

BROKEN CHAINS
The Philippian Series #14
July 9th, 2017

TEXT: Philippians 4:4-9

CONSIDER THIS: One way to accurately describe Christianity is to say that it is a whole new way of thinking, a radically changed outlook about:

- (1) yourself
- (2) life
- (3) God
- (4) sin
- (5) circumstances
- (6) others

In today's passage we finally begin to hone in the spectacular promises of Philippians 4. JOY, PEACE, CONTENTMENT. Available to you at all times, even in the midst of terrible circumstances. And who better to explain this to us than a man in prison though innocent, kept in chains, taken advantage of unfairly ... yet a man whose daily portion was JOY, PEACE and CONTENTMENT. The tough things he was facing could not stop Paul from seeing his own life as a testimony of **BROKEN CHAINS**. Let us join him.

GOD'S WORD TEACHES US ...

I BLESSING FOLLOW OBEDIENCE

- A) From Genesis to Revelation, this pattern is consistently taught (for example, see Genesis 4:6-7; Deuteronomy 28:1-14; Malachi 3:6-12; Revelation 2:1-7). Philippians 4:4-7 reflects this same pattern.

NOTE: Obedience leads to blessing, but it is not about earning God's love or forgiveness. We are saved freely by grace. The obedience in view here pertains to how God wisely parents and shepherds His people. We need to understand the beauty of His commands, that in obedience to Him we find joy. See Psalm 19:7-11.

- B) There are commands in 4:4-9 which directly relate to God's promises for you:
- 1) *Rejoice* (verse 4) = Putting on God's perspective
 - 2) *Be gentle* (verse 5) = My attitude toward others (see 2:1-5).
 - 3) *Do not be anxious* (verse 6) – Literally means “be drawn in different directions”. We must choose to trust in God's character and sovereign goodness and not doubt. This is where Israel repeatedly failed in Exodus 14-17. Christian, what are your **thoughts** when standing on the shore of your “Red Sea” challenge?

- 4) *Be thankful* (verse 6) = There are always blessings if we choose to see them. It is right to be thankful. It is wrong to not be thankful.
- 5) *Present your requests* (verse 6) = Prayer is about being in a personal relationship with God.
- 6) *Think biblically* (verse 8) =
 - a) True = that which God has made known.
 - b) Noble = that which is honorable.
 - c) Right = conforms to God's holiness.
 - d) Pure = clean and undefiled.
 - e) Lovely, admirable, excellent, praiseworthy = to love what God loves.

These commands all focus on how we choose to think.
 If you lack the peace promised in verse 7,
 it will, in some way, be due to the choices
 you make in your thought life.

- C) Put it into practice (verse 9). Paul's life and example, especially his response to difficult circumstances, is your model for responding to adversity. Life is 5% what happens and 95% how you respond.

II THE PEACE OF GOD

- A) The Old Testament word, **shalom**, is very rich and this is what Paul has in mind. Shalom speaks of a wholeness or completeness, a sense of deep satisfaction and fulfillment we enjoy in the presence of God.
- B) It is one of God's names = The LORD is Peace/Jehovah Shalom as in Judges 6:19-24. Gideon lived in a time of national disaster, chaos, and personal pain. Yet his testimony was "Jehovah Shalom". Christian, you need not be a prisoner of your circumstances! Take a look at Romans 5:1-2!

III GOD IS STANDING GUARD

- A) The history of Philippi is significant. It had the legal status of "Roman Colony" because so many Roman soldiers and centurions had retired there.
- B) To "guard" is a military term which means "to keep watch over". Imagine having Jesus Christ as the personal bodyguard of your heart, standing ready to fend off attacks against your soul, your emotions, and your state of mind. Now consider Jesus' promise in John 14:1, 27.

BROKEN CHAINS!

Reminder: Pick up the commentary notes in the Welcome Center or at www.gracecommunity.net for practical ways to apply today's message.