

The promises of God (4): Philippians 4

Background (source: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Letter-of-Paul-to-the-Philippians>)

. . . written by St. Paul the Apostle to the Christian congregation he had established in Philippi. It was penned while he was in prison, probably at Rome or Ephesus, about 62 CE. In its present canonical form, Philippians is, according to several scholars, a later collection of fragments of the correspondence(s) of Paul with the congregation in Philippi.

Philippians 4:4-9 'Final Exhortations

NRSV

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵ Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹ Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

NIV

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, 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. ⁹ 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.



Some points to ponder and discuss

(v4) Consider all that Paul had experienced in his life as a Christian – what was the **source** of his **joy**?

(v5) What do you understand by **gentleness**?

(v5) What do you think Paul understood by '*The Lord is near*'? What does this mean to you today?

(v6) 'Be anxious for nothing' – how easy do you find that? See also Matthew 6:25-34.

(v6) What do you think is the distinction Paul is making between '**prayer**' and '**supplication**'?

(v7) What do you think is the difference between '*peace **with** God*' and '*the peace **of** God*'?

(v7) How does the peace of God **guard** *our hearts and minds*?

(v8) Paul appears to be referring to the Philippians' own secular culture. Are there things in our own secular culture we should think of in a positive way? How have they become ingrained in our culture?

(v9) Verse 9 contains a promise: how are we to receive that promise? (Try to give specific examples.)