

# Paul's Joy and Crown

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     Welcome to our services today, and as we come together in this act of worship, we will seek the Lord's blessing to be upon us.
- Let us therefore unite together in prayer. Eternal and ever-blessed Lord, we give thanks unto thee that thou hast abled us to come together at this hour in this act of worship.
- And as we do so, we will seek thine own blessing to be upon us, that thou, through thy Holy Spirit, would enlighten our understanding and lead us into thine own truth, that we may be instructed by thy word, and that thy word may find lodgment in our hearts, and that it may bring forth evidence in our lives.
- Grant to us, O Lord, that we would be unable to discern those things that are excellent and those things that are to thine own glory.
- For, O Lord, we acknowledge that without thee we can do nothing, that we are dependent upon thee.
- [ 1 : 3 9 ]     And so we seek, O Lord, at this hour, that it may please thee, through thy Spirit, to bring us into fellowship with thine own word, to bring us, O Lord, into fellowship one with another.
- And although we may reflect and remember those days when we gathered physically and corporately together, yet, O Lord, we give thanks that thou doth continue with the preaching of thy word, and hast given us means by which thy word can reach out to many.
- And so we pray, O Lord, that as thy word is proclaimed today, that it may go out in the power and demonstration of thine own Spirit, in convicting and converting, and in the building of thine own church here on earth.
- We give thee thanks, O Lord, for all the tokens of thy goodness and kindness, that thou doth so abundantly outpour upon us every day.
- And as we come at this hour, O Lord, to acknowledge our sinnership, to acknowledge that we do sin in thought, in word, and in deed.
- [ 3 : 1 0 ]     But we bless thy name, O Lord, that thou hast enlightened our understanding to know ourselves, and that thou, through thy Spirit, hath enlightened our understanding to know the sufficiency of thy Son, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to meet with our needs as sinners.
- We give thee thanks, O Lord, that through thy Spirit thou hast planted a desire in our hearts, as thy servant of old who said, Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean.
- Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. And we pray, O Lord, that as we do come together, that we would come with that sacrifice which is pleasing to thee, as thy word proclaims to us, the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart thou wilt not despise.
- We give thee thanks, O Lord, for the revelation which thou hast given of thyself, as the God who delighteth in mercy.

We seek, O Lord, thy blessing upon our homes and our families, upon our communities. We pray, O Lord, that it may please thee to come on a day of thine own power, to reveal thy right Adam and the power of salvation among us, to bring us, O Lord, to days of repentance, days when we would sorrow over our sin, and when we would turn to thee and seek thy mercy through Jesus Christ.

[ 5 : 01 ] Bless us, we pray thee as a nation. Grant, O Lord, wisdom to those who rule over us. Remember, O Lord, our young people and our children.

Remember those who have come to old age. We pray, O Lord, that thou wouldst be brought near to them. Remember those who mourn. We pray, O Lord, that they may know thee as the great comforter.

We ask, O Lord, that thou would continue with us now for the moments that we are gathered together in this manner today. And pray, O Lord, that thy blessing would accompany thy word.

Encourage thy people, we pray thee. Grant to us that we may be faithful witnesses for thee in this world.

Grant to us, O Lord, a walk in life that would be worthy of thy name. Watch over us, we pray thee. And all that we ask for the forgiveness of our many sins is in Jesus' name and for his sake.

[ 6 : 07 ] Amen. We shall now turn for our reading to the New Testament and to Paul's letter to the Philippians and chapter 4.

Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.

I beseech you, dear us, and St. Dicay, that they be of the same mind in the Lord. And I entreat thee also through your fellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow labourers, whose names are in the book of life.

Rejoice in the Lord always. And again I say rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

[ 7 : 22 ] Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue and if there be any praise, think on these things.

Those things which ye have both learned and received and heard and seen in me, do, and the God of peace shall be with you.

But I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at the last your care for me hath flourished again, wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.

Not that I speak in respect of want, for I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound, everywhere and in all things.

I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.

[ 8 : 36 ] And so on. May the Lord bless unto us the reading of that portion of his word. Now today we are going to conclude our study on this letter of Paul to the Philippians.

And this morning we shall look at verse 1 to 9. And this evening we shall look at the other verses to the end of the chapter.

And seeking the Lord's blessing then, let us look at chapter 4, verse 1 to 9. Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved, and long for my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved, and so on.

Now we see here that Paul begins the letter by saying, therefore, so that he is connecting what he is about to say with all that has been said already.

Everything that he has been saying to them, the truths that he has taught them in the first three chapters. Paul begins by reminding the Philippians of his deep affection for them.

[ 9 : 57 ] Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved, and long for my joy and crown. There is no doubt left about his genuine love for them.

He addresses them as, my brethren. Of course, this term is inclusive of men and women. He loves the whole family at Philippi.

How important it is for us to remember our adoption into the family of God. How important it is for us to remember that the grace of God makes us all equal in our salvation before him.

In his letter to the Ephesian, Paul writes, For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. It is a gift of God, not a works, lest any man should boast.

We are bound together as a family who, through faith, is united to Jesus Christ. Paul brings before us here the relationship that should be evident, not only between the pastor and the people, but between us all as the family of God.

[ 11 : 20 ] And the depth of his love for them, here he says twice, Dearly beloved. It expresses for us the deep outpouring of affection that he has towards his spiritual family at Philippi.

Now because of this distance that existed between himself and them, he says here that they are longed for.

At the beginning of this letter, he mentioned the longing he felt to be with them. For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

He has a deep longing both to be with them, and a longing to know that even in his absence, they are remaining steadfast in the Lord.

Paul has already spoken in a similar way regarding Ephaphroditus and his longing for his fellow Christians. Paul says, For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that he had heard that he had been sick.

[ 12 : 44 ] You see, Christ's love in us should constrain us with a deep felt affection for our fellow believers, for our brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ.

For all those who make up the family of God. For all those who have been adopted into the family of God.

John says, We know that we have passed from death into life, because we love the brethren. He that liveth not his brother abideth in death.

Jesus said, A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

A mark of true love is that when we are absent from those we love, it hurts. There is an ache. There is a longing to be reunited.

[ 13 : 54 ] Is that not true in our own situation in lockdown, when we are apart physically and corporately from those family members that we love in the Lord?

Isn't there a hurt and an ache and a longing to be reunited? And Paul here says that they are his crown and joy.

Joy, of course, is a recurring theme by Paul in this letter. Paul is bound in chains. He is a prisoner in Rome.

And he feels the separation between himself and the Philippians very keenly. And yet, he is full of joy for the Philippians.

And you say, How can that be? Well, his joy is not situational. It is not a joy that is bound by circumstances.

[ 15 : 01 ] We all know how in certain situations we can be full of joy. But that joy does not last. It is a fleeting joy because it is all attached to circumstances and a certain situation.

But the joy that Paul speaks of here is not bound by circumstances, but it is a joy that is bound upon a relationship.

It is a relational joy. It is joy in the Lord and that includes his people. He is full of joy because of his relationship with the Lord and his people.

But he says that they were not merely his joy, but his crown. And by calling them his crown, Paul is looking at the present and also forward to a day of victory.

It is something like what happens at the end of the Olympic Games in those days where the victors are given reels that produced great rejoicing.

[ 16 : 24 ] They received the reward and that gave them great rejoicing. Paul is very fond of using this type of imagery throughout his letter.

In chapter 2, verse 16, he says, that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I am not run in vain. In chapter 3, verse 14, he says, I press till the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Now what Paul says here then is that at present they are as joy and crown, as those who are persevering in the faith.

They are persevering in the faith. They are going forward in the faith. But he's not probably looking towards the end of the day, looking, as it were, towards the day of the Lord's return, to which he has made reference at the end of the last chapter, when the Philippians would be, as he has already told them in chapter 2, 16, holding fast the word of life, that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

Paul uses similar words in his letter to the Thessalonians. But he says there of them, For what is our hope, or joy, your crown of rejoicing?

[ 18 : 03 ] Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy. You see, this is what he's looking at as being his joy and crown, that the believers at Philippi are persevering in their faith.

They are going on and forward in their faith. But he's also looking at the day of the Lord's return, when the believers of Philippi would also be his crown, proving that his labour was not in vain in the Lord.

Now the church at Philippi, we shall see in a moment, was not a perfect church. They had their flaws and weaknesses, and they didn't have to go out from themselves to seek their problems.

However, in spite of all that, Paul loved them, and he longed for them, and there were his joy and crown.

He has already told us in this letter what was true in his own experience, and in the experience of every Christian person, when he said, Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that, for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.

[ 19 : 39 ] Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth into those things which are before.

He is looking forward to the day of his crowning. In 2 Timothy chapter 4, we read, Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also, that love his appearing.

Well, with all this outpouring of his affection for them, he now challenges them. He says to them, So stand fast in the Lord.

Here he repeats his initial exhortation in chapter 1, verse 27, when he said to them, Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel.

But here he adds these additional words, In the Lord. So stand fast in the Lord. They are to stand fast in their relationship to the Lord, whose coming they are eagerly waiting for, and who will subject all things to himself.

[ 21 : 09 ] But then Paul turns his attention from the whole congregation to a specific case of two women who are in conflict with each other at Philippi.

I besiege your dears, and besiege Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

We are not told much about those women. We know their names. And although Iodias has sometimes been treated as a man's name, there is no evidence for such, and the following verse would require them to be the names of two women.

Syntyche is named after the goddess of fortune, which would indicate to us that she was probably of pagan origin. What we do know about them is that they are in conflict one with another.

And this probably has a rippling effect upon the congregation at Philippi, as conflicts within congregations always have people taking sides.

[ 22 : 25 ] We also know from verse 3 that they were among those who laboured with Paul in the gospel. This does not mean that they had the role of teaching and oversight, but that they were fellow participants with them in the defence of the gospel.

In this manner, we are to serve one another. We are told regarding Jesus that many women followed him from Galilee, ministering unto him.

It is our duty to serve one another and to promote the gospel. It is our duty to participate in the promotion of the gospel in our own communities.

We are all to be valued partners in the advance of the gospel.

Judeus and Cynthia Kaye were probably among the group of women that met by the riverside on the Sabbath for prayer, whom Paul and Silas met when they came to Philippi on that first Sabbath, where Lydia gave her heart to the Lord.

[ 23 : 47 ] These women may have given their hearts at the same time, we are not told. But obviously, both women were well known to the church at Philippi.

And here Paul appeals or pleads with those women to be reconciled with each other.

Paul had the authority to command, but instead, we find that he appeals or pleads with them. You know, we may have drawn in our minds a picture of Paul as someone who is stern and forceful and who is ready at all times to throw his weight about as an apostle.

Yet what we find here is someone who is compassionate, someone who is considerate, someone who is caring.

We find the same attitude expressed and exercised by Paul when he wrote to Philemon regarding his servant Onesimus.

[ 25 : 03 ] According, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do what is required, yet for love's sake I prefer to appeal to you.

He appeals for them here to be of the same mind in the Lord. That is, to have the same attitude, to have the same mindset.

It is precisely the same language as he used in the second chapter when he said that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. Well, it's the same appeal he is making here when he is asking them that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

[ 26 : 18 ] He wants them to have the right attitude towards each other by focusing on their life united with the Lord. Focusing on their life in union with the Lord.

Maybe this was a personal dispute. It may have been a clash of personalities. That does happen. But Paul here pleads with them to have the mindset of Christ, which he has already spelled out to them as we note in chapter 2.

To humble ourselves and that we look out for the interests of others. Now, we find that so difficult to do. We so often claim our own rights to our own advantage, even if it is at the expense of others.

Personal conflicts and clashes of personalities always destroys Christian witness in congregations and communities. We are to learn to set aside our own personal agendas and to focus on the larger agenda of promoting the gospel in unity and in harmony.

Whatever this dispute was, and we are not told, and not even told how long it had persisted, nevertheless, the main thing is that their disagreement with each other disrupted their ability to demonstrate their unity in the Lord, their harmony in the Lord.

[ 28 : 06 ] This is not Eodias and Syntyche private problem, you see. What we see here is that there is a third person involved.

And that third person that is involved is the Lord. What are they doing to promote the gospel?

What are they doing to show forth Christ? You see, this is where we have to be careful and where we have to watch ourselves.

this is where the devil likes to work and try and bring disputes and clashes of personalities and things of that nature into the Christian community in order to cause a disagreement, disputes, which is not promoting the gospel, which is not promoting Christ, which is not Christ-like.

And so here he pleads with them that they be of the same mind in the Lord. And that is something that doesn't come automatically.

[ 29 : 36 ] No, my friends, I and you have to strive. we have to work at it that each one of us would be of the same mind in the Lord.

Yes, we are all different. Yes, sometimes it may be very difficult to get on with someone. But we've got to put these things aside and think of the greater agenda.

Think of the greater cause. And that is the cause of the Lord, the promotion of the gospel. Now, Paul did not think that these two women would resolve their conflict on their own.

So he asks for another person to guide them to reconciliation. And I entreat thee also, through your fellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel.

Now, Paul does not reveal the identity of the yoke fellow or companion on whom he calls to help those women. Possibly the person was not a native of the city of Philippi.

[ 30 : 53 ] But obviously the church at Philippi knew the identity of the person. And over the years, a lot of suggestions have been made. But I think we can't rule out if I protect us, who would be present with Paul as he dictated the letter.

I think we can also rule out not only if I protect us, but also Timothy, as he was coming to Philippi at a time after the letter had been written. But there is a suggestion which looks more likely that it was Luke.

But whoever it was, the person is given the task to assist the two women to have the same mindset in the Lord. And the word help here means a strong personal action to bring those two women together.

Now, along with Iodias and Cynthia, Paul mentions others. help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow labourers whose names are in the book of life.

We do not know why Paul singles out and names Clement from the other fellow labourers, but Paul testifies of them all that they laboured with me in the gospel.

[ 32 : 24 ] gospel. They were not idle and sitting back, but they were participants who struggled and suffered along with Paul for the sake of the gospel.

Paul writing to the Corinthians in his first letter chapter 3 says, for we are labourers together with God. We are all to be fellow labourers with God in the gospel.

Again, we can see the emphasis that has been in this letter all along of the togetherness and oneness that should be in our lives with other believers for the promotion of the gospel, as gospel witness.

Although Paul does not take time to name his co-workers, their names, he says, are in the book of life.

The idea of names inscribed by God in a book is found as earlier as Exodus and chapter 32. When the children of Israel worshipped the golden calf, Moses said to the Lord, O this people have sinned a great sin and have made them gods of gold, yet now if thou will forgive their sin and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.

[ 33 : 58 ] And the Lord said unto Moses, whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. Now I think this is reference to what we have in Psalm 69 and verse 28 where we read, let them be blotted out of the book of the living.

This is reference to death. Moses was willing to die. Moses was willing to leave the land of the living.

Does this carry the idea of atonement? Was he willing to die as the substitute for his people that Israel would be saved? Well, that may be left for another time.

But the book of life refers to those who are citizens of the heavenly kingdom of whom Paul has referred to already when he said, for our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ. The Gospel of Luke, chapter 10, Jesus said to his disciples, Notwithstanding this, rejoice not that the spirits are subject into you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.

[ 35 : 19 ] There are a number of references to the book of life in the book of Revelation. Paul reminds them that he reminds them all and me and you that the Lord himself has enrolled each of us who trust in Jesus Christ in his heavenly register of citizens.

Ah well, is your own name registered there? The source of our enrolment in that register is the sovereign love and grace of God.

The ink that is used in our enrolment is the blood of his precious son and the guarantee or certificate of our enrolment is the gift of the Holy Spirit.

In Psalm 87, where the Lord writes his register of those born that belong to the city of God, it is interesting to see that it includes Gentile nations.

glorious things are said of the old city of God. I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me.

[ 36 : 34 ] Behold Palestia and Tyre with Ethiopia. This man was born there and of Sion it shall be said, this and that man was born in her and the highest himself shall establish her.

The Lord shall count when he writeth up the people that this man was born there. Now that ought to be an encouragement for us to be united with each other in the Lord, to have the same mind in the Lord.

Then Paul writes one command after another in verses 4 to 9 and scholars break them up into two sets separated by the word finally.

The first set is in verse 4 to 7. Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

Be careful for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

[ 37 : 51 ] And then verse 8 begins the second set finally brethren whatsoever things are true whatsoever things are honest whatsoever things are just whatsoever things are pure whatsoever things are lovely whatsoever things are of good report if there be any virtue and if there be any praise think on these things those things which you have both learned and received and heard and seen in me do and the God of peace shall be with you well let us look for a moment at verses 4 to 7 the Christians at Philippi faced the same challenges that we face today there were there was opposition there was rejection there was a resistance to the gospel there was persecution and so on in 2nd Corinthians chapter 8 Paul writes of the liberality of the

Macedonian churches which included Philippi he says how that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded into the riches of their liberality he speaks there of their deep poverty we have just looked at disagreements in the church at Philippi their relationship with one another was not right they were out of step with where they ought to be as belonging to the Lord as citizens of heaven they were a church that was in deep poverty and in the midst of all these challenges Paul gives his first list and he says rejoice in the Lord and as we have already noted this is a theme that is throughout the later and we have already noted as we looked at verse one that the

Christian joy is not dependent on circumstances but rather it is a joy that one has in relationship with the Lord and his people this rejoicing was to mark not only the individual but the whole body of Christ not merely individual joy but corporate joy whatever their circumstances they were to rejoice in the Lord always Paul himself was an example of rejoicing in the Lord he was imprisoned he was in chains in Rome not sure what the future held for him and yet he speaks to them in chapter one and he says always in every prayer of mine for you all making requests with joy it is interesting to note that he was not so self embroiled that he forgot the Christians at

Philippi even in his troubles he was Christ focused we can become so self embroiled in our troubles and our problems and our circumstances that we put ourselves first and Christ second even when Christ was preached out of envy and possibly to hurt Paul what was his attitude he says Christ is preached and to rejoice yea and will rejoice now we must remember that to rejoice in the Lord always does not mean that we never experience sadness or grief of course we do Paul felt sorrowful over Ephraudita's illness he wept over those who were the enemies of the cross we are emotional creatures and made such by

God and we are to express our emotions Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus Paul wants us to express our emotions but he wants us to express our emotion of joy which is far more than just feeling happy it is to rejoice in the Lord it is to rejoice in the relationship that we have with the Lord and his people despite our own circumstances then follows the command let your moderation be known unto all men or as some translations has it our gentleness in the midst of opposition and aggression they were to be gentle Paul says that this gentleness is not only to be taught the Christian but to be shown to all let your moderation be known unto all men let your gentleness be known unto all men this again is to have the mindset of

[ 43 : 05 ] Jesus Peter writes in his first letter chapter 2 for even here unto were ye called because Christ also suffered for us leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps who did no sin neither was guile found in his mouth who when he was reviled reviled not again when he suffered he threatened not but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously this is what Paul appealed to in his second letter to the Corinthians chapter 10 when he speaks there of the meekness and gentleness of Christ and here he commands the church at Philippi to exhibit such gentleness to all Aristotle explained gentleness as a willingness to forego one's own rights according to the law or to have the mindset of

Christ to be gentle even to those who are making our lives miserable to be gentle towards them let let your moderation be known to all men let your gentleness be known to all men we are to extend kindness and forbearance and gentleness instead of retaliation those who make our lives miserable who are as thorns in our side how we would like to retaliate but here is the command be gentle be kind show forth your forbearance Paul follows this command with a reminder the Lord is at hand now there are two ways by which Paul's words have been interpreted some say that Paul is saying let your moderation be known unto all men for the coming of the Lord is at hand in reference to the

Lord's second coming others say what Paul means by the phrase is this because the Lord is at hand is that the Lord is always near he's always near to you be careful for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God others say that he's making reference to both the assurance that the Lord is coming and the assurance that he's always near to you in Psalm 147 we read the Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him to all that call upon him in truth in James chapter 5 verse 8 we read be ye patient therefore brethren to the coming of the Lord behold the husband man waited for the precious fruit of the earth and hath long patience for it until he receives the early and latter rain be also patient establish your hearts for the coming of the

Lord draweth nigh grudge not one against another brethren lest he be condemned behold the judge standeth before the door there James is referring to the second coming of the Lord I suppose really that both are true both are true that he's making reference to the second coming but that he is also making reference to the fact that the Lord is near the Lord is nigh unto you in second Peter chapter three and verse eleven where Peter is making reference to the end of the world and the second coming of our Lord he says seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness reference to the second coming at the same time it is also true that the Lord is at hand be careful for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thank giving let your request be made known unto

God the assurance that the Lord is near encourages Christians to stop being anxious he says be careful for nothing how is it possible to stop from being anxious Paul is here encouraging that because the Lord is near he's asking them to pray but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God Paul is following from the words of Jesus as recorded in Matthew chapter 6 therefore I say unto you take no thought for your life what you shall eat or what you shall drink nor yet for your body what you shall put on is not the life more than meat and the body than raiment behold the fowls of the air for the sows so not neither to the reap nor gather into barns yet your heavenly father feedeth them are ye not much better than they the words of

[ 48 : 21 ] Jesus recorded in the gospel and the word of Paul here is not encouraging us to be careless or uncaring but we are to live without anxiety why Jesus says your heavenly father know that ye have need of all these things later on in this chapter he writes but my God shall supply all you need according to the riches and glory by Christ Jesus he has already given to us the greatest gift of all writing to the church at Rome in chapter 8 Paul says what shall we then say to these things if God be for us who can be against us he that spared not his own son but delivered him up for us all how shall he not with him also freely give us all things so he says but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto

God this does not mean that God does not know our needs before we give voice to them but by expressing a request to God we acknowledge our total dependence upon God we acknowledge our complete trust in him and all this is to be done with thanksgiving thanksgiving thanksgiving thanksgiving gives the right attitude and perspective in prayer Paul's own prayers is an example to us the practice of praying with thanksgiving in chapter 1 verse 3 to 5 he says peace peace along with joy is a fruit of the spirit and here he calls it the peace of

God because in verse 9 he says that God is the God of peace peace this peace comes from our trust in God this peace shall keep our hearts and minds the word keep or guard has the thought of our military garrison so that God's peace will be the garrison around our hearts and minds to keep us from falling into anxiety and the peace of God which pass us all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus this protection is in Christ Jesus everything that marks the life of a Christian both in the present and the future is to be found in our relationship with God through Jesus Christ the peace of God flows from our peace with God peace with God ended the hostility between us and God as Paul puts it in his letter to the Romans chapter 5 therefore being justified by faith we have peace with

God through our Lord Jesus Christ God has made peace with us through the atoning work of his son and on the basis of that peace of God flows into our heart and minds and keep us from being anxious peace Jesus said to his disciples peace I leave with you my peace I give unto you not as the world giveth give I unto you let not your heart be troubled neither let it be afraid that does not mean that our lives are going to be void of turmoil of course not Jesus himself was troubled as he anticipated the cross we are going to feel life's pains but the peace of God draws us to the truth that strengthens us to stand and say with Paul as he says in Romans 8 who is he that condemn it it is Christ that died yea rather that is risen again who is even at the right hand of God who also maketh intercession for us who shall separate us from the love of

Christ shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword as it is written for thy sake we are killed all the day long we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us for I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor powers nor things present nor things to come nor height nor depth nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord may the Lord bless our thoughts let us pray eternal and ever blessed Lord we give thanks to thee for the assurance and the encouragement that we receive from our relationship with thee through our Lord Jesus Christ grant to us oh

[ 53 : 52 ] Lord that we would have the same attitude the same mindset as the Lord Jesus we pray oh Lord that thou would continue with us during this day may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forever more Amen