

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

Be an Advertisement for God

Philippians 4:4-13

1 When a Christian went to a homeless 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.”

What kind of an advertisement are you for the Lord? Do you have a smiling face or a frowning one? Some take your Christian faith at “face” value.

Philippians, chapter 4, verses 4 through 13, can give you help in being a positive advertisement for the Lord. 2

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. 1 3

1 v4-7.

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable — if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me — put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.² ⁴

I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.³ ⁵

I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.⁴ ⁶

² v8-9.

³ v10-11.

⁴ v12-13.

Verse 5 tells you that Lord Jesus wants you to be an example to all people. ⁵ So how can you be a positive witness to others? ⁷

You can be a witness to others . . .

I. Through Your Prayer Life - v4-7

Through your prayer life. ⁸ Notice verse 4 here, **Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!** No matter what the circumstances in your life you can rejoice because God is in control! God does use trials and sorrow in your life to produce your character. For example, the Apostle Paul was in prison in Rome when he wrote this letter.

Prayer is the privilege of communicating with God, the Creator and Master of the Universe! ⁹ You can get real joy in that prayer life. Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 19 says, **Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to**

⁵v5 - Let your gentleness be evident to all.

the Lord . . . ¹⁰ You can be a positive testimony to others when you rejoice in your prayer life! ¹¹

Verse 5 tells us that prayer gives you hope. **Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.** ¹² You can have hope because you know the Lord is near, “at hand”. He is coming soon! First Corinthians, chapter 4, verse 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.** ¹³

The Lord, Who is near, also understands where you are and how you feel. Hebrews, chapter 4, verses 15 and 16 says, **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.** So, you can approach Him with confidence since He knows where you’re coming from. ¹⁴

Now notice verse 6, **Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.** Prayer is the opportunity to express your gratitude for the rich, abundant, eternal life God is providing you. ¹⁵ Ephesians, chapter 5, verse 20 continues, **Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.** If you were downing and I rescued you, wouldn't you be grateful to me? ¹⁶ Your life can be in a constant attitude of prayer because of the cross. ¹⁷ Through prayer you don't need to be anxious about anything. The Lord is near.

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Then, in verse 7, prayer is the source of God's peace which will guard your heart and mind. ⁶ ¹⁹ This peace God provides is beyond our understanding. Submariners talk about the "cushion of the sea", a depth where there is calm even though the storm

⁶ v7 - And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

above the surface is disturbing the waves. ⁷ In the midst of emotional calamity God's peace can be a calming balm. Don't you feel peace after you have unloaded your burdens before the Lord? ²⁰ Peter describes what this peace can do, **Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.** ²¹

Why can you have this peace? There's a reason. God's word tells us ²² it's because you are divinely led ⁸ , ²³ you don't have to be anxious about tomorrow ⁹ ²⁴ and all things work out together for your good. ¹⁰ So, why worry!

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."**

⁷ "God's Quieting Peace", Philipians 4:1-7, Our Daily Bread, January 12.

⁸ Psalm 23:3 - He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

⁹ Matthew 6:34 - Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself.

¹⁰ Romans 8:28 - And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

People should be able to see this divine peace in you which they don't have. You can be a positive advertisement for the Lord through your prayer life! ²⁵

Verses 8 and 9 give us another way to be a positive advertisement . . .

II. Through What You Fill Your Mind With –

v8-9

Through what you fill your mind with. ²⁶ Verse 8 tells you to fill your mind with godly attitudes. ²⁷ To the woman at the well in Samaria Jesus said that true worshippers would worship the Father in Spirit and in truth ¹¹ . ²⁸ Lord Jesus said, **“I am the way, the truth and the life”**. ¹² If you follow the truth, you will do it and others will recognize it. ²⁹

Verse 8 describes the elements of spiritually healthy thinking. ³⁰ The first is to focus on what is true. ³¹

¹¹ John 4:23 - Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.

¹² John 14:6.

The second is what is noble. ¹³ It means to focus on being honest and respectful. Do you really respect God? Do you respect your parents; the law of the land; your supervisor at work; or your husband or wife? ³²

The third is what is right. ¹⁴ This word means justice and righteous. It means having a right relationship with God and His standards. ³³

The fourth is what is pure. ¹⁵ It's a ceremonial word meaning undefiled. It means to be innocent. Focus on being unstained by the world. ³⁴

The fifth is what is lovely. ¹⁶ This word implies being pleasing and agreeable; loving towards everyone. ³⁵

The sixth is what is admirable. ¹⁷ What is of good report, well reported of or praise worthy? Are you spoken well of by others? ³⁶

¹³ σεμνός.

¹⁴ δίκαιος.

¹⁵ άγνάς.

¹⁶ προσφιλής.

Then, verse 9 tells you to fill your mind with godly examples. The idea here is to put the example of godly people into your life. Imitate them! ³⁷

Then, the final way to become a positive advertisement for the Lord is found in verses 10 and 11; be a positive witness.

III. Through Your Patience - v10-11

Through your patience. ³⁸ Verse 11 teaches you to be content in whatever circumstances you find yourself. Maybe you are not content in any circumstance! For instance the boss overheard an employee say one day, “If I only had a hundred dollars I would be perfectly content!” He came up to her and stated, “I have always wanted to see someone who is perfectly content. Here is one hundred dollars.” He gave it to her, turned around and walked away. Standing there,

¹⁷ εὐφημος.

stunned, she finally blurted out, “Why on earth didn’t I say \$200!” ¹⁸ This is an attitude thing! ³⁹

If continual dissatisfaction is plaguing your life ask yourself these questions. ⁴⁰ Is Lord Jesus at the center of everything I do? ⁴¹ Am I confusing my needs with my desires? ⁴² Could I be really happy with less? ⁴³ First Timothy, chapter 6, verse 6, **But godliness with contentment is great gain.** Happiness doesn’t consist of the things you possess, but what possesses you! Think what a powerful example you would be to others if you never complained about anything but simply, by faith, left it in the Lord’s hands. ⁴⁴

Verse 13 teaches you to overcome any obstacle with the Lord’s strength. ⁴⁵ In Romans, chapter 8, verses 37 through 39, it reads, **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**

¹⁸ “Contentment”, I Timothy 6:6, Our Daily Bread, April 21.

anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. God cares more for you than your parents cared for you. God cares for you more than you care for your children! ⁴⁶

You can be a witness to others – through your prayer life – through what you fill your mind with – and through your patience!

“Rejoicing in the Lord always”

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