

- I. **The virtues of Christ for our experience in Philippians 4:5-9 are the expression of a life that lives Christ**—Phil. 1:19-21a; 2:5-13; 3:8-10:
 - A. Paul considers forbearance and the lack of anxiety as the first two aspects of the expression of a life that lives Christ.
 - B. Anxiety, coming from Satan, is the sum total of human life and disturbs the believers' life of living Christ; forbearance, coming from God, is the sum total of a life that lives Christ; the two are opposites—Matt. 6:22-34.
- II. **“Let your forbearance be known to all men. The Lord is near”**—Phil. 4:5:
 - A. According to Christian experience, forbearance is all-inclusive, for it includes all Christian virtues; forbearance is actually the all-inclusive Christ as the all-inclusive Spirit with His bountiful supply—Phil. 1:19-21a:
 - Forbearance is reasonableness, considerateness, and consideration in dealing with others, without being strict in claiming one's legal rights; forbearance means that we are easily satisfied, even with less than our due:
 - Forbearance includes love, patience, kindness, humility, compassion, considerateness, and submissiveness, a willingness to yield; if we have such an all-inclusive virtue, we will also have righteousness and holiness.
 - Forbearance also includes self-control, moderation, gentleness, understanding, sympathy, wisdom, mercy, peacefulness, looking to the Lord, and even the virtue of admitting that the Lord is sovereign in all things—cf. 2 Cor. 12:7-9.
 - A forbearing person is one who always fits in, whose behavior is always suitable—cf. 6:1a; 10:1; Phil. 1:19; Isa. 11:2:
 - If we are forbearing, we will have the wisdom and the ability to supply others with what they need; we will also have the full knowledge of what to say to them and when to say it—Isa. 50:4-5; Col. 1:28; Prov. 25:15.
 - To be forbearing is to consider how others will be affected by what we do or say—2 Chron. 1:10.
 - B. As an all-inclusive virtue, forbearance is Christ Himself; since Christ is forbearance, for Paul to live was forbearance—Phil. 1:21a:
 - To let our forbearance be known to all men is to let the Christ whom we live and magnify, whom we take as our pattern and pursue as our goal, be known to all men.
 - Only the Lord Jesus lived a life full of forbearance, and only Christ can be our perfect forbearance today—Luke 24:15-19, 28-31; Matt. 17:24-27; John 11:20-34.
 - To make known our forbearance is to live a life that expresses Christ as the totality of all human virtues.
 - Immediately after speaking about forbearance, Paul says that the Lord is near; with respect to space, the Lord is near us, ready to help; with regard to time, the Lord is at hand, coming soon; the Lord's being near primarily refers to His presence with us—Phil. 4:5; cf. Rom. 10:8-13; Matt. 1:23; Exo. 33:14.
 - C. We need to learn Christ as the secret of being transformed, that is, of being metabolically changed in our natural life, in any kind of environment, situation, or circumstance; this practical and simple secret is in verses 6 and 7—“In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses every man's understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.”—Phil. 4:12, 6-7.

- III. “When we have problems in our daily life, we do not have to seek advice from others, because we have a spirit in us and the Lord as the Spirit dwelling in our spirit is very near to us. We can ask Him about everything, without any need to use the telephone or the fax machine, for He can talk with us right within us. You can talk with Him and confer with Him in everything. The Lord’s Word says, ‘ In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God ’ (Phil. 4:6). Hence, if you have some problem, you just need to tell Him. He is right within you, and He is with you face to face. The Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—is in us not to trouble us but to be our Paraclete, Comforter, and Supporter. I always pray, ‘ O Lord, now I am going to take a walk. Support me, sustain me, and strengthen me. ’ This is to drink the Lord. In this way I have no anxiety. When anxiety comes, you should say, ‘ O Lord, this anxiety is Yours, not mine; I give it to you because You bear it for me. ’ Thus, you receive the Lord’s element into you, and metabolism will work constantly in you. Consequently, what is expressed through you outwardly is Christ. This is to live Christ. Those who do not know this secret consider that to live Christ is a difficult thing. Actually, you just need to practice speaking with the Lord constantly; then spontaneously, you will live Christ”—*The Organic Aspect of God’s Salvation*, pp. 54-55:
- A. Christ Himself is the peace of God, which surpasses every man’s understanding—Phil. 4:7; Isa. 9:6; John 14:27; Luke 7:50; Rom. 3:17; 5:1; 8:6; 15:13; 16:20.
 - B. The words in everything refer to the many different things that happen to us day by day; prayer is general, having worship and fellowship as its essence; petition is special, being for particular needs; both our prayer and our petition should be accompanied by our giving thanks to the Lord—Phil. 4:6.
 - C. *To God* denotes motion toward, in the sense of a living union and communion, implying fellowship; hence, the sense of to God here is “in the fellowship with God”—Phil. 4:6.
 - D. The result of practicing fellowship with God in prayer is that we enjoy the peace of God; the peace of God is actually God as peace infused into us through our fellowship with Him by prayer, as the counterpoise to troubles and the antidote to anxiety—Phil. 4:9; John 16:33.
 - E. The God of peace patrols before our hearts and thoughts in Christ, keeping us calm and tranquil; if we would have a life free of anxiety, we need to realize that all our circumstances, good or bad, have been assigned to us by God in order to serve us in fulfilling our destiny to gain Christ, live Christ, and magnify Christ—Isa. 30:15a; Rom. 8:28-30; Matt. 10:29-31; 2 Cor. 4:15-18.

IV. “Finally, brothers, what things are true, what things are dignified, what things are righteous, what things are pure, what things are lovely, what things are well spoken of, if there is any virtue and if any praise, take account of these things”—Phil. 4:8:

- A. These virtues are the expressions of God’s attributes lived out from within the pursuers of Christ, who is the embodiment of God.
- B. These virtues are six governing aspects of a life that lives Christ:
 - A life that lives Christ is **true**—ethically truthful, without any pretense or falsehood.
 - A life that lives Christ is **dignified**—honorable, noble, grave, solid, weighty, and worthy of reverence—1 Tim. 3:8, 11; Titus 2:2; cf. Rom. 9:21.
 - A life that lives Christ is **righteous**—right before God and man—Phil. 3:9.
 - A life that lives Christ is **pure**—single in intention and action, without any mixture—Matt. 5:8.
 - A life that lives Christ is **lovely**—lovable, agreeable, and endearing.
 - A life that lives Christ is **well spoken of**—renowned, of good repute, attractive, winning, and gracious—Hosea 14:7.
- C. Virtue and praise are a summing up of the six foregoing items, in all of which are some virtue or excellence and something worthy of praise—Matt. 5:16.
- D. To be a proper human being is to express God through His divine attributes in our human virtues, to have a human life filled with Christ as the reality of the attributes of God—cf. Gen. 1:26.

V. “I have learned, in whatever circumstances I am, to be content. I know also how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in everything and in all things I have learned the secret both to be filled and to hunger, both to abound and to lack. I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me”—Phil. 4:11b-13:

- A. Paul took Christ as the secret to experience Christ, being content and rejoicing in every kind of circumstance, in any situation, and in any matter because of Christ—Phil. 4:4.
- B. *I have learned the secret* literally means “I have been initiated”; the metaphor here refers to a person’s being initiated into a secret society with instruction in its rudimentary principles—Col. 2:2; Eph. 3:3-4; 5:32:
 - After Paul was converted to Christ, he was initiated into Christ and into the Body of Christ—Acts 9:3-19, 25-28; 22:6-21; 13:1-4.
 - Paul learned the secret of how to take Christ as life, how to live Christ, how to magnify Christ, how to gain Christ, and how to have the church life—Col. 3:4; Phil. 1:21a, 20; 3:8, 12; 1:8, 19; 2:1-4, 19-20; 4:1-3.
 - The secret in Philippians 4 is to do all things in Christ as the One who empowers us; as a person in Christ, Paul experienced Christ and applied Him in all circumstances; this Christ is real, living, near, available, and prevailing—Phil. 4:13; Hymns, #564; Phil. 3:9; 4:5b; Hymns, #539.
 - Paul’s word about Christ as the empowering One specifically applies to Christ’s empowering us to live Him as our human virtues and thereby to magnify Him in His unlimited greatness in every kind of circumstance—Phil. 4:8-13.
 - By the empowering of Christ, we can live a contented life and be true, dignified, righteous, pure, lovely, and well spoken of; to live a life of these virtues is much more difficult than doing a Christian work—Phil. 4:11-12, 8.
 - If we would experience Christ as the empowering One, we need to cooperate with Him in the following matters:
 - In our practical living on the earth, we must be persons who pray continually by coming before God, entering into Him, and living in the light of His face—Psa. 42:5, 11; 80:1, 3, 7, 19.
 - We need to experience a thorough and fresh forgiveness of our sins, based on the shedding of the Lord’s blood on the cross—Heb. 9:14; 10:19, 22; Exo. 24:8; Matt. 26:28.
 - We need to know what ascension is and know that the life we have received is a heavenly life; we should be aware of the fact that we have ascended into the heavens with the Lord and are thus heavenly persons; outwardly, we are still living on the earth, but inwardly, with respect to our inner life and mood, we are living in the heavens—Eph. 2:6; Heb. 8:1-2; 4:14-15; 7:25-26.

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Bird's-eye View for Prophesying, a Sample

- Forbearance, the sum total of a life coming from God that lives Christ, and anxiety, the sum total of human life coming from Satan that disturbs the believers from living Christ, are opposites; Paul considers forbearance and the lack of anxiety as the first two aspects of the expression of a life that lives Christ. [Phil. 4:5-6] *Let your forbearance be known to all men. The Lord is near. In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.*

II. **“Let your forbearance be known to all men. The Lord is near”**

- According to Christian experience, forbearance includes all Christian virtues and is actually the all-inclusive Christ as the all-inclusive Spirit with His bountiful supply. A forbearing person have the wisdom and the ability to supply others with what they need; have the full knowledge of what and when to say to others; are considerate of how others will be affected by what we do or say in dealing with others; are not strict to claim one's legal rights; are easily satisfied even with less than our due; live a righteous and holy life; look to the Lord and admit that the Lord is sovereign in all things. As an all-inclusive virtue, forbearance is Christ Himself; only Christ lived a life full of forbearance, and only Christ can be our perfect forbearance today. To let our forbearance be known to all men is to let the Christ whom we live and magnify as the totality of all human virtues, whom we take as our pattern and pursue as our goal, be known to all men.. Paul says that the Lord is near primarily refers to His presence with us that He is ready to help in space; that He is at hand in time. [Phil. 1:19-20] *For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and the bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death.* [Phil. 1:21a] *For to me, to live is Christ ...*
- We need to learn Christ as the secret of our being transformed, being metabolically changed in our natural life, that we be anxious in nothing, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let our requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses every man's understanding, will guard our hearts and thoughts in Christ Jesus. [Phil. 4:6-7] *In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses every man's understanding, will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.*

III. **“When we have problems in our daily life, we do not have to seek advice from others, because we have a spirit in us and the Lord as the Spirit dwelling in our spirit is very near to us. We can ask Him about everything, without any need to use the telephone or the fax machine, for He can talk with us right within us. You can talk with Him and confer with Him in everything. The Lord's Word says, ‘In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God’ (Phil. 4:6). Hence, if you have some problem, you just need to tell Him. He is right within you, and He is with you face to face. The Triune God—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit—is in us not to trouble us but to be our Paraclete, Comforter, and Supporter. I always pray, ‘O Lord, now I am going to take a walk. Support me, sustain me, and strengthen me.’ This is to drink the Lord. In this way I have no anxiety. When anxiety comes, you should say, ‘O Lord, this anxiety is Yours, not mine; I give it to you because You bear it for me.’ Thus, you receive the Lord's element into you, and metabolism will work constantly in you. Consequently, what is expressed through you outwardly is Christ. This is to live Christ. Those who do not know this secret consider that to live Christ is a difficult thing. Actually, you just need to practice speaking with the Lord constantly; then spontaneously, you will live Christ”—The Organic Aspect of God's Salvation, pp. 54-55:**

- Christ Himself is the peace of God, which surpasses every man's understanding. In all circumstances we encounter in our daily life, if we draw to God in a living union and communion with Him, practicing fellowship with God in prayers and petitions, we will enjoy the peace of God infused into us through our fellowship with Him as the counterpoise to troubles and the antidote to anxiety. The God of peace patrols before our hearts and thoughts in Christ, keeping us calm and tranquil that we would have a life free of anxiety. We need to realize that all our circumstances, good or bad, have been assigned to us by God in order to serve us in fulfilling our destiny to gain Christ, live Christ, and magnify Christ.

IV. **“Finally, brothers, what things are true, what things are dignified, what things are pure, what things are lovely, what things are well spoken of, if there is any virtue and if any praise, take account of these things”—Phil. 4:8**

- These virtues are the expressions of God's attributes lived out from within the pursuers of Christ, who is the embodiment of God. They are six governing aspects of a life that lives Christ. Virtue and praise sum up these six items, in all of which are some virtue or excellence and something worthy of praise. To be a proper human being is to express God through His divine attributes in our human virtues, have a human life filled with Christ as the reality of the attributes of God.

V. **“I have learned, in whatever circumstances I am, to be content. I know also how to be abased, and I know how to abound; in everything and in all things I have learned the secret both to be filled and to hunger, both to abound and to lack. I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me”—Phil. 4:11b-13**

- Paul took Christ as the secret to experience Christ, being content and rejoicing in every kind of circumstance, in any situation, and in any matter because of Christ. After his conversion to Christ, he was initiated into Christ and into the Body of Christ. He learned the secret of doing all things in Christ as the One who empowers us that he can take Christ as life, live Christ, magnify Christ, gain Christ, and have the church life. As a person in Christ, Paul experienced Christ the One who is real, living, near, available, and prevailing, and applied Him in all circumstances, specifically applies to Christ's empowering us to live Him as our human virtues so to magnify His unlimited greatness in every kind of circumstance; to live a contented life and be true, dignified, righteous, pure, lovely, and well-spoken of. If we would experience Christ as the empowering One, we need to cooperate with Him by: ①being persons who pray continually by coming before God, entering into Him, and living in the light of His face; ②experiencing a thorough and fresh forgiveness of our sins, based on the shedding of the Lord's blood on the cross; ③knowing that we have ascended into the heavens with the Lord, the life we have received is a heavenly life, we are heavenly persons; outwardly, we are still living on the earth, but inwardly, with respect to our inner life and mood, we are living in the heavens.

To rejoice in the Lord is to be one with Him. When we are one with the Lord, we are not anxious about anything, for we are not only under the Lord's sovereign hand, but we are in the Lord Himself. If we live this kind of life, how could we be anxious? The more we practice being one with the Lord, the more we shall realize that His destiny is our destiny. If He wants us to stay on earth for a longer period of time, He will keep us alive. But if it is His desire that we go to Him, He will take us to Himself. Since everything depends on His will and since we are one with Him in a practical way, there is no reason for us to be anxious.

When we are separated from the Lord, we are anxious about everything. Everything in human life gives rise to anxiety. But when we are one with the Lord, we are separated from the natural human life and its anxiety. If we would make our forbearance known to all men and not be anxious in anything, we need to practice being one with the Lord. This is the reason Paul charges us to rejoice in the Lord before he exhorts us to make known our forbearance.

<Excerpts from "Life-study of Philippians", Message 62, "A Life full of Forbearance but without Anxiety (7)">

In Philippians, a book that speaks about Paul's circumstances, we see the secret of the Christian life and the practical way for the church life, that is, the indwelling Christ. No matter what the circumstances are, we have a wonderful person living within us who bears all our burdens. We need to learn to turn to Christ, take Him as our person, and let Him replace us. All our circumstances teach us to learn the secret of living by Christ; all our circumstances force us to give up ourselves and take Christ as our person. This is the main lesson of this Epistle.

In summary, we need to experience and enjoy Christ as the One who empowers us so that we will stand firm in Him, rejoice in Him always, let the peace of God guard our hearts, be content all the time, do all things that express the highest human virtues, and have God fill our every need in Christ. When we enjoy Christ to this extent, although there may be many problems in our circumstances, in Christ and with God they will be solved.

<Excerpts from "The Conclusion of the New Testament (Msgs. 346-366)", Message 351, "Experiencing and enjoying Christ in the Epistles (57)">