

Live it Out

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[0 : 00] It's one thing to say that we believe something, and it's yet another to live out what we believe. We tend to obsess over sound doctrine, and that's not a bad thing, because we want to make sure that we believe the truth, that we believe what is right.

We don't want to fall prey to unsound doctrine or false teaching. And often we're willing to battle over what we believe to be sound doctrine.

Not always so much of a good thing. The question is, are we willing to live out what we believe? Willing to live out the truth of the Word of God?

Well, good morning, everyone. We're so glad that you are with us, whether you are here in the room with us, practicing social distancing as much as we can. And those of you who are watching us or listening to us by way of the Internet, we're glad that you're here together with us this morning. We're going to be in the book of Philippians, chapter number 4. I was telling my wife, Catherine, yesterday that we're almost through with our study of the book of Philippians.

[1 : 25] It's been quite a great journey as we have gone through this short letter of the Apostle Paul to the Philippian believers. And it was one of those books where really nothing was said that was negative except to a couple of women in the church.

And it really wasn't that negative in the sense that they were encouraged to work things out. And we saw that a couple of weeks ago.

And so our question this morning that we come to in Philippians, chapter 4, verse 9, is just that. Are we going to live out what we believe?

Let's read that this morning in God's Word. Philippians, chapter number 4, verse number 9. Let's pray this morning.

Our Heavenly Father, this morning we thank you for the truth of your Word. We thank you that you have given to us truth and that you've shown us who you are.

[2 : 43] And how we can have a relationship with you. Thank you so very much for being here with us this morning. I pray for each family that is represented here.

May we honor you, glorify you. May we be an encouragement to one another and live a life that honors and pleases you in all we do.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. You can't separate outward action from inward attitude. Let me say that again.

You cannot separate outward action from inward attitude. We've learned this last week and the week before about right thinking leads to right action.

Because if we believe the wrong things, it is going to ultimately work its way out into actions or things that we do that are wrong or not in keeping with what is right.

[3 : 45] And the Apostle Paul begins chapter 4 by carrying out the idea of having a right attitude. We've seen that throughout the book of Philippians so far.

The Apostle Paul set forth Jesus as the right example. He said Jesus in heaven didn't think that his glory that he had with God, the Father in heaven, was something to be grasped onto.

Something to be held onto. He said Jesus in heaven. He said Jesus in heaven. I can give this up for a while. I can come to the earth, become a human being, and give up that glory that I had in heaven for a season because it's necessary to bridge the gap between mankind and God the Father.

So that was his attitude. That was the mind of Christ. So Paul says let's have the same attitude, the same mind that Christ had when he emptied himself.

The technical term, the Bible term for that is kenosis, where Jesus emptied himself of the glory that he had with God the Father in heaven. And he humbled himself and became a human being.

[5 : 04] So Paul presents Jesus as that example. Then the Apostle Paul moves on to the idea of worry. He says we shouldn't be worrying.

So to conquer worry, we saw the Apostle Paul bring out that we had to experience the secure mind. We needed to be able to see that we know that we're secure in God, therefore we don't have to worry. And to have the secure mind, we've got to meet certain conditions.

And Paul said the conditions are right praying, right thinking, and today we're going to look at right living.

So we have to be able to pray right in order to be able to, for God to answer our prayer. The book of James, James says, you know, we don't have because we don't ask, but we also ask with the wrong motives.

[6 : 06] We ask so that we can use it and consume it upon our own lust. And so we have to engage in right praying, not being double-minded, not being unstable, but believing that God will answer our prayer.

And then right thinking. If we're not sure if something is going to happen or not, don't waste your energy thinking about it or worrying about it, rather. If there's something we can do about it, do it. If there's nothing we can do about it, don't worry about it. By prayer and supplication, give it up to God and let God handle it. And so God will take care of our worry with right thinking.

And then today Paul gets into the idea of right living. And right living also depends on, and right praying depends on the right kind of mind.

The single mind of Philippians chapter number 1. The submissive mind of Philippians chapter number 2. The spiritual mind of Philippians chapter number 3.

[7 : 08] And the secure mind of Philippians chapter number 4. And right thinking is necessary to combat worry. Wrong thinking leads to wrong feeling.

And before long the heart and the mind are pulled apart by worry. So if we're not careful, we're going to be living a life that is not trusting God, but rather wrong thinking is going to lead to worrying over everything.

Our thoughts are powerful. If you don't realize that, we need to understand that. Because the way we think has a powerful sway over what we do, how we feel, and how we interact with others. Paul in 2 Corinthians says that we must bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. And in verse number 9, the apostle Paul provides.

We see in chapter 4, verse number 9, that Paul gives himself as the example. He says, what you've seen and heard in me, he says this, do.

[8 : 20] So Paul's teaching about having, Paul's been teaching about having the right attitude. He's been teaching about having the mind of Christ throughout this letter.

The fact is, we can't separate proper action from proper thinking. And sin always results in unrest, unless our conscience has been seared.

But otherwise, if we are living a righteous life, living a holy life, living in obedience to the word of God, it will provide peace.

Think about it. Has there been a time in your life when you have disobeyed God? And you're not in a condition where your conscience has been seared to the point where you don't either care whether you do right or wrong.

But if you've done something that you know is contrary to the word of God and you've disobeyed God's word, how has it made you feel?

[9 : 18] Made you feel uneasy? Made you feel guilty? And you've had unrest. You might have had sleepless nights. You might have had worrying thoughts that you combated with.

So sin always results in unrest and purity, and a holy life results in peace. Isaiah 32, 17, And the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and peace.

Wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable. James says, so right living is a necessary condition to experiencing the peace of God that we saw in verse number 8, and many, many verses.

So in verse number 9, as we get to the crux of our message this morning, what Paul does in verse number 9 is he balances four activities.

He says, So to live out the word of God, we need to first of all internalize what you learn.

[10 : 32] Internalize what you learned. He says, Do you realize that it's one thing to learn a truth, but it's quite another to receive it inwardly and make it part of our inner being?

To illustrate that, there are certain careers and certain jobs that require a lot of skill and a lot of knowledge. And when you first get into that career or first into that job, there are a number that I can think of that you go through cycles.

The first part of the cycle is you don't know what you don't know. I mean, you are so green, you don't even know what you don't know. And typically what happens in those situations, those who've been there for a while, they're going to initiate the rookie.

They're going to initiate the person who gets started. And so they'll go tell them to look for some kind of tool, or they'll go tell them to do something that doesn't even exist. And they're going to spend who knows how long looking for that kind of item or thing.

And they come back and say, well, I can't find it. And everybody's going to have a good laugh on them because they don't know what they don't know. And then you learn the job, you learn the skill, you learn some more, you get some more knowledge.

[12:08] And then you get to the point where you know what you don't know. And you know you're pretty inept at it. But there's hope. So you get to the second phase of it, and you know what you don't know.

And then you learn more, and you get a little bit more used to it. And then you get to the point where you know what you know. You know it. You know you know it.

And you get good at it. But there's another phase, there's another cycle that sometimes people forget about. And it's to the point where, and it's number two, where you don't think about what you know.

You just do it. You don't even think about what you know. You just do it. This morning in the foyer we were talking about lawnmowers.

We were talking about zero-turn mowers. And someone was saying that when they first came out that the salesman had these stories about the guy that would buy a zero-turn mower.

[13:20] And would bring it home and would totally destroy his wife's flower bed because he didn't know how to drive it. And would send it back. She said, you need to own one of those.

You need to send it back and get one of those old-style lawnmowers. So all kinds of stories. Well, I remember when I first, the first time I rode a zero-turn mower was back in the 1980s.

When they first, at that time, they were not very well known. I had so much trouble driving that thing. It was pathetic. And then when I got one for myself, after maybe the third or fourth cutting, I knew I could work it.

But I still had to think about what I was doing. Now is the point where I get on it and I'm finished. And I didn't think about the actual process of doing it. So I don't think about what I know.

I just do it. And it's the same with the Christian life. It's the same with following Christ. We get to the point, as we mature, and when we get to the point where the Apostle Paul was, we don't have to think about what's right and wrong.

[14:29] The Holy Spirit is there. We have internalized the Word of God. We have memorized it. It has become a part of us. And so, therefore, we don't have to get up in the morning. This morning, for those of you who have maybe been a follower of Christ for so long and maybe you've been a part of Faith Bible Church for so long, you didn't get up this morning and wonder to yourself, I wonder if I'm going to go to church today.

I wonder if I'm going to go fellowship with the body of Christ. I don't know. Let me draw straws.

Okay. Short straw, loses wins, whatever your perspective.

No. What do you do? You get up. You know what you're doing because you have internalized it.

And so Paul says, you've learned it from me, but you've also received it, and you have internalized. It's similar with the Christian life. We look at 1 Thessalonians 2 and verse number 13. Paul says, for this reason, we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you what?

You welcomed it. And he says, it is not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively does what?

[15:58] Works in you who believe. The truth of God and living a life for Jesus is not something that we live according to a credo.

It's not something that we live according to a set of rules. It's something that we learn it, the Holy Spirit, through the power of God's Holy Spirit.

He internalizes it, and it is a new life. And we are part of a new family. Rather than learning a hobby or learning something, and we just learn a set of rules and we do it, this is something that we internalize into our lives.

Facts in the head are not enough. We must have truths in the heart. In Paul's ministry, he not only taught the word of God, but he also lived it so his listeners, his followers, could see the life of Christ lived out through him, so they could see the truths in his life.

Paul's experience really ought to be our experience. We must learn the word, receive it, and then do it. James 1, verse 22, But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, because when we do that, we deceive ourselves.

[17 : 20] We deceive ourselves. What happens is, we often experience a disconnect. We learn something, but we don't internalize it.

Now, I'm going to go out on a limb here and say that anybody can learn how to bake. Short of maybe an intellectual disadvantage, everybody can learn how to bake.

I have baked in the past. You may not believe it, but I have baked in the past. I used to make cookies, and I used to get pretty creative. But the fact is, every single time I had to follow a recipe. So, let me back up a minute. Anybody can bake. You go, get a book, search the internet, find a recipe, and I guarantee you the first time you bake that recipe, you're going to find yourself looking at the recipe, first step, and you do that for, wait a minute, what did I need to do, and you find yourself going back and forth, back and forth with a recipe.

But you end up with something that's fairly edible. So, you baked, let's say, a three-layer cake with filling and icing.

[18 : 41] You eat it, and it's pretty good. Well, you say, next week, I'm going to bake another cake. What do you do? Do you just bake a cake? No, what do you have to do?

Go back to the recipe because you can't remember it. Now, is that three teaspoons or three tablespoons? There is a difference on certain of those ingredients. And so, you go back and forth, back and forth.

You have learned how to bake, but you haven't internalized it yet. But I guarantee you, after you bake your hundredth or two-hundredth cake, you just do what?

And somebody asks you, oh, I love that cake, can I have the recipe? And you go, mmm. Because you've changed it so many times to make it come out like you want it.

And you go, I don't really have a recipe. Well, come on. Tell me. And so, what do you have to do? You have to now begin to think again about how you bake that cake.

[19 : 44] Because you got to the point where you internalized it. You didn't think about it. You just did it. And so, now you have to think about it. And then, my wife, Catherine, cooks, is one of the best cooks that I know.

Next to my mom. And next to all of you, obviously. And so, people have asked her, well, how much do you put of this in that?

She goes, I don't know. Well, do you measure it? No. I just put it until I know it's right. Well, how do you know? It's like baking the cake. Someone asks, well, how long do you bake it?

Well, until it's done. Well, how do you know when it's done? Well, I just look at it and you can tell that it's done. Not me. It's like timer.

Timer goes off. It's done, whether it's done or not. And so, when we internalize it, it becomes so much a part of it. Just like the truth of God.

[20 : 47] Just like God's word. We just simply live the life. Because God's Holy Spirit is our teacher. He's our guide. He is the one that gives us the power to live the Christian life.

So, the Philippians had learned a whole lot from the Apostle Paul. He was with them for a short time. But they learned a lot from him. They had, I'm sure, the other letters maybe that had been written, that had been passed around the other churches.

But received is different than learned. The word received here in the Greek is a little bit more nuanced than learned. Before the Bible, as we know it today, was written and accepted by the church, truth in the Old Testament and the first part of the New Testament, truth was received by tradition.

Oral tradition. Oral tradition. Someone would sit at the foot of a master, someone who knew the word of God literally by heart internally and externally.

And they would teach. And the learner would hear the truth. And then the learner would begin eventually internalizing it. And then they could, in turn, teach it to someone else.

[21 : 59] So, in other words, early Christianity took over from rabbinic Judaism and the idea of transmitting and safeguarding a tradition or oral truth.

So, Paul says, you've learned it from me, but you received it from me. I taught it to you, and you received it, and it became a part of you. What we have learned, in fact, we have received. And if we've made it a part of our being and in our thinking, and sometimes even without thinking, it comes out in right action.

We learn it, we internalize it, and we just go out and we live a life that honors and pleases our Heavenly Father. Then, next, the Apostle Paul says that we are to live out what we learn. To live out what we learn. Let's look at James 1, verse 22 again. He says, But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

[23 : 02] It's not enough to hear the word of God, but we need to do the word of God. Let's go back to verse 9 of Philippians chapter number 4. He says, Paul says, The things which you have learned and received and heard and saw or have seen in me, these what?

These do. Just like not to take the Nike slogan, just do it. You learned, received, you heard, you saw.

Remember, he had those four things in balance. He says, now just do it. Now, a better translation for that word. Do is not a wrong translation, but the idea that word carries with it is to practice.

Not to practice in order to get better at something, but just like a physician, their work is called a what? A practice. You practice medicine, meaning you do it.

You do it over and over and over and over again. So you make something a practice. And that is what Paul says. He says, you've learned and received.

[24 : 09] You've heard and seen. Now just go practice it. Just go do it. Just do it. And by the way, the tense of that verb is a present active imperative.

Means you just keep on doing it. You don't stop. You just continue doing it. The first four verbs that Paul used are, I don't want to get too deep in the weeds with the language, but it's more of an idea of this happened.

The results still continue. But when he says just go do it and practice it, you start it and you continue it without stopping it.

And now Paul could say something. You know, there are certain things that you can say because maybe you're an expert or maybe everybody knows you're the authority and you can get away with it.

It's like my father-in-law, Pastor Jerry Long. In his church, before he retired, he can say just about anything and get away with it.

[25 : 13] Why? Because they knew he loved them. They knew he cared about them. And they knew that he was the real thing. And so he could get away pretty much with anything, just like the Apostle Paul.

Now, if we tried to say that, now, just do what I do. That would be arrogant. But Paul could get away with it. Why? Because he lived it out. He had internalized it.

And so when he says do what I do, he meant it. And they knew that they could live the life of the Apostle Paul. So many of us, we could say, I wouldn't necessarily want to say that because we would say, you know, I don't want you to make the same mistakes I made.

I would like for you to do better. And so Paul says that, do this. You've seen it in me. Now go out and practice it. Paul could make his life as an example to other believers because Paul lived in a place of power because he made Christ the center of his life.

And Christ was also the periphery of his life. Christ was everything to the Apostle Paul. So it's the state of every one of us, in which every one of us needs to live, a state of being an example for those who observe us.

[26 : 31] So the result of living what we learn, how does it all work out? Let's look at the next thing. We experience the presence of God.

Look back at verse number nine. We've already seen, we've already heard, we've already learned and received, heard and seen, practicing the Christian life.

And Paul says, and the God of peace will be what? He'll be with you. Now we heard about the peace of God in previous verses. Now we hear the God of peace will be with you.

The peace of God from verse number seven is the test whether or not we're in the will of God. You ever heard someone say, well, how do I know I'm the will of God? Where are you going to have a peace about it?

The Holy Spirit is going to communicate with your spirit. And the Holy Spirit is going to, especially if we're in tune with God, we don't have sin in our life that is obstructing the flow of that relationship.

[27 : 38] Then we're, God is going to, through his Holy Spirit, provide a peace, knowing that we are, or giving us assurance that we are in his will. Listen to what we're told in Colossians.

And let the peace of God do what? Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called into one body and be thankful.

If we're walking with the Lord, then the peace of God and the God of peace will exercise their influence over our hearts. And whenever we disobey, we lose that peace and we know we've done something wrong.

We confess, we get back into that right fellowship, and we get that, we receive that peace again. So in other words, God's peace is like the umpire that calls us out when we get, when we err, when we do something wrong.

God's Holy Spirit says, wrong. And we've got to confess, repent, and get back in order for the umpire to say, okay, that's fair.

[28 : 47] That's well within the will of God. So that peace of God rules, the peace of God is that umpire in our lives. So as we bring this down to a close, right praying, right thinking, and right living.

These are the conditions to have a secure mind and have victory over worry. As Philippians 4 is the peace chapter in the New Testament, James chapter 4 is the war chapter.

And I find it very interesting that Philippians chapter 4 and James chapter 4 are so similar. And when I read these sections for you, you're going to see how Philippians 4 and James 4 are so similar, but kind of antithetical and similar.

Philippians 4, the peace chapter. James 4, the war chapter. James explains the causes of war. Wrong praying.

He says you ask and you receive not. Why? He says because you ask amiss. You ask for the wrong reasons. Wrong praying.

[30 : 05] James chapter 4. We saw wrong praying in Philippians chapter 4 at the beginning part of chapter 4. Wrong thinking. Wrong thinking. In James chapter 4 verse 8.

Purify your hearts. He says you double minded. You know, we can't stick to one thing, one thought, because we waver back and forth. Yes, he will. No, he won't. Yes, he will.

No, he won't. He says somebody like that won't get their prayers answered. He says because you have to ask in faith. He says wrong thinking. And then in verse number 4.

Wrong living. He says in verse 4. Know you not that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Or you become an enemy of God with wrong living. He says why are there fighting and wars among you?

He gives these are the reasons. There's no middle ground. Either we yield our heart and our mind to the Spirit of God and practice right praying, right thinking, and right living.

[31 : 05] Or we yield to the flesh and we find ourselves torn apart by worry. So there's no need to worry. Think right. Pray right.

Live right. And the God of peace. We'll have the peace of God ruling in our hearts. And the God of peace will always be there with us. Don't worry.

Have anybody read Matthew chapter 6 verses 24 to 34 lately? He says don't worry. With the peace of God to guard us and the God of peace to guide us, why worry?

Let's pray. Father, this morning we're so, so very thankful for your truth, for your guidance, for the Holy Spirit that lives within us when we trust Christ as our Savior.

And I thank you this morning for each one that is here. May we honor you, glorify you in our thoughts, in our words, and in our actions.

[32 : 07] Lord, I pray that you help us to internalize what we have learned and heard and seen and received from you.

And Father, I pray that you would bless each one here. And may you grant your peace throughout this week.

And Father, we thank you. We praise you. For it's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.