

Be an Advertisement for God

Philippians 4:4-13

Intro:

1. When a Christian went to a shelter to invite people to church, one of them said, "I can see by your face that you have problems too. I have enough problems of my own!"
2. What kind of advertisement are you for the Lord?
 - a. Are you a smiling face or a frowning one?
 - b. Some take your Christian faith at "face" value.
3. **v5** - Lord Jesus wants you to be an example to all people.
4. You can be an witness to others . . .

I. v4-7 - Through Your Prayer Life

A. **v4** - Prayer is a cause for rejoicing.

1. No matter what the circumstances, you can rejoice because God is in control!
 - a. God does use trials & sorrow in your life to produce your character.
 - b. Example: Paul was in prison in Rome when he wrote this letter.
2. Prayer is the privilege of communicating with God, the Creator & Master of the Universe!
3. You can have real joy in your prayer life. **Eph 5:19 - Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord,**
4. You are a positive witness to others when you can rejoice in your prayer life.

B. **v5** - Prayer gives you hope.

1. You can have hope because you know the Lord is "at hand" - that He is coming soon! **1 Cor 4:5 - wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.**
2. The Lord who is near also understands where you are & how you feel! **Heb 4:15-16 - For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.**

C. **v6** - Prayer is the opportunity to express your gratitude for the rich, abundant, eternal life God is providing you. **Eph 5:20 - . . . always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

1. If you were drowning & I rescued you - wouldn't you be grateful to me?
2. Your life needs to be in a constant attitude of prayer because of the cross.
3. Because of prayer - you don't need to be anxious about anything. The Lord is near!

D. **v7** - Prayer is the source of God's peace which will guard your heart & mind.

1. This peace transcends all understanding! **ILL: Submarine dives to "the cushion of the sea" during a storm.**
2. Don't you feel peace after you have unloaded your burdens before the Lord in prayer? **1 Pet 5:7 - Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.**
3. Why can you have peace? God's word tells us that:
 - a. You are divinely led (**Ps 23:3**).
 - b. You don't have to be anxious about tomorrow (**Matt 6:34**).
 - c. All things will work out together for your good (**Rom 8:28**).
 - d. So - why worry?
4. The superintendent of a mental hospital in Ohio said, "Except for the beneficial influence of Christianity we would have to double the capacity of our hospitals to accommodate our mental patients".
5. Other people should be able to see this divine inner peace in you - which they don't have!

II. v8-9 - Through What You Fill Your Mind With

A. v8 - Fill your mind with godly attitudes.

1. To the woman at the well, Jesus said that true worshippers would worship the Father in Spirit & in truth (Jn 4:23).
 - a. Lord Jesus said, **I am the way, the truth & life - Jn 14:6.**
 - b. If you follow the truth, you will do it & others will recognize it.
2. **Noble** (σεμνός) = honest, respectful. Do you really respect God - your parents - the law - your supervisor at work - your husband or wife?
3. **Right** (δίκαιος) = justice, righteous, having a right relationship with God & His standards.
4. **Pure** (ἀγνός) = undefiled, innocent, remaining unstained from the world.
5. **Lovely** (προσφιλής) = pleasing, agreeable, loving towards everyone.
6. **Admirable** (εὐφημος) = of good report, well reported of, praise worthy, to be spoken well of by others.

B. v9 - Fill your mind with godly examples - imitate; put the example of godly people into your own life.

III. v10-13 - Through Your Patience

A. v11 - Learn to be content in whatever circumstances you find yourself.

1. Maybe you are not content in any circumstance.
2. **ILL: Content: Should have asked for \$200!** It's an attitude thing!
3. If continual dissatisfaction is plaguing your life - ask yourself these questions:
 - a. Is Lord Jesus at the center of everything I do?
 - b. Am I confusing my needs with my desires?
 - c. Could I be happy with less?
4. **I Tim 6:6 - But godliness with contentment is great gain.** Happiness doesn't consist of the things you possess - but what possesses you!
5. Think what a powerful witness you would be to others if you never complained about anything but simply by faith left it in the Lord's hands!

B. v13 - Learn to overcome any obstacle with the Lord's strength.

1. **Rom 8:37-39 - No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**
2. God cares more for you than your parents cared for you - or you care for your children!

Be a witness of the richness you have in Christ by "Rejoicing in the Lord always" - Philippians 4:4