

PHILIPPIANS

Rejoicing In Christ (4:2-9)

Notes: Week Seven

Philippians 4:2-9 (NIV)

² I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³ Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

Final Exhortations

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

Philippians 4:2-9 (HCSB)

² I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to agree in the Lord. ³ Yes, I also ask you, true partner,^[a] 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. 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, let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses every thought, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally brothers, 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 any praise—dwell on these things. ⁹ Do what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

Footnotes:

- a. [Philippians 4:3](#) Or *true Syzygus*, possibly a person's name

Holman Christian Standard Bible - Study Bible¹

Philippians 4:2-9

4:2 **Euodia** and **Syntychē** were influential, like many women in the Philippian church ([Ac 16](#)). There is no evidence that they held offices. **Urge** occurs twice, once with each name, avoiding favoritism. **Agree** translates the Greek word *phroneo* μ, found so often in this epistle (esp. [2:1-11](#)). This disunity may not have been a significant problem since Paul saved his exhortation for the end of the letter. It was not moral or theological.

4:3 **Ask** is less authoritative than "urge" ([v. 2](#)). **True partner** is singular. Someone in authority (the pastor) would be the mediator. "Partner" elsewhere is translated "fellowship." This is the yokefellow, one co-yoked in the work. Paul provided reasons to help these women. First, they **contended** with Paul (an athletic term). Second, they worked alongside **Clement** (unknown) and Paul's coworkers. The **book of life**, mentioned rarely in the NT (cp. [Rev 3:5](#); [20:15](#); [21:27](#)), refers to those listed among the saved.

4:4-9 In this section Paul approached peace from two perspectives—peace within troublesome circumstances ([vv. 4-7](#)) and constructing an environment of peace ([vv. 8-9](#)).

chairō

Greek Pronunciation [KIGH roh]

HCSB Translation rejoice

Uses in Philippians 9

Uses in the NT 74

Focus passage [Philippians 4:4](#)

Chairō means to enjoy a state of gladness, happiness, or well-being. Scripture records numerous events that result in this joyful state: finding something formerly lost ([Mt 18:13](#); [Lk 15:5,32](#)); the hope of reward from God ([Mt 5:12](#) = [Lk 6:23](#); [Lk 10:20](#)); Jesus' miracles ([Lk 13:17](#); [19:37](#)); His birth ([Lk 1:14](#)); His post-resurrection appearances ([Jn 20:20](#)); suffering ([Ac 5:41](#); [Col 1:24](#)); the repentance of others ([2Co 7:9](#)); the faith of others ([Col 2:5](#)); the preaching about Christ ([Php 1:18](#)); and many other occasions. This state of *rejoicing* in God is commanded for Christians ([Php 3:1](#); [4:4](#); [2Co 13:11](#); [1Th 5:16](#)). *Chairō* also appears as part of a greeting expressing the wish for a person's happiness ([Mt 26:49](#)) and commonly appearing in the introduction to a letter ([Ac 15:23](#); [23:26](#); [Jms 1:1](#)). In the context of miraculous encounters with the divine, *chairō* may mean *Rejoice* ([Mt 28:9](#); [Lk 1:28](#)).

4:5 **Graciousness** implies selflessness and respect for others (cp. [2:1-4](#)). Seldom mentioned in Paul's writings, graciousness is expected of believers and Christian leaders (cp. [1Tim 3:3](#); [Titus 3:2](#)). **Be known** indicates it is part of the church's reputation. **The Lord is near** reminded the Philippian believers of Christ's unseen presence.

4:6-7 **Worry** is anxiety ([Mt 6:25-34](#)). Prayer is the antidote for worry. Three words express different aspects of prayer: **Prayer**, a worshipful attitude; **petition**, a need; and **requests**, the specific concern. **Thanksgiving** shapes prayers with gratitude. In response, **the peace of God** brings power to endure. The peace **surpasses** knowledge, calming a troubling situation when explanations fail. Further, peace guards by keeping anxieties from **hearts** (choices) and **minds** (attitudes).

1. Jeremy Royal Howard, ed., *HCSB Study Bible*, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2010), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "Philippians 1".

4:8-9 Seven qualities create an environment of peace. **True** is ethical "truthfulness." **Honorable** is "noble," to be respected. **Just** is giving people what they deserve. **Pure** is holy in relation to God. **Lovely**, mentioned only here in the NT, is attractive. **Commendable**, also used only here in the NT, is praiseworthy. **Excellence** refers to moral excellence. **Praise** is bringing God praise. **The God of peace** complements "the peace of God" ([v. 7](#)) in that life with these characteristics encourages God's presence.

English Standard Version - Study Bible²

Philippians 4:2-9

4:1-23 Concluding Exhortations and Thanksgiving. Paul encourages the Philippians, calling for reconciliation, joyful faith, and disciplined thinking ([vv. 2-9](#)).

4:1-3 Standing Together for the Gospel. Paul entreats the Philippians to stand unified in the Lord for the sake of the gospel.

4:1 Therefore. This transitional verse can be read as either the conclusion to the previous section or the introduction to [ch. 4](#), **my joy and crown**. The Philippians' spiritual success would be Paul's "crowning achievement" (cf. [1 Thess. 2:19-20](#)), and their perseverance and final salvation will bring him great joy (cf. [Phil. 2:17](#)).

4:2 Paul does not reveal the source of tension between **Euodia** and **Syntychē**. He exhorts them to apply the principle stated in [2:2](#); **agree** ([4:2](#)) and "being of the same mind" ([2:2](#)) are the same Greek phrase (*to auto phronein/phronēte*).

4:3 Reconciliation often requires third-party intervention, in this case a **true companion**. This person is unnamed in the ESV, although the word (Gk. *syzygos*, "true yokefellow," see ESV footnote) could be read as a proper name. Paul is especially eager to see Euodia and Syntyche reconciled because they have **labored side by side** with him **in the gospel**. Cf. [1:27](#), where Paul also encourages unity among those who are "striving side by side" (Gk. *synathleō*, the same verb used here) for the gospel. Paul did not isolate himself and minister alone; he deliberately worked with many others. In view of first-century culture, Euodia and Syntyche probably ministered mainly among women (cf. notes on [Acts 18:26](#); [Rom. 16:7](#); [1 Tim. 2:12](#)). The **book of life** has OT roots (e.g., [Ex. 32:33](#); [Ps. 69:28](#); cf. [Rev. 3:5](#); [13:8](#); [17:8](#); [20:12](#), [15](#); [21:27](#)) and refers to God's record of those who belong to him.

4:4-9 Rejoicing in Faith. Paul calls the Philippians to attitudes of joy and reason, so that they replace anxiety with expectant, grateful prayer. He also calls them to think upon and practice Christian virtues.

4:4 Rejoice. The joy that Paul calls for is not a happiness that depends on circumstances but a deep contentment that is **in the Lord**, based on trust in the sovereign, living God, and that therefore is available **always**, even in difficult times.

4:5 Reasonableness is crucial for maintaining community; it is the disposition that seeks what is best for everyone and not just for oneself. **The Lord is at hand** emphasizes the fact that Jesus will surely return as judge and will hold people responsible for their deeds (cf. [James 5:9](#)). Paul does not specify when this will happen (cf. [Matt. 24:36-44](#); [2 Pet. 3:1-13](#)).

2. Lane T. Dennis, ed., *ESV Study Bible, The: English Standard Version*, (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Bibles, 2008), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "Philippians 4".

4:6-7 Paul echoes Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount (see [Matt. 6:25-34](#)) that believers are not to **be anxious** but are to entrust themselves into the hands of their loving heavenly Father, whose **peace** will **guard** them **in Christ Jesus**. Paul's use of "guard" may reflect his own imprisonment or the status of Philippi as a Roman colony with a military garrison. In either case, it is not Roman soldiers who guard believers—it is the peace of God Almighty. Because God is sovereign and in control, Christians can entrust all their difficulties to him, who rules over all creation and who is wise and loving in all his ways ([Rom. 8:31-39](#)). An attitude of **thanksgiving** contributes directly to this inward peace.

4:8 think about these things. The Philippians are to fill their minds with things that will inspire worship of God and service to others.

4:9 Beyond having a proper spiritual outlook ([v. 8](#)), the Philippians are to **practice** what they have seen Paul doing. As they make progress in this way, they will find that it is not simply the peace of God but **the God of peace himself** who **will be with** them.

NLT Life Application Study Bible³

Philippians 4:2-9

4:2, 3 Paul did not warn the Philippian church of doctrinal errors, but he did address some relational problems. These two women had been workers for Christ in the church. Their broken relationship was no small matter, because many had become believers through their efforts. It is possible to believe in Christ, work hard for his Kingdom, and yet have broken relationships with others who are committed to the same cause. But there is no excuse for remaining unreconciled. Do you need to be reconciled to someone today? If you're facing a conflict you can't resolve, don't let the tension build into an explosion. Don't withdraw or resort to cruel power plays. Don't stand idly by and wait for the dispute to resolve itself. Instead, seek the help of those known for peacemaking.

4:3 The identity of this "true partner" remains a mystery. It could be Epaphroditus, the bearer of this letter, or a comrade of Paul in prison. It could also be someone named Syzygus, another way to understand the word for "partner."

4:3 Those "whose names are written in the Book of Life" are all who are marked for salvation through their faith in Christ (see also [Luke 10:17-20](#); [Revelation 20:11-15](#)).

4:4 It seems strange that a man in prison would be telling a church to rejoice. But Paul's attitude teaches us an important lesson: Our inner attitudes do not have to reflect our outward circumstances. Paul was full of joy because he knew that no matter what happened to him, Jesus Christ was with him. Several times in this letter Paul urged the Philippians to be joyful, probably because they needed to hear this. It's easy to get discouraged about unpleasant circumstances or to take unimportant events too seriously. If you haven't been joyful lately, you may not be looking at life from the right perspective.

4:4, 5 Ultimate joy comes from Christ dwelling within us. Christ is near, and at his second coming we will fully realize this ultimate joy. He who lives within us will fulfill his final purposes for us.

4:5 We are to be considerate (reasonable, fair minded, and charitable) to those outside the church, and not just to fellow believers. This means we are not to seek revenge against those who treat us unfairly, nor are we to be overly vocal about our personal rights.

3. *Life Application Study Bible*, (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1988), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 2022.

4:6, 7 Imagine never worrying about anything! It seems like an impossibility; we all have worries on the job, in our homes, at school. But Paul's advice is to turn our worries into prayers. Do you want to worry less? Then pray more! Whenever you start to worry, stop and pray.

4:7 God's peace is different from the world's peace (see [John 14:27](#)). True peace is not found in positive thinking, in absence of conflict, or in good feelings. It comes from knowing that God is in control. Our citizenship in Christ's Kingdom is sure, our destiny is set, and we can have victory over sin. Let God's peace guard your heart against anxiety.

4:8 What we put into our mind determines what comes out in our words and actions. Paul tells us to program our mind with thoughts that are true, honorable, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and worthy of praise. Do you have problems with impure thoughts and daydreams? Examine what you are putting into your mind through television, Internet, books, conversations, movies, and magazines. Replace harmful input with wholesome material. Above all, read God's Word and pray. Ask God to help you focus your mind on what is good and pure. It takes practice, but it can be done.

4:9 It's not enough to hear or read the Word of God or even to know it well. We must also put it into practice. How easy it is to listen to a sermon and forget what the preacher said. How easy it is to read the Bible and not think about how to live differently. How easy it is to debate what a passage means and not live out that meaning. Exposure to God's Word is not enough. It must lead to obedience.

Life Essentials Study Bible⁴

A Principle to Live By
Philippians #11: Standing Firm
from Philippians 4:1-9

No matter our circumstances in life, we are to stand firm in the Lord by being unified in our relationships, by seeking God's help through prayer, and by imitating Jesus Christ.

Paul's exhortation to "stand firm in the Lord" ([v. 1](#)) introduces some additional exhortations, all of which are all related to concerns he has written about earlier in this letter.

First, he addressed two women by name, encouraging them to agree "in the Lord" ([v. 2](#)). These two women, who had faithfully "contended for the gospel" at Paul's side, were engaged in an inappropriate disagreement. This specific exhortation is related to his general exhortation to stand "firm in one spirit, with one mind, working side by side" ([1:27](#)). (Review Php #5: Mutual Support, [p. 1641](#).)

Second, in order to stand firm, these believers would need to seek supernatural help through prayer, allowing God to give them peace in their hearts. Paul was probably referring to the intense anxiety caused by the persecution they were facing. Paul could certainly identify with their feelings, and he wanted them to experience God's sustaining grace just as he was experiencing this help in prison. Later, Paul wrote, "I am able to do all things through Him who strengthens me" ([4:13](#)).

Third, Paul wanted these believers to continue to follow his example and obey the Word of God ([2:12](#)). Paul lived his own life in such a way that he could write to them the same kind of appeal he wrote to the Corinthians, "Imitate me, as I also imitate Christ" ([1Co 11:1](#)). If they imitated Paul's example of following Christ, they would be able to stand firm just as he was doing in the Roman prison.

Reflection and Response

Of these three exhortations, which one challenges you the most?

4. Gene Getz, *Life Essentials Study Bible*, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2011), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 1645.