

LESSON 6

AN ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE

PHILIPPIANS 4:2–9



1 Finish this sentence: “You know it’s going to be a bad day when . . .”

2 What would you say to help someone feel more optimistic about life?



Read Philippians 4:2–9 and the following notes:

☐ 4:2, 3 ☐ 4:4 ☐ 4:6, 7 ☐ 4:7 ☐ 4:8

3 What does Paul recommend for all believers regarding prayer?

4 What promises are recorded in this section?

5 Why does Paul encourage believers to follow his example?

6 How is being full of joy in the Lord different from trying to have a more positive outlook on life?



Philippians is described as a book filled with joy, and here (4:4) Paul encourages the Philippian believers to be full of joy. We may wonder how this is possible, especially considering the problems and pressures we face. But consider Paul. He gave up his security and status and endured an endless series of trials for the sake of his love for Christ. And writing this as a prisoner of Rome, he tells us to rejoice. What would it take to change you into a joyful Christian?

7 Why is it healthier to focus on what is excellent and worthy of praise rather than to concentrate on identifying problems? How can we learn from mistakes and bad examples and still focus on the positive?

8 List an example you can focus on (a person, an event, or a thought) for each of the following categories:

True (genuine, not deceptive or illusory)

Honorable (worthy, serious)

Right (one's duty and responsibility to God and man)

Pure (morally undefiled)



Lovely (attractive, winsome)

Admirable (worthy of esteem)

Excellent (fulfilling one's God-given potential in every area of life)

Worthy of praise (that which God would commend)

9 Which are the easiest for you? Which are the most difficult? What could you do to think more about such things?

10 What causes a person to develop a negative attitude about life?

11 What causes some people to approach life with an attitude of gratitude?

12 What can we do to prevent our critical side from dominating how we see things?

13 What can we do to control what we think about?

14 Where do you need to make an attitude adjustment? Ask God to help you change your thoughts and outlook in this area.



A What is the “Book of Life” mentioned in 4:3? Whose names are in it, and how were they placed there?

B Paul seems convinced that Jesus would return soon, and yet we are still awaiting his triumphant return. How should we act during this seeming delay in the fulfillment of the Lord’s promise?

C Why was Paul so upset about the conflict between Euodia and Syntyche? Whom did he ask to intervene to help them resolve their differences? What conflicts are there in your church? How can you help resolve them?

D What are the most common causes of broken relationships? How should we respond to broken relationships between believers? What does the Bible say about the process of reconciliation? What responsibility do other Christians have for encouraging this process?

E How does prayer work? What are some common traps we fall into in our prayer life? How can we avoid these pitfalls?

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