

Philippians #4: Christian Mentality for Joy

Phil. 1:27 to 2:11

A. **Living a life that matches the Gospel—citizens, soldiers, athletes** (1:27)

1. Our gospel living matters more than our gospel message (1:21a, 27)—“*preach the gospel; use words if necessary*”
2. As heavenly citizens in Christ’s kingdom (1:27a, cf. 3:20)
3. As a squad of soldiers, standing firm, holding their ground (1:27b)
4. Like athletes, team-members striving side-by-side for the gospel (1:27c)
5. Being in harmony for the same purpose—the gospel (not oneness for its own sake)
 - Fellow-citizens, loyal to Christ, submitting to King Jesus, extending His kingdom
 - Like a squad of soldiers, holding their ground against a common enemy (opposition)
 - Like a team of athletes, cooperating together to win the game/contest
 - Are you just a “spectator,” “in the locker room,” “on the bench,” or “in the game”?
 - What’s your “team”?

B. **The Christian Mentality for Joy—having Christ’s Mind-set** (2:1-11)

1. Based on 5 things we have—encouragement, comfort, fellowship, affection & sympathy (2:1)
2. Being of the same/one mind, having the same love, in full accord (2:2)
 - Unity, not uniformity
 - On the same “team,” cooperating, having the same objectives
3. Not self-centered, but others-centered (2:3-4)
 - Not with rivalry, or conceit
 - But with humility, counting others more significant
 - Not focusing on your own interests, but those of others
4. Having this mind (attitude) “which is yours in Christ Jesus” (2:5)
5. Jesus Christ--the supreme e.g. of being others-centered, not self-centered (2:6-11)

Philippians #4: Christian Mentality for Joy [Supp. Material]

Philippians 1:27 to 2:11

“Only let your manner of life be [or behave as citizens] worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.” [Phil. 1:27-30]

“So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection & sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord & of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted Him & bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven & on earth & under the earth, & every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” [Phil. 2:1-11]

A. Living a life that matches the Gospel--citizens, soldiers, athletes (1:27)

1. Gospel-living matters more than the gospel-message (1:21a, 27)—“*preach the gospel; use words if necessary*”
2. As heavenly citizens in Christ’s kingdom
 - “conduct yourselves as citizens in a manner worthy of the gospel”
 - exercise your rights, fulfill your responsibilities as citizens in Christ’s kingdom
 - “our citizenship is in the heavens, from which we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ” (3:20)
 - Note: Paul writes “conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel.” The phrase “conduct yourselves” (*politeuesthe*) literally means “live as citizens.” The verb Paul uses (*politeuomai*) is related to our English word politics...& has overtones of citizenship responsibilities. Paul is making a play on the Philippians’ “dual citizenship.” The Philippians live in a free Roman city, & thus understand from their own experience what it means to live as citizens. Paul is picking up on that motif & elevating it to include their heavenly citizenship as well. This is especially clear by Paul’s use of the noun form of *politeuomai* in Phil 3:20a where Paul writes, “For our citizenship [*politeuma*] is in heaven.” Paul is suggesting that you are a citizen of heaven, and while you are on earth you ought to behave like heaven’s citizen. [Keith R. Krell, *The Bottom Line* (Phil. 1:27-30)]
 - Note: the Greek for *Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel* can also be translated “only behave as citizens [Gk. *politeuesthe*] worthy [of the gospel],” a phrasing that nicely captures Paul’s play on words here and in Phil. 3:20, “our citizenship [Gk. *politeuma*] is in heaven.” Philippi prided itself on being a Roman colony, offering the honor & privilege of Roman citizenship. Paul reminds the congregation that they should look to Christ, not Caesar, for their model of behavior, since their primary allegiance is to God & his kingdom. They need to stand together with one another & with Paul in *striving* for the gospel. Paul’s emphasis on unity may suggest some division within the Philippian congregation (4:2-3). ESV
3. As soldiers, standing firm (1:27b)
 - “stand firm in one spirit.” (1:27b)
 - hold your ground like a squad of soldiers
 - Note: The word “stand firm” (*steko*) described a Roman military formation where the soldiers stood shoulder to shoulder & back to back with their shields up & their spears outward. It’s the strongest possible defensive position...To stand firm means to hold your ground regardless of the danger or the opposition. Figuratively, it means to hold fast to a belief, a conviction, or a principle without compromise, regardless of personal cost. You must have a military mind-set... Impacting the world begins as Christians stand together “in one spirit.” As followers of Jesus, we need each other. Like soldiers, we too, are to join arms and hearts, offering encouragement & hope in our struggles. We are not to divide. [Keith R. Krell, *The Bottom Line* (Phil. 1:27-30)]
4. Like athletes, team-members struggling together (1:27c)
 - with one mind/soul, for the same purpose
 - “striving side-by-side together for the faith of the gospel” (1:27c)
 - Note: Paul has just used political and military word pictures, now he moves to...athletics. The word translated “striving together” (*sunathleo*) gives us our English word “athletics.” Paul pictures the church as a team, & he reminds the Philippians that it is teamwork that wins victories. It’s like a coach saying to his players, ‘We win together & we lose together.’ The local church is not made up of superstars...Jesus Christ is the superstar, & we join together with Him to compete. In this case, we play as a team to advance the truth of God & promote His kingdom. Our proper motivation & common goal is ‘for the faith of the gospel’.” [Keith R. Krell, *The Bottom Line* (Phil. 1:27-30)]
5. Being in harmony for the same purpose—the gospel (not oneness for its own sake)

- Fellow-citizens, loyal to Christ, submitting to King Jesus, extending His kingdom
- Like a squad of soldiers, holding their ground against a common enemy (opposition)
- Like a team of athletes, cooperating together to win the game/contest
 - Oneness for its own sake—the team stays in the locker room, asking, ‘Are we one?’
 - Are you just a “spectator,” “on the bench,” or “in the game”?
 - What’s your “team”?

B. The Christian Mentality for Joy—having Christ’s Mind-set (2:1-11)

1. Based on 5 things we have—encouragement, comfort, fellowship, affection & sympathy (2:1)
 - “*If there is...*” Paul is not *doubting* that *encouragement, participation in the Spirit, affection, & sympathy* are realities *in Christ* & are present in the Philippi congregation. He uses a conditional sentence (*if*) to provoke the Philippians so that they’ll reflect on whether these qualities are evident in their lives. The Philippian believers must make sure they continue to progress in the absolutely critical area of love for one another. Paul emphasizes, *be of the same mind*. This doesn’t imply a drab intellectual uniformity; rather, the Philippians are to use their diverse gifts (cf. 1 Cor. 12) in an agreeable, cooperative spirit, with a focus on the glory of God. ESV
2. Being of the same/one mind, having the same love, in full accord (2:2)
 - Unity, not uniformity
 - On the same “team,” cooperating, having the same objectives
 - The joy of being others-centered (2:2)
 - Note: “*Be of the same mind*” This phrase doesn’t mean we should have the same opinions or agree about everything. Paul’s desire is for unity, not uniformity. Uniformity is gained by pressure from without. The English word uniformity has within it the word ‘uniform.’ We dress alike, look alike, sound alike, think alike, act alike. But that’s neither healthy nor biblical. Unity comes from deep within. It’s the inner desire to conduct oneself in a cooperative manner...to be on the same team, go for the same objectives, for the benefit of one another. [Keith R. Krell, *The United Way* (Phil. 2:1-4)]
 - Note: “*Unite in spirit*.” This is a most unusual phrase Paul chose here; it really conveys the idea of having ‘joint souls’ (*sumpsuchos*). We are to be soul brothers & sisters, in harmony with all of God’s people. E. Stanley Jones (1884–1973), missionary to India, once said to Christians, “*Talk about what you believe & you have disunity. Talk about Who you believe in & you have unity.*” Christians will always disagree on doctrine; however, we should unite around Jesus. There are 2 primary dangers in the Christian church: majoring on the minors & minoring on the majors. We need to ensure that we are majoring on the major doctrines that center around the Lord Jesus (e.g., the Trinity, the inerrancy of Scripture, the deity of Christ, the bodily resurrection of Christ, salvation by faith alone, & the personal return of Christ). These [essential] things are non-negotiable because they have joined true Christians across the centuries. When we disagree: (1) We should major on what we have in common. (2) We should respect the right of others to disagree. (3) We should hold our convictions in love. True unity is not an absence of conflict (doctrinal or otherwise), but a commitment to reconciliation. [Keith R. Krell, *The United Way* (Phil. 2:1-4)]
3. Not self-centered, but others-centered (2:3-4)
 - Not with rivalry, or conceit
 - But with humility, counting others more significant
 - Not focusing on your own interests, but those of others
 - Note: There is always a temptation to be like Paul’s opponents in 1:17 & operate in a spirit of *selfish ambition*, looking to advance one’s own agenda. Such *conceit* (lit., “vainglory”) is countered by counting others *more significant than yourselves*. Paul realizes that everyone naturally looks out for his or her *own interests*. The key is to take that same level of concern and apply it *also* to the *interests of others*. Such radical love is rare, so Paul proceeds to show its supreme reality in the life of Christ (2:5-11) ESV
4. Having this mind (attitude) “which is yours in Christ Jesus” (2:5)
 - Note: The believer’s *mind* needs to reflect on the proper model, if life is to be lived for God. There is some debate as to whether this mind-set is something Christians receive by virtue of being *united to Christ* (ESV text: “*which is yours in Christ Jesus*”), or whether it is to be based on *the model of Christ* (ESV footnote: “*which was also in Christ Jesus*”). (The Greek has no verb; either “is” or “was” has to be supplied.) In light of the consistent theme of behavior modeling in this letter (Jesus, Paul, Timothy, & Epaphroditus are all held out as examples), many interpreters have adopted the latter meaning. Both ideas are theologically true. In either case, the central theme of 2:1-5 is the same—that the Philippian church would be of one mind (2:2), united by love (2:2) & humility (2:3), & looking out for the interests of others (2:4). ESV
5. Jesus Christ--the supreme e.g. of being others-centered, not self-centered (2:6-11)
 - Not ascending, but descending
 - Not grasping or retaining, but sacrificing
 - Not self-centered, but others-centered (for us!)
 - Not exalting Himself, but being exalted by God

Philippians #4: Christian Mentality for Joy [Script]

- Christian life about experiencing God & Christ—examples
- Christian Mentality for Joy—Christians should be joyful people—*“The joy of the Lord is my strength”*
- George Muller—*“I’m an old man, a very happy old man”*

Philippians 1:27 to 2:11

“Only let your manner of life be [or behave as citizens] worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.” [Phil. 1:27-30]

“So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection & sympathy, complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord & of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted Him & bestowed on Him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven & on earth & under the earth, & every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” [Phil. 2:1-11]

Song *“He’s my Lord, He’s my Lord, He has risen from the dead & H’s my Lord, Every knee shall bow...”*

PIX: Philippians Living the Gospel

PIX: Phil Preach Gospel when necessary use words

A. Living a life that matches the Gospel--citizens, soldiers, athletes (1:27)

PIX: Phil 1 v27 Only conduct yourselves

1. Gospel-living matters more than the gospel-message (1:21a, 27)—*“preach the gospel; use words if necessary”*
 - Paul said, *“For me to live is Christ..”* (1 v??)
 - E.g. of Robert Chapman—*“Many preach Christ, not many live Christ, I will live Christ!”*

PIX: Philippians 1 v27 Citizens from on High

PIX: Philippians 1 v27 Citizens Tried & True

2. **As heavenly citizens** in Christ’s kingdom
 - “conduct yourselves as citizens in a manner worthy of the gospel”
 - **Tourists e.g. Americans abroad**—*“That’s what Americans are like”*

- Chinese teenager defaced an Egyptian artifact “*Ding Jinhao was here*”
- May, 2013, "Ding Jinhao" is a 15-year-old middle school student from Nanjing.
- People are watching you—e.g. of guy in the woods “*You’re that Pastor*”
- exercise your rights, fulfill your responsibilities as citizens in Christ’s kingdom

PIX: Phil Soldiers Band of Brothers

PIX: Phil US Soldiers in Afghanistan

PIX: Phil US Soldiers on Patrol

PIX: Phil 1 v27 Soldiers Basic training Coop

3. As soldiers, standing firm (1:27b)

- “stand firm in one spirit.” (1:27b)
- hold your ground like a squad of soldiers
- Note: The word “stand firm” (*steko*) described a Roman military formation where the soldiers stood shoulder to shoulder & back to back with their shields up & their spears outward. It’s the strongest possible defensive position...To stand firm means to hold your ground regardless of the danger or the opposition. Figuratively, it means to hold fast to a belief, a conviction, or a principle without compromise, regardless of personal cost. You must have a military mind-set... Impacting the world begins as Christians stand together “in one spirit.” As followers of Jesus, we need each other. Like soldiers, we too, are to join arms and hearts, offering encouragement & hope in our struggles. We are not to divide. [Keith R. Krell, *The Bottom Line* (Phil. 1:27-30)]

6. Like athletes, team-members struggling together (1:27c)

PIX: Philippians Teamwork Football

PIX: Philippians Teamwork Rowing

- with one mind/soul, for the same purpose
 - “striving side-by-side together for the faith of the gospel” (1:27c)
 - On the same team—Song: “*In the team, In the team, let us work in the team; In the team, In the team, we’ll work as in the heavenly team*”
 - Note: The word translated “striving together” (*sunathleo*) gives us our English word “athletics.” Paul pictures the church as a team, & he reminds the Philippians that it is teamwork that wins victories. It’s like a coach saying to his players, ‘We win together & we lose together.’ The local church is not made up of superstars...Jesus Christ is the superstar, & we join together with Him to compete. In this case, we play as a team to advance the truth of God & promote His kingdom. Our proper motivation & common goal is ‘for the faith of the gospel’.” [Keith R. Krell, *The Bottom Line* (Phil. 1:27-30)]
- ### 7. Being in harmony for the same purpose—the gospel (not oneness for its own sake)
- Fellow-citizens, loyal to Christ, submitting to King Jesus, extending His kingdom
 - Like a squad of soldiers, holding their ground against a common enemy (opposition)
 - Like a team of athletes, cooperating together to win the game/contest

PIX: Phil Coach’s Pep Talk

PIX: Phil on Bench Sidelines

PIX: Phil on the Bench Sidelines

PIX: Phil sitting in Locker Room

PIX: Phil Monday Morning QB

Oneness for its own sake—the team stays in the locker room, asking, ‘Are we one?’

- Are you just a “spectator,” “on the bench,” or “in the game”?
- **What’s your “team”?**
- **Your small group—work together—host, food, music, inviting, sharing, etc**
- **Our congregation work together (some at front; other support) e.g. Kids’ Night,’ Catalyst, Youth activities—we’re all doing this...**
- **Don’t say this is not my thing; let them do it, if they fail...**
- **All believers in Toronto, GTA. Their gain is our gain, etc. They are not our enemies, opponent. Competition. They’re on the same (larger) team**

PIX: Small Groups Life Together

PIX: Small Groups Tree

C. The Christian Mentality for Joy—having Christ’s Mind-set (2:1-11)

PIX: Philippians 2 v1 If there is any

6. Based on 5 things we have—encouragement, comfort, fellowship, affection & sympathy (2:1)
 - “If there is...” Paul is not *doubting* that *encouragement, participation in the Spirit, affection, & sympathy* are realities *in Christ* & are present in the Philippi congregation. He uses a conditional sentence (*if*) to provoke the Philippians so that they’ll reflect on whether these qualities are evident in their lives. The Philippian believers must make sure they continue to progress in the absolutely critical area of love for one another. Paul emphasizes, *be of the same mind*. This doesn’t imply a drab intellectual uniformity; rather, the Philippians are to use their diverse gifts (cf. 1 Cor. 12) in an agreeable, cooperative spirit, with a focus on the glory of God. ESV
7. Being of the same/one mind, having the same love, in full accord (2:2)
 - Unity, not uniformity
 - On the same “team,” cooperating, having the same objectives
 - The joy of being others-centered (2:2)
 - Note: “*Be of the same mind*” This phrase doesn’t mean we should have the same opinions or agree about everything. Paul’s desire is for unity, not uniformity. Uniformity is gained by pressure from without. The English word uniformity has within it the word ‘uniform.’ We dress alike, look alike, sound alike, think alike, act alike. But that’s neither healthy nor biblical. Unity comes from deep within. It’s the inner desire to conduct oneself in a cooperative manner...to be on the same team, go for the same objectives, for the benefit of one another. [Keith R. Krell, *The United Way* (Phil. 2:1-4)]
 - Note: “*Unite in spirit*.” This is a most unusual phrase Paul chose here; it really conveys the idea of having ‘joint souls’ (*sumpsuchos*). We are to be soul brothers & sisters, in harmony with all of God’s people. E. Stanley Jones (1884–1973), missionary to India, once said to Christians, “*Talk about what you believe & you have disunity. Talk about Who you believe in & you have unity.*” Christians will always disagree on doctrine; however, we should unite around Jesus. There are 2 primary dangers in the Christian church: majoring on the minors & minoring on the majors. We need to ensure that we are majoring on the major doctrines that center

around the Lord Jesus (e.g., the Trinity, the inerrancy of Scripture, the deity of Christ, the bodily resurrection of Christ, salvation by faith alone, & the personal return of Christ). These [essential] things are non-negotiable because they have joined true Christians across the centuries. When we disagree: (1) We should major on what we have in common. (2) We should respect the right of others to disagree. (3) We should hold our convictions in love. True unity is not an absence of conflict (doctrinal or otherwise), but a commitment to reconciliation. [Keith R. Krell, *The United Way* (Phil. 2:1-4)]

- **PIX: Philippians 2 v3 Humility Doing Nothing**
- **PIX: Philippians 2 v3a Doing Nothing out of**
- **PIX: Philippians 2 v4 Look at Others Things**
- **PIX: Philippians 2 v4 Others Also**

8. Not self-centered, but others-centered (2:3-4)

9. E.g. of Paul I remain for your progress

10. Lord Jesus Christ

11. Us....

- Not with rivalry, or conceit
- But with humility, counting others more significant
- Not focusing on your own interests, but those of others
- Note: There is always a temptation to be like Paul's opponents in 1:17 & operate in a spirit of *selfish ambition*, looking to advance one's own agenda. Such *conceit* (lit., "vainglory") is countered by counting others *more significant than yourselves*. Paul realizes that everyone naturally looks out for his or her *own interests*. The key is to take that same level of concern and apply it *also* to the *interests of others*. Such radical love is rare, so Paul proceeds to show its supreme reality in the life of Christ (2:5-11) ESV

12. Having this mind (attitude) "which is yours in Christ Jesus" (2:5)

- Note: The believer's *mind* needs to reflect on the proper model, if life is to be lived for God. There is some debate as to whether this mind-set is something Christians receive by virtue of being *united to Christ* (ESV text: "*which **is** yours in Christ Jesus*"), or whether it is to be based on *the model of Christ* (ESV footnote: "*which **was** also in Christ Jesus*"). (The Greek has no verb; either "is" or "was" has to be supplied.) In light of the consistent theme of behavior modeling in this letter (Jesus, Paul, Timothy, & Epaphroditus are all held out as examples), many interpreters have adopted the latter meaning. Both ideas are theologically true. In either case, the central theme of 2:1-5 is the same—that the Philippian church would be of one mind (2:2), united by love (2:2) & humility (2:3), & looking out for the interests of others (2:4). ESV

- **PIX: Phil The Way Up is Down**
- **PIX: Philippians 2 v9 Exalted**
- **PIX: Philippians 2 v9 Above Every**
- **PIX: Philippians 2 v10 Every Knee Bow**

13. Jesus Christ--the supreme e.g. of being others-centered, not self-centered (2:6-11)

- Not ascending, but descending
- Not grasping or retaining, but sacrificing
- Not self-centered, but others-centered (for us!)
- Not exalting Himself, but being exalted by God