

FOR DISCUSSION

1. Have you ever had a big disagreement with a fellow Christian? Have you ever tried to help other Christians in their disagreements? How did you resolve it? Looking back would you do anything differently?
2. When have you experienced a great measure of peace in your Christian life? What made the difference? How was your thought life and/or prayer life connected to this time?

DIG DEEPER

Read Philippians 4:1-3

RELATING

3. Paul clearly cares for the Philippians deeply. What affectionate words does he encourage them with in verse 1? What is his exhortation for the church?
4. Who are the two ladies mentioned? And what is going on with them, and the church?
5. What do you notice about *how* Paul speaks about these ladies? What is his solution? Do you think he is fair or considerate? What positives does he point out?
6. We see that Paul asks another individual, someone he refers to as his “true companion”, to help out with this conflict between Euodia & Syntyche. When have you needed a third party’s help and perspective in your relationships? What do you learn here that can prepare you to be this person?

Read Philippians 4:4-5

REJOICING

7. Our natural tendencies are complaining & disputing rather than rejoicing. This is why Paul commands again and again in this letter that we “rejoice in the Lord *always*”. What reasons does a Christian have to rejoice even in tough times?
8. Paul’s command in verse 5 is to let your _____ be evident to all. This can also be translated as *gentleness* or *forbearance*. Is this natural for you when engaging in conflict with others? Why or why not?

Read Philippians 4:6-7

PRAYING

9. Paul’s command is “do not be anxious about _____.” Consider Matthew 6:25-34 & 1 Peter 5:7. How does anxiety reveal a lack of trust in the Lord?
10. Instead of entertaining anxious thoughts, we are given three steps to deal with stress in our lives:
 1. P_____: We often think of prayer as our requests, but it is first and foremost turning our attention to the very one we are speaking with. Here is where we take our eyes off of our problem and onto our great God. Praise Him for who He is.

2. S _____: Now present your requests to Him. What situation is on your heart? Share with the Lord. Cast your anxieties on Him because He cares for you.
3. T _____: Thank Him for your salvation. Thank Him for His past provisions. Cultivate a grateful heart for all that you have been given.

Which of these three is most present in your prayer life? Most absent?

11. The result of turning our eyes to God in prayer, thanking Him and bringing our request at his feet is that *the* _____ *of* _____ *that surpasses all* _____ *will guard your* _____ *and your* _____ *in Christ Jesus.*

Read Philippians 4:8-9

THINKING

12. Paul knows that our thought life is integral to building healthy relationships in the church and experiencing true peace from the Lord. These verses lead us to focus in on the battlefield of our mind. We are called to renew our mind by focusing on the following things:

Whatever is...

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ |

If there is any _____, if there is anything worthy of _____, think about these things.

13. The first characteristic is to think on what is 'true'. This means we are to reject what is false and to also reject irrational thinking. We are NOT to entertain 'what if's'. How is entertaining 'what if's' a very real danger to us? How can it rob you of your joy and peace?
14. 2 Corinthians 10:5 exhorts us to "take every thought captive to obey Christ." Look at the list above. What kinds of things hinder our thought life? What kinds of things help?

Paul has been sharing the recipe for peace in our lives, and now gives the final ingredient in vs. 9: "What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me - _____ these things and _____".

How would you put this in your own words?

BRING IT HOME

15. Is there any discord in your relationships that you need to make right? Is there any root of bitterness growing that you need to repent of?
16. What burdens you today? Do you trust the Lord with this situation? Which ingredient in this study will you add into your life this week?

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray for unity and gospel perspective in our relationships with one another.
- Cast your anxieties on the Lord for He cares for you and desires to give you His peace.
- Pray you will increasingly learn to take your thoughts captive to obey Christ & dwell on His truth.