



KING'S CHAPEL

Daily Devotional - Philippians Study

Week 5 - Day 2

Approaching God

Read 2 Peter 1:3-7

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love.

Opening Prayer: Take a moment to ask God to show you some of the gifts in your life – of friends or family or situations or personal gifts, all the things that bring you life, energy and lightness of heart. As you consider these gifts, consider how they can help you to come closer to God, how they offer you opportunities for faith, generosity, patience or love.

Bible Reading, Study & Meditation - Philippians 4:10-13

Slowly & carefully read the passage 2 or 3x's before taking notes & answering questions

Paul is grateful for the Philippians' support. But he was quick to say as well that his deep gratitude for their gift didn't mean he was the sort of person who would grumble or moan at God if he wasn't kept well-supplied with creature comforts. On the contrary, God had put through a tough school in which he had learned one of life's most important lessons: contentment.

Philippians 4:10-13

10 I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. **11** Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. **12** I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. **13** I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

Start with Engaging the Text: Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words. Which words or phrases stand out to you as significant?

Daily Study Questions

You may find it helpful to read through the section: “Resources for Further Study” at the end of today’s study before answering these questions.

To Study the Passage:

- How does Paul express his gratitude in this passage? How does he also at the same time distance himself from a complaining or grumbling attitude?
- What are some things that Paul compares and contrasts in this passage? What is the main point he is driving at by making these comparisons?
- How would you articulate in your own words the secret Paul has learned about being content?

Meditation & Reflection Questions

- Read the excerpt below by Eugene Peterson in the section “Resources for Further Study.” After reading, how would you define spiritual maturity? How is God calling you towards that where you are right now?
- What might contentment look like for you in your daily life? What areas of life is that a struggle for you right now?

Close in Prayer:

Claim the promise of verse 13, not in a general way but for specific situations. Where do you need strength and renewed energy from God? How are you fearful about your needs not being met? What anxieties weigh you down? Pray about each concern, thanking God for the promises of vs. 13 and its encouragement to you?

Resources for Further Study

Eugene Peterson on Philippians 4:10-13

An excerpt from As Kingfishers Catch Fire: part 6

Philippians 4:13 - "I can do *all* things through Christ who strengthens me."

All...documents a solid maturity. "I have learned, in whatever state I am, to be content. I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and want. I can do *all* things in him who strengthens me" (4:11-13).

In our vernacular, Paul has been around the block a few times. He has been up and he has been down. He is a veteran. He is solidly mature. There are surprises that neither adversity nor success could deal him. He has visited the extremes. And what he knows is that what God has done within him is far more important and lasting and real than anything that could be done to him from the outside by weather or government or persons.

Immaturity is that in-between innocence and experience, when we think that by changing what we have or whom we are with or where we are, we can change ourselves. Maturity arrives in a way of life that has form and substance developed from our insides and that knows the significant acts are our responses. Christian maturity experiences that responsiveness when shaped and renewed by faith in Christ.

Mature Christians are able to do all things because they know they don't have to do everything. They acquire strength to live because they don't have to be anxious and constantly attentive to trivia, and they don't have to take responsibility for the whole world on their shoulders.

There are a great many things we can do little or nothing about. The weather is out of our hands. Other people's emotions are out of our hands. The economy is out of our hands. Mostly we have to live with what families or our bodies or our government hands to us. But there is one enormous difference that *is* in our hands: we can offer up the center of our lives to the great revealed action of God's love for us. We can discover that each of us is an absolutely unique individual. We can cultivate the vitality and centering of life that develops out of risking our lives in a relationship with God.

When we do that, we find Paul's statement neither extravagant nor fanciful: "I can do *all* things through Christ who strengthens me" (verse 13, NKJV).