

LESSON 9: PHILIPPIANS 4:2-23

Stand Firm!

1. What matters more to Paul than the reason for Euodia and Syntyche's disagreement (vv. 2-3)? What has their disagreement brought about in the fellowship believers? Can you effectively stand firm when there is division in the church? Again, how important is unity (see 1:27-28)? How do you know whose "names are in the book of life" (v. 3)? What is the book of life?
2. Paul commands us to "rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!" (v. 4) How do you understand this command to joy in the Lord? And: "Let your reasonableness be known to everyone," Paul writes in verse 5. What do you understand this to mean. What is your reasonableness that (presumably, hopefully!) is known by all?
3. In verse 5, Paul instructs us to "not be anxious about anything." What is the nature of anxiety? What does Paul offer as the Christian's antidote to it? What does the fact that "the Lord is at hand" have to do with bringing real comfort to ourselves and others (v. 5-7)? What is the promise offered to us in this regard?
4. What is the nature and character of the peace to which Paul refers in verse 7? Do you need to be able to explain every part of your Christian experience to yourself or to all comers who may ask about the hope that is in you? If you wish to enjoy the peace of God, what must you do?
5. Paul directs us to conform our thought to all that is good and true and excellent (v. 8). What is his teaching on this point? How does the content of our thought shape the contours of our life? And how do we practice these things? What is God's promise to us if we do? What is it that they had "learned and received and heard and seen" in Paul (v. 9)?
6. "I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content," Paul writes in verse 11. What is the secret of Christian contentment. Can we say for ourselves what Paul declares of himself, "I can do all things through him who strengthens me" (v. 13)? In what sense is this true?
7. Paul describes the Philippians' gifts as "a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God." How can generosity be seen as inseparable from Christian relationships? While Paul did not covet gifts, what did he covet (v. 17)?