

Philippians: Gospel Partnership

A Life Governed by the Gospel

Philippians 4:4-7 ESV

[4] Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. [5] Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; [6] do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. [7] And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Intro - Parents leaving for vacation

Final Instructions

- feed the dog
- don't forget to put out the garbage on Wednesday
- the alarm code is 2727
- emergency numbers are on the fridge

Borrowing Dad's Car

- Don't ~~scuttle~~ take it through a drive thru
- insurance + ownership is in the glove box
- Use the handsfree for phone calls
- and no texting

These final instructions aren't disassociated from the letter but rather come as a result of the letter

Philippians 4:4-7

July 17, 2016

Four things that should be true of gospel partners whose lives are governed by the gospel

A life governed by the gospel is...

A life of rejoicing.

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice."

- From previous verse: "whose names are in the book of life."
- Joy arises as we believe the truth of God's Word and delight in that truth
- **John 15: ~~11~~ 11 ESV** [11] These things [abide in me, obey my commandments] I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.
- **Piper:** "Pursue the experience of this joy [the joy of Christ] by looking steadfastly at the whole array of excellencies in Christ in the Word of God while crying out continually for the Spirit to come and open your eyes to see this glory and to savor this glory with the very savoring of God."
- When are we to rejoice? "Always"
 - Even when my boyfriend breaks up with me?
 - Even when my child gets sick to the point of death?
 - Even when my husband has cheated?
 - Even when I get let go from my job at a time of high unemployment?
 - Even when my body is aging and my close friends are dying and I'm becoming a shadow of the mental/physical/emotional person I used to be?
 - Even when the bills are piling up and paying them off is no longer possible?
 - Even when I have been abused?
 - Even when my country is engaged in a civil war and we are displaced and seeking asylum elsewhere?
 - YES! Always!

- I do not speak this from personal experience. I speak this because it is what God has said in his Word.
- God calls us to mourn with those who mourn. God calls us to be appropriately concerned with the troubles of this world. God calls us to be saddened by our brothers and sisters who have forsaken Christ. But, I believe the Bible indicates there is a deep, mysterious, ineffable joy in our union with Christ that continues despite the many emotions that rage and rise up in our circumstances.
- Paul and the Philippians were not in ideal circumstances
- And I have spoken with numerous members of our congregation who will profess that, despite dire and deathly circumstances, there was a deep-rooted joy in the Lord that the trials and tribulations of this life could not shake
- We lose our joy when we stop believing the truth and/or delighting in the truth *of the gospel*

A gospel-partners life is a life governed by the gospel resulting in rejoicing always.

A life of sweet reasonableness.

"Let your reasonableness be known to everyone."

- The word translated "reasonableness" in the ESV is translated as "gentle spirit" in the NASB and "gentleness" in NIV and "moderation" in the KJV.
- There are two ideas associated with this Greek word: level-headedness and a disposition of restorative, kind, gentleness = sweet reasonableness
- This is not a suggestion or a granting of permission; it is a command

- Regardless of their circumstances, in regards to “everyone”—both believers and unbelievers—the Philippians are to demonstrate a level-headed reasonableness that comes with a winsome, gentle, and attractive sweetness.
- Many are either reasonable at the expense of gentleness, or gentle and sweet at the expense of being reasonable...Paul desires them to be both.
- How? By having the mind of Christ – “The Lord is at hand”

A yoke-fellow in Christ is living a life governed by the gospel which is a life adorned with sweet reasonableness.

A life free from anxiousness.

“do not be anxious about anything”

- We want to make exceptions. Paul, you don't know my situation!”
- Philippians situation: opposition to the gospel from outside the church, the internal danger of false teachers promoting a return to the Mosaic law, the presence in their midst of those who were enemies of the cross, family conflicts such as the one between Euodia and Syntyche, a dearly loved leader in prison...
- **Matthew 6:25-30 ESV** [25] “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? [26] Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? [27] And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? [28] And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they

neither toil nor spin, [29] yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. [30] But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

- How do we remain free from anxiety?
 - Believe and trust in the love of God (v26) and the sovereignty of God (v27)
 - Again, "the Lord is at hand" and he is loving and he is sovereign
- Wise concern changes to sinful anxiety when we stop believing and delighting in the sovereign love of God. *Where are God's love + sovereign seen most clearly?*

A partaker of grace has been impacted by the gospel in such a way that they subdue anxiety with faith in the love and sovereignty of God.

A life of prayer.

"but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."

- In opposition to being anxious, we are commanded to let our requests be made known to God
- Two hindrances to prayer: unbelief and self-sufficiency. Unbelief was challenged already when we looked at anxiousness so let us consider self-sufficiency.
 - "If you are not praying, then you are quietly confident that time, money, and talent are all you need in life. You'll always be a little too tired, a little too busy. But, if like Jesus you realize you can't do life on your own, then no matter how busy, no matter how tired you are, you will find the time to pray." — Paul E. Miller, *A Praying Life: Connecting with God in a Distracting World*

- We have a God who doesn't just allow us to make requests, but encourages us to make them and ultimately commands us to make requests knowing our weakness *of self-sufficiency*
- Paul identifies the circumstances, the methods, and the attitude of making our requests known to God:
 - Circumstances: in everything—not just when it's an emergency, but also in the every-day-ness of life, not just when we feel overwhelmed but also when we feel confident we can handle things, not just for the hard-to-believe-supernatural but also in the average, ordinary episodes of our life—in everything
 - Expecting a baby – pray
 - Trying to get pregnant – pray
 - Working through elementary/secondary school – pray
 - Looking for a job – pray
 - Looking to endure the job you already have – pray
 - You're in good health – pray
 - You're experiencing poor health – pray
 - You're trying to parent in a godly manner – pray
 - You wish your adult children would visit – pray
 - Method: by prayer and supplication
 - Prayer – general sense of addressing God
 - Supplication – urgent request for a need to be met by God
 - Attitude: with thanksgiving
 - Gratitude far more important than we often realize
 - "Gratitude should form the very context of our entire life." **Colossians 3:17 ESV** And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

A partner in the gospel is governed by the gospel and that means his or her life is a life of prayer.

A life governed by the gospel is... A life of rejoicing. A life of sweet reasonableness. A life free from anxiousness. A life of prayer.

-always

-to everyone

about anything

in everything

What is the result of this?

"And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Not a criteria for making decisions!

Not a promise detached from anything else. It is attached to these other things.

If you allow the gospel to govern your life; if you rejoice in the midst of all your circumstances by believing and delighting in God's Word; if your dealings with the people around you—family, the church, your neighbours, your work associates, your friends and acquaintances—are flavoured with a sweet reasonableness; if you battle anxiousness with faith in the sovereignty and love of God; and if you make your requests known to God through continual prayer and supplication THEN

- "the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."
- Peace – the wholeness of God, the completeness of God, all of what it will mean to live with him in eternal perfection
- Surpasses all understanding – transcends the rational aspect of our being
- will guard your hearts and your minds – our shared Christ-like mindset will be preserved by God's peace which is in Christ Jesus

** You cannot have the "peace of God" without experiencing "peace with God" ⇒ GOSPEL*
SIN → enemies of God Jesus-reconciles us to God/God to us