must seek peace. The reason is simple: Your name is written in the book of life. *Peace of mind comes through the mind of Christ.*

[As individuals and as a church, we must turn our conflict into compassion so that we maintain Christian unity and glorify God. In 4:4–9, Paul imparts another challenge.]

**2. Turn your conflict into action (4:4–9).** This is a great section for you doers. In these six verses, there are seven commands. It's not enough to have compassion; action is also essential. In 4:4 Paul writes, **"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!"** Paul begins with two commands to "rejoice." The object of our rejoicing must be "in the Lord" (cf. 3:1). If we would concentrate on rejoicing in the Lord so much of life would fall into place. This command to rejoice is to be fulfilled "always." This means in every circumstance, particularly those that are adverse. The fact that the verb "rejoice" is an imperative shows that rejoicing in the Lord is not a natural thing to do. Perhaps you have seen the cartoon that pictures a middle-aged man, pot-bellied, with a frown on his face, wearing a T-shirt that reads "Please don't ask me to have a nice day." Or you may identify with W.C. Fields who said, "I start off each day with a smile, and get it over with."<sup>20</sup> Joy is tough! Even Christians struggle exuding joy, especially in the midst of conflict. Paul, however, is challenging you and me to rejoice even in the midst of a good church fight. When conflict comes, rejoice that there is at least one other person in the church to fight with. Rejoice that the person feels strongly enough to fight. He or she could have left the church and not cared enough about you to fight with you. So rejoice over the conflict God has given you.

Paul continues his action items to deal with conflict in a godly fashion. In 4:5a he writes, **"Let your gentle spirit be known to all men."** In the midst of conflict, be gentle. Win your enemies over with gentleness. A gentle answer turns away wrath. If someone doesn't like you; if someone is out to get you, show them gentleness. The word translated "gentleness" (*epieikes*) is probably best understood as "yielded rights." We are to be gentle or yielded people. The use of "be known" seems significant here. People are to realize our yieldedness experientially. They should realize that we are a people who do not cling to our rights by seeing us in action. Moreover, it is likely that Paul's use of the word "gentleness" echoes Psalm 86:5 in the Greek Old Testament (Ps 85:5 LXX). The English translation, "ready to forgive," likely reflects Paul's meaning. "Ready to forgive" conveys the desire and predisposition to forgive, which the word conveys, and which I believe Paul has in mind when he uses it in Philippians 4.<sup>21</sup>

Paul wants you to be ready to forgive when someone hurts you and your family with slander and gossip. He doesn't want you to have a critical or cynical attitude; he wants you to do so with grace and love. Yahweh is the model. No matter how many times I sin against Him, He is always ready to forgive. He lavishes unconditional love upon me. He zealously yearns to forgive me no matter what I have done. Since God has this kind of love for me, why would I struggle forgiving anyone in our church family? Here's a simple question: Would the people who know you best consider you a gentle person? Would that word even pop into their minds when they think about you? Or to make the question harder: Would the people you like least consider you a gentle person? That's the real test. Anyone can be gentle around nice people, but only the spirit of Jesus can enable you to respond gently to people who mistreat you.<sup>22</sup> My hope is that even those who dislike me would say, "While I don't appreciate Keith's personality, his gifts, his philosophy of ministry, or his preferences, he is at least gentle and respectful."

Paul concludes 4:5 with a fascinating phrase: **"The Lord is near."** This word "near" (*eggus*) seems to refer to both location and time. In the midst of church conflict, the Lord is near in proximity. He hears the words you speak. He knows your thoughts and motives. He's in your midst. He wants you to interact with other believers in a gentle manner, knowing that He is part of every conversation and response. Hence, He doesn't want you to exclaim, "He'll never change!" or, "She's sinned against me." Additionally, the Lord may return at any time.<sup>23</sup> He is at hand. He is at the door. Knowing this, we can give up our rights since Jesus will soon take care of them. In both cases, we can give up our rights on Christ's behalf.<sup>24</sup> I don't know about you, but I don't want to go into glory with a whole lot of gore. I want to ensure that I have pursued peace with my fellow believers. I don't want the Lord Jesus to have to clean up my mess and settle my interpersonal conflicts in glory. Remember, *peace of mind comes through the mind of Christ.*

Phil 4:6 is the verse that you want me to skip. Paul writes, **“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”** The first word in the Greek text is “nothing” (*meden*). Paul’s emphatic point is there is *nothing* you can worry about—absolutely nothing! The implication is that anxiety or worry is a sin. Unfortunately, most believers prefer to coddle worry and not call it “sin.” It’s difficult for many of us to call a behavior that we commit on a daily basis sin. We would much rather label adultery, homosexuality, or pornography “sin” because we may not be guilty of such behavior. Yet, it is obvious that there are more Christians addicted to anxiety than to all the other addictions combined. The word translated “anxious” (*merimnao*) describes being divided and pulled in different directions.<sup>25</sup> I would guess that this describes you just like it describes me at times. Worry is a sin all of us grapple with on a daily basis.

Some years ago a professor at a leading American university studied the things people worry about. His research discovered that: 40% never happens; 30% concerns the past; 12% are needless worries about health; 10% are about petty issues; and 8% are legitimate concerns. That means that 92% of our “worry time” is wasted energy. But Paul is saying that we are not to worry even about the 8%. Why is that? Because when we worry we’re really saying that God can’t take care of us, that our problems are bigger than His promises.<sup>26</sup> What did you worry about this week? How much time did you spend worrying? What did your worrying accomplish? Absolutely nothing, right? You may now have an ulcer, though. Seriously, I heard recently that over 100 diseases can be directly attributed to worry! Worry is a burden God never intended you to bear, but if you choose to bear it He will allow you to suffer the consequences. Will you confess your worry to the Lord? Unless you call worry sin, there’s no need for the Prince of Peace to come and deliver you from your sin. *Peace of mind comes through the mind of Christ.*

Paul indicates that the cure to anxiety is “worry about nothing, pray about everything.”<sup>27</sup> Verse 6 uses no less than four different terms for prayer: (1) “Prayer” (*proseuche*): This is the broadest word for communication with God. (2) “Supplication” (*deesis*): The word used here conveys the sincere sharing of personal needs and problems. (3) “Thanksgiving” (*eucharistia*): Our prayers should be accompanied by a heart of gratitude for all that God has done for us in the past. (4) “Requests” (*aitema*): This word speaks of specific petitions rather than vague and hazy generalities. Paul makes it clear that worry and prayer cannot coexist at the same time. You can either pray or worry, but you can’t pray *and* worry.<sup>28</sup> What God wants is for you to counter worry with prayer.<sup>29</sup> Therefore, when you are tempted to worry, why not attempt to pray? It may be just a five second “arrow prayer” shot up to heaven.<sup>30</sup> Prayer is critical as we seek to break this cherished evangelical sin.

In 4:7, Paul promises, “If you choose to pray instead of worry, God will cover you.” He writes, **“And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension,<sup>31</sup> will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”** The phrase “the peace of God” occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. When you pray instead of worry, God’s experiential peace will flood your being. The verb “guard” (*phroureo*) is a military term which refers to a sentry’s responsibility to protect a camp or castle as he marches around securing that which is valuable and strategic. The peace of God will watch over and warn us against any intruders. If the peace of God is not ruling or standing sentry over our inner man, then an unwanted intruder has already entered. When God’s peace floods our lives, it will protect our valuable hearts from wrong feelings and our strategic minds from wrong thoughts. The enemy is unable to get in when God’s peace protects us. As we rest our case and transfer our troubles to God, “Corporal Peace” is appointed the duty of marching as a silent sentry around our minds and emotions, calming us within.<sup>32</sup>

Paul not only discusses how we should pray (4:6–7), he also reminds us how we should think and what we should do in the midst of conflict and church strife (4:8–9). Paul gives six characteristics, followed up with a summary and comprehensive command: **“Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things”** (4:8).

These six character qualities do not need to be exegeted because Paul tacks on “if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise.” Paul is writing in broad, sweeping terms of any behavior that is godly. The interesting twist in 4:8 is that Paul is still speaking of conflict in the local church. Yet, we typically apply these character qualities to specific areas of our lives that are unrelated (e.g., “whatever is true” = integrity at work; “whatever is pure” = purity on my computer). While these applications are beneficial, it is better to apply these qualities directly to conflict (e.g., “whatever is true” = I need to find truth in my conflict; “whatever is lovely” = I need to believe the best about my adversary).

Paul urges you to “dwell” or “think” on godly characteristics that will help you in the midst of conflict.<sup>33</sup> The word here is the verb *logizomai*, a term from which we get the mathematical term logarithm. In this context, *logizomai* means to carefully and calculatingly contemplate these virtues the same way that you would work out a mathematical problem.<sup>34</sup> I don’t know about you, but I’m an awful math student. I actually got a “D” in Mrs. Smith’s geometry class. Next, I took Algebra/Trigonometry with Mr. McKnight, who was gracious enough to let his students take every test as many times as they wanted until they were happy with their grade. Amazing, huh? In spite of Mr. McKnight’s grace, I still could only manage a “C” out of his class! That’s how bad I am in math! Yet, in both of these classes, I sought to *logizomai* my way through. Similarly, church conflict is like a complex math problem that you must carefully and strategically think through until you solve the problem.

We have seen that when we pray, we experience the peace of God (4:6–7). Now we will see in 4:8–9 that when we “practice” we experience the God of peace.<sup>35</sup> Paul transitions from attitude to action and lays down his final command: **“The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace<sup>36</sup> will be with you.”** Paul is no “ivory tower teacher;” he is a man who lives “in the trenches” with those he seeks to teach and to lead.<sup>37</sup> As far as we can know, Mahatma Gandhi never became a Christian, but he made a statement that we who follow Jesus would do well to ponder. When asked to put his message into one short sentence, he replied, “My life is my message.” This could be the title of Paul’s biography. Likewise, Paul wants and expects his readers to follow in his footsteps. Thus, he says, “Keep on practicing these things” (present active imperative). Do not be just hearers, but doers (cf. Luke 11:28; Jas 1:22).<sup>38</sup> When hearing is followed up with doing “the peace of God will be with you.” As you practice God’s Word in conflict in sour relationships, God will be present in a powerful way.

Please slip a rubber band on one of your wrists. Now whenever you recognize you’re not rejoicing, flick yourself. When you sense a lack of gentleness, hurt yourself. Five minutes from now when you find yourself filled with worry, nail yourself. When you begin thinking about ungodly characteristics, snap yourself silly. When you are convicted over your lack of living like a doer of the Word, draw that rubber band back and prepare to say “ouch!” If you’re really audacious, take off your rubber band and use it on someone else! God wants to change you and those around you. But sometimes there needs to be negative reinforcement. This is how things work in almost every family. Yet, God’s heart is that you would recognize you are His child. He loves you. He wants you to have peace of mind, but it can only occur by having the mind of Christ.

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**Scripture References**

Philippians 4:1–9

Psalms 133:1–3

John 17:20–21

1 Peter 3:8–9

Luke 12:22–30

1 Thessalonians 5:16–18

1 Timothy 4:7–8

**Study Questions**

1. Do I have a deep love for the members of my church (4:1)? In what specific ways do I verbally express my love and appreciation for my brothers and sisters in Christ? Do I find value and fulfillment in the spiritual maturity of other believers? How is this evident in my life?
2. When was the last time I was involved in an interpersonal church conflict (4:2–3)? How did I behave badly? How did I grow through this trial? What would I do differently when (not *if*) an interpersonal conflict happens again? What advice would I give others on how to deal with a similar conflict?
3. How have I learned to rejoice in the Lord in the midst of various crises (4:4)? In what way does Christ's return help me to work through my relational trials (4:5)? How can I know when to overlook a wrong against me and when to confront it? How do I determine whether a problem is essential or peripheral? Are there shades of gray in between?
4. In the midst of conflict and trials, do I turn my cares over to the Lord (4:6–7)? How can I know when legitimate concern crosses the line into sinful anxiety? How has my prayer life been strengthened through stressful times in my life? How has the Lord brought peace into my life in the midst of despair?
5. Which characteristic in 4:8 do I struggle the most to dwell on? How can I learn, receive, hear, see, and practice this characteristic (4:9)? Specifically, what will this look like in my life? Which characteristic has the Lord worked into my life? How have I seen Him grow me in this area?

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> SermonNews, “Name Does Not Fit Behavior”: [www.sermonnews.com](http://www.sermonnews.com). Posted 7/26/2007, contributed by Brian Mavis.

<sup>2</sup> This is reminiscent of 1 Thess 2:19–20: “For who is our hope or joy or crown of exultation? Is it not even you, in the presence of our Lord Jesus at His coming? For you are our glory and joy” (cf. 3:9).

<sup>3</sup> Paul uses the conjunction *hoste* (“therefore”) in Phil 1:13; 2:12; and 4:1.

<sup>4</sup> The UBS4 Greek text includes Phil 4:1 with ch. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Paul uses *adelphoi* (“brothers and sisters”) nine times in Philippians (1:12, 14, 2:25; 3:1, 13, 17; 4:1, 8, 21).

<sup>6</sup> Peter T. O’Brien, *Commentary on Philippians*. New International Greek Testament Commentary series (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 476.

<sup>7</sup> Bob Kerrey, “Rethinking Your Conflicts” (Phil 4:1–3): [www.moonvalleybible.org/sermons.php](http://www.moonvalleybible.org/sermons.php).

<sup>8</sup> These two women are not named elsewhere in the NT so it is sketchy to speculate as to their identity.

<sup>9</sup> In the Greek text, four of the key terms in the NASB (“companion,” “help,” “struggle,” “fellow workers”) begin with the prefixed preposition *sun* which means “together with.” Paul deliberately chooses these words to emphasize the togetherness of the church team.

<sup>10</sup> The verb *sunathleo* (“shared my struggle”) appears elsewhere in the NT only in Phil 1:27.

<sup>11</sup> Fee writes, “Having ‘the same mindset in the Lord’ has been specifically spelled out in the preceding paradigmatic narratives, where Christ (2:6–11) has humbled himself by taking the ‘form of a slave’ and thus becoming obedient unto death on a cross, and Paul (3:4–14) has expressed his longing to know Christ, especially through participation in his sufferings so as to be conformed into the same cruciform lifestyle. The ways such a ‘mindset’ takes feet is by humbly ‘looking out for the interests of others’ within the believing community (2:3–4).” Gordon D. Fee, *Paul’s Letter to the Philippians*. New International Commentary on the New Testament series (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 392.

<sup>12</sup> Many of Paul’s helpers mentioned in Rom 16 are women.

<sup>13</sup> Some look at this situation and say, “See, there you go. You put women into prominent positions in the church, and what do you get? All kinds of problems.” But let’s remember that the NT records some rather significant animosities between men in the NT church as well, such as the sharp words Paul and Barnabas had about taking John Mark along on a second missionary journey (Acts 15:38–39)—so much so that they could not even travel together as partners any more. The NT church is not an ideal church free from arguments and fights; it was flawed just like churches today, and these squabbles could involve men and/or women. The question is not whether we can avoid sharp differences of opinion, but how we deal with them when they arrive.

<sup>14</sup> Paul repeats the verb “urge” (*parakaleo*) for emphasis even though it is grammatically unnecessary. The verb basically means “to call someone to one’s side,” and can be loosely translated, “Let’s come together.”

<sup>15</sup> The phrase “live in harmony” represents a Greek phrase (*to auto phronein*) nearly identical to the one Paul used in his general exhortation in Phil 2:2 to be “like-minded” (*to auto phronete*). The clear verbal echo of this general exhortation probably indicates that Euodia and Syntyche, more than any of the others, needed to put the interests of each other first and, “in the Lord,” to drop their quarrel. See Frank Thielman, *Philippians*. NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 216.

<sup>16</sup> Who is this man? It is impossible to be sure. Some have suggested that the word “yokefellow” is really a proper name: *Sunzugos*. That is possible. Others have thought that he is referring here to Epaphroditus, who by this time was back in Philippi, and that is also possible.

<sup>17</sup> Kent Crockett, *The 911 Handbook* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), 2.

<sup>18</sup> Constable writes, “The Bible refers to more than one book of life: the book containing the names of people presently alive (Exod. 32:32–33; Ps. 69:28), and the book containing the names of God’s elect (i.e., all believers; Luke 10:20; Rev. 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27) and the names of faithful believers (Phil. 4:3; Rev. 22:19).” Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Philippians,” 2009 ed.: [www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/philippians.pdf](http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/philippians.pdf), 58 n. 174.

<sup>19</sup> Kerrey, “Rethinking Your Conflicts.”

<sup>20</sup> Ray Pritchard., “How to Have Joy All Year Long” (Phil 4:1–9): [www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/1998-12-27-How-to-Have-Joy-All-Year-Long/](http://www.keepbelieving.com/sermon/1998-12-27-How-to-Have-Joy-All-Year-Long/).

<sup>21</sup> Bob Deffinbaugh, “Stand Fast, Stand Together” (Phil 4:1–9) in *To Live is Christ*: [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org).

<sup>22</sup> Pritchard, “How to Have Joy All Year Long.”

<sup>23</sup> Christ’s return is a recurrent theme in Philippians. This has a very similar meaning to the Aramaic word *maranatha* (cf. 1 Cor 16:22; Rev 22:10). The any-moment expectation of Christ’s return was and is an encouragement to Christian living (cf. Rom 13:12; Jas 5:8–9).

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<sup>24</sup> Dwight Edwards, “Earthly Conduct of Heavenly Citizens”: A verse-by-verse study through Philippians:

[www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org).

<sup>25</sup> It occasionally refers to genuine concern (Phil 2:20; 1 Cor 12:25).

<sup>26</sup> Brian Bill, “To Rejoice is a Choice” (Phil 4:4–9):

[www.pontiacbible.org/index.php/?sermons/more/to\\_rejoice\\_is\\_a\\_choice/](http://www.pontiacbible.org/index.php/?sermons/more/to_rejoice_is_a_choice/).

<sup>27</sup> Charles R. Swindoll, *Laugh Again* (Dallas: Word, 1992), 199.

<sup>28</sup> Psychologists teach us that there are two mental laws that contribute heavily to our mental state of being. They are the Law of Concentration and the Law of Substitution. The Law of Concentration states that whatever we dwell upon grows in our life experience. Whatever we think about on a continual basis becomes a part of us. Yes, we become what we think, and the more we dwell on something, the more we have of it in our lives. The Law of Substitution states that our conscience mind can only hold one thought at a time. It makes no difference to our mind whether the thought is “negative” or “positive,” it can only hold one at a time. However, we can choose to substitute “negative” thoughts with “positive” thoughts, thus changing our mental state of being. See Roberto D. Abella:

[www.sermoncentral.com](http://www.sermoncentral.com).

<sup>29</sup> Tony Evans, *Returning to Your First Love* (Chicago: Moody, 1995), 48.

<sup>30</sup> God expects our prayers to be constantly lifted up to Him. Corrie ten Boom (1892–1983), the great Holocaust survivor once said, “Is prayer your steering wheel or your spare tire?”

<sup>31</sup> The parallel passage in Eph 3:20 is helpful. God’s ways are beyond our ways (cf. Isa 55:8–9).

<sup>32</sup> Swindoll, *Laugh Again*, 203.

<sup>33</sup> The capacity of the human brain is the subject of ever-widening scientific wonder. The mind’s activity has been compared to 1,000 switchboards, each big enough to serve New York City, all running at full speed as they receive and send questions and orders. Put another way, there is more electronic equivalent in one human brain than in all the radio and television stations of the entire world put together. R. Kent Hughes, *Philippians: The Fellowship of the Gospel*. Preaching the Word (Wheaton: Crossway, 2007), 173.

<sup>34</sup> Hughes, *Philippians*, 177.

<sup>35</sup> Ken Boa, “Philippians 4:8–9 - Attitudes and Actions” (Phil 4:8–9):

[www.kenboa.org/text\\_resources/teaching\\_letters/kens\\_teaching\\_letter/2144](http://www.kenboa.org/text_resources/teaching_letters/kens_teaching_letter/2144).

<sup>36</sup> This emphasis on the peace-giving God can be seen in Rom 15:33; 16:20; 2 Cor 13:11; 1 Thess 5:23; Heb 13:20. Jesus is called the Lord of peace in 2 Thess 3:16.

<sup>37</sup> Bob Deffinbaugh, “Stand Fast, Stand Together” (Phil 4:1–9): [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org).

<sup>38</sup> Paul’s words are also very similar to the Hebrew concept, *Shema* (cf. Deut 5:1; 6:4; 9:1; 20:3; 27:9–10), which meant “to hear so as to do.”