





BEREAN LADIES RETREAT 2026



cultivating
CONTENTMENT
Philippians 3 & 4

BBC

Fixing Our Minds on Christ

Philippians 3:17-4:9

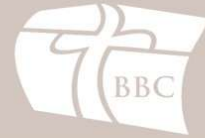
Kelly Coaty

Next slide: read Phil 3-4

Philippians 3-4



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CONTENTMENT
Philippians 3 & 4



Next slide: read notes first



MIT

When we fix our minds on Christ, it shapes our identity, our relationships, and our peace—enabling us to stand firm in Him.



- As we walk through this passage, here's the big idea I want us to keep coming back to:
When we fix our minds on Christ, it shapes our identity, our relationships, and our peace—enabling us to stand firm in Him.
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Phil 3:1-3:16 Quick Recap

- Paul reminds us that true righteousness and joy aren't found in our efforts – it's found in Christ alone.
- The Christian life is a continual pressing on – not looking at the past, the thing that I've done, but pursuing Him above all.
- Surpassing worth of knowing Christ



(Read slide)

Paul calls us to press on – and in the next verses, Paul turns and says, “Here’s what it looks like to be anchored in Christ.”

(Next Slide: Read verse)



¹⁷ Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸ For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹ Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with **minds set** on earthly things. ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.



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Imitate Me! (v. 17)

- The Command
 - Join in imitating me.
- The Filter
 - Keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.



- In ch. 2 Paul was instructing the Philippian believers to make the intentional choice to adopt the same attitude that Jesus adopted (2:5-8)
 - ⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ^[a] ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ^[b] ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, ^[c] being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
- And now Paul is commanding them (and us) to “join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us”
 - He made it clear earlier in ch. 3 that he himself adopted the same attitude/perspective/mindset that Christ adopted, by counting anything in this life that stands in the way of radical obedience to Christ as “rubbish.” (This is what Karen spoke about earlier this morning) And now he tells the Philippians to follow his example
 - Jesus' attitude was self-emptying.
 - Paul's attitude is counting things as "rubbish."
 - And here's why that matters to us:
 - You can't cultivate contentment while you are still clinging to things you believe you need in order to be okay, because the very things we're holding onto—status, comfort, control, approval—are often the

things we're depending on to satisfy us.

- So when Paul calls them "rubbish," he's not just insulting them—he's saying, "These things were never meant to fill you in the first place." And if we keep trying to hold onto them... we will always feel restless, because we're asking temporary things to do what only Christ can do.

Contentment begins when we loosen our grip on what can't satisfy, so our hearts are actually free to be filled by Christ.

- At this point Paul is imprisoned for his testimony of the gospel; he's endured immense suffering, which amazingly in 2 Cor he calls "light and momentary affliction" **when compared to the "eternal weight of glory."** (2 Cor 4:17).
Look at his perspective!
 - He's putting his money where his mouth is, practicing what he's been preaching, and providing an example to follow
 - I imagine any inmates on death row would say, "I'm an example not to follow," and yet Paul is does the opposite.
 - He's not "making the best of a bad situation"; he's having a "mindset that leads to the greatest possible outcome" regardless of the walls – and he makes a point to tell us to imitate him

- (Next Slide: Notes)



Who are these people? (3:18-19)

Identifying the “Enemies of the Cross”

- They aren’t strangers
 - They are familiar, once-loved, and “often told of”
- The ‘tears’ factor
 - Paul’s grief suggests these were likely ‘insiders,’ not distant scoffers
- The counterfeit walk
 - Lives don’t match their confession
- The gravity of Earth
 - φρονέω
 - Their mindset is fixed on what is visible and temporary
- The tragic end
 - Their trajectory is destruction
 - Makes them a dangerous pattern to follow



- After Paul tells them to imitate him, he immediately contrasts his life with another group—people he calls “enemies of the cross of Christ.”
 - And it’s important to see that Paul is not talking about obvious outsiders or people who openly reject Jesus.
 - His language suggests these are people who were once known within the community—people who at some point professed faith in Christ, but whose lives no longer reflect that profession.
 - That’s why Paul is grieving. He weeps over them. And you don’t weep over strangers—you weep over people you know, people who are drifting.
- So these are not distant warnings—they are close ones. People the Philippians would have recognized. People whose influence they would have felt.
 - And that leads to a sobering truth: their walk reveals what their words cannot.
 - As Jesus said in Matthew 7, “you will know them by their fruits.” Their direction tells the truth about their devotion.
- And one of the clearest indicators Paul gives is this: their minds are set on earthly things.
 - The word he uses is *phroneō*—a settled mindset, a chosen way of thinking. And throughout Philippians, Paul keeps bringing us back to this idea: **what shapes your mind will shape your life.**
- Here, Paul contrasts two directions. The cross of Christ represents a life of surrender, sacrifice, and self-denial. But an earthly mindset is driven by comfort and immediate satisfaction.
 - And that’s why true contentment isn’t found only when circumstances going well. It’s

not happiness when life is easy. True contentment is the peace of Christ in the middle of suffering—because the mind is anchored in something greater than what is seen.

- But these people are called enemies of the cross because they reject that way of life. Not just Christ's work on the cross—but the way of the cross itself.
- They are trying to find satisfaction in things that were never designed to satisfy them.
- And to emphasize this, Paul says, "their god is their belly"—a life ruled by desire. They are driven by what they want next.
 - And that kind of life never produces contentment. Because if your peace is tied to your cravings, your possessions, or your status, you will always need more.
 - So Paul says their end is destruction. Not because he is being dramatic, but as the natural result of a life built on temporary things.
 - And he warns the church: don't follow that pattern.
 - Instead, follow those those who live with their minds set on Christ.
 - (And if you're sitting here concerned, convicted, or wanting to follow Christ—that's not the heart Paul is warning about.)
 - (Next Slide: Notes first)



- ²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,²¹ who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.



- Because God has a different plan for those of us who are in Christ.
- **(Read Verse)**
 - When our minds are set (phroneō) on our heavenly citizenship, our lives stop being shaped by this world and start being anchored in Christ.
 - God sent Jesus, who lived a perfect life, died in our place, rose again, so that through faith in Him, we could be forgiven from our sins, and brought into a completely new kingdom.
 - That’s why Paul can say with certainty that, if we are in Christ, “Our citizenship is in heaven.”
 - Not because we have done anything to earn it, but because Christ has secured it!
 - And the same Savior who rescued us... is the One we are now waiting for. He’s coming back.
 - So, this is our promise! This is our identity. This is where we belong. **This is what should shape how we think**
- So the question is—are we living like this world is our home? Or are we living like we’re just passing through?
 - It’s like staying in a hotel. You use the space—but you don’t remodel it. You don’t build your life around it. Why? Because you know you’re not staying.
 - Paul is saying—that’s how we relate to this world. We live here, we engage

here—but we don't treat it like it's our home.

- And that changes everything for those of us who are in Christ
 - Because if this world isn't my home, then I don't have to squeeze all my hope out of it.
 - I don't have to Control everything, Fix everything, or Fear everything
 - **Because my hope isn't in my ability to hold life together—it's in Christ, who holds all things together and is bringing me home.**
- (Next Slide: notes)



Paul Juxtaposes Two Groups of People (v. 17-21)

	Non-Believers	Believers
Identity	Enemies of the cross	Citizens of Heaven
Their "God"	Their stomach (physical desires)	The Lord Jesus Christ
Their Pride	Their shame (boasting in the worldly)	The Savior's glory
Mindset	Set on earthly things	Set on Christ and His return
Ultimate End	Destruction	Transformation (new bodies!)



- What Paul is doing here is laying out two completely different ways to live—two identities, two directions, and two outcomes.
- (Briefly gesture to the table)
 - On one side are those he calls enemies of the cross— their god is their desires, their pride is in what should shame them, their minds are fixed on what is temporary... and their end is destruction.
 - But on the other side are those who belong to Christ— citizens of heaven, who look to Jesus as Lord, whose hope is in His glory, whose minds are set on what is eternal... and their end is transformation and heaven!
- And this is where it gets personal –
 - It's not, *"Which one do I agree with?"*
 - but, **"In which direction is my life actually moving?"**
 - Because your mindset shows up in real ways:
 - What do you run to when life feels hard?
 - What do you think about when your mind is unoccupied?
 - What are you most afraid of losing?
 - What feels like it would finally make you okay?
 - That's what your mind is set on.
 - That's what has your affection.
- And Paul is saying—the person who will live with Christ forever is not someone

who occasionally thinks about Him... but someone whose life is increasingly centered on Him.

- We're not living this life trying to squeeze as much pleasure as possible out of this world—
we're living in light of a greater joy that is coming.
- ((Next Slide: Notes))



So, Who Are You Following?

- Watch your influences
 - Not every influence is safe
 - Direction > appearances
- Guard your eyes
 - Social media fuels sideways focus



- If who or what we follow shapes where we go... then this becomes incredibly practical.
- We have to ask ourselves: Who am I actually following?
 - Not just who am I around—but who is shaping how I think, how I live, and what I value?
 - Because not everyone is a safe influence, even in the church, and when you are looking at those who are influencing you, direction matters more than appearances
 - Are we intentionally choosing people who pointing us to Christ? Or are we allowing our friends to be chosen by our circumstances?
 - Are choosing Christians within the church or are we choosing non-Christian military friends just because they “get us”
 - (please don’t misunderstand me, we need to befriend the lost because they need to be pointed to Jesus, but how much are we allowing our lost friends to influence us)
 - And if you don’t feel like you have those people around you yet—that’s not a failure, that’s an invitation to seek them out.
- And on the flip side: are we women worth following?
 - There are younger women and girls watching us.
 - Are we living in a way that helps them follow Christ?

- And are we guarding what we are consistently looking at?
 - Because social media trains us to look sideways—to compare, to measure, to drift—instead of fixing our eyes on Christ.
 - And not that’s bad all the time, but how much is it shaping our focus?
- We don’t drift into godly influence—we choose it.
So the question is: **are you choosing well?**
 - Because the direction of your life is being shaped—right now—by who you follow..
 - And that’s why Paul will say, very clearly, “Stand firm in the Lord.”
- Verse 4:1
- (Next Slide: slide/verse)



- **4** Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.



(Next Slide: Notes)



Standing Firm (στήκετε) in the Lord

- A Heart Anchored in Christ
 - Loved deeply by Paul
 - His 'crown' and joy
- Stand Firm in the Lord
 - Not Flashy - often quiet and costly
 - Sometimes lonely
 - Only possible 'in the Lord!'



- Paul is saying something really striking about the Philippian believers—he calls them his joy and his crown.
- That word 'crown' is reward language—it's the same idea Paul uses in 1 Cor 9 when he talks about the prize in a race.
 - In other words, these people are evidence of his life being well lived.
- So the question is—what has captured our hearts? What would we call our joy and crown?
 - Because what we love most will always shape where we end up.
 - It's easy to look right on the outside, but Paul keeps bringing us back to the heart.
 - What do we actually value? What do we actually long for?
- And that's why he says 'therefore' at the beginning—because of what Christ has done, and because of the promise of resurrection, there is a clear response:
 - Stand firm in the Lord
 - This word means to preserve – to remain steady, faithful, unmoved.
 - And it's not flashy. It's often quiet. Sometimes costly. And yes, sometimes it can feel lonely
 - But it is only possible when we are 'in the Lord.'
 - We don't stand firm in our own strength – we stand firm in our union with Christ
 - And it doesn't mean you always feel strong—it means you keep returning to Christ, even when you feel weak.

- Jesus described it as a house built on the rock – everything else will eventually give way
- **Standing firm isn't about trying harder—it's about staying rooted in the only foundation that will not move.**
- (Next Slide: notes)



Stand Firm in the Lord (4:1)

- What does this look like?
 - Identity
 - When you feel insecure or compare
 - Truth
 - When your thoughts spiral
 - Contentment
 - When life feels heavy
 - Love
 - When relationships are hard
 - Obedience
 - When it's costly
 - Dependence
- What is it not?
 - Not the absence of struggles
 - Not the absence of weakness
 - Not a perfect or easy life
- Standing firm is staying rooted in Christ when everything in you wants to drift.



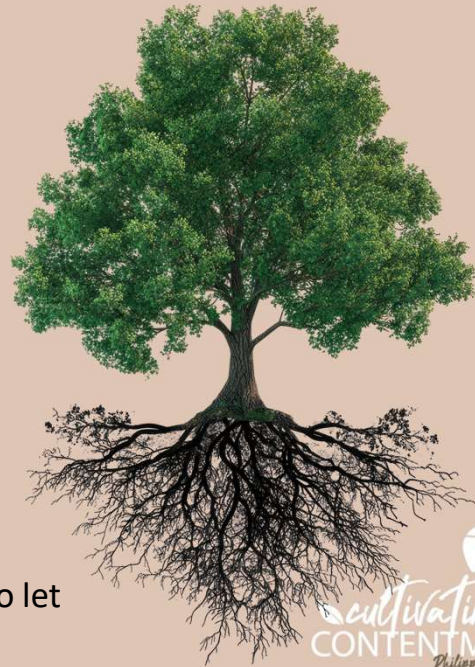
- So what does it actually look like to stand firm in the Lord?
 - It's not abstract—it shows up in real life.
- Here are examples of what standing firm in Christ looks like in six different areas of life.
- **(Walk through quickly (no expansion per point))**
 - When I feel insecure or start comparing—I stand firm in my identity.
 - When my thoughts spiral—I stand firm in truth.
 - When life feels heavy—I stand firm in contentment.
 - When relationships are hard—I stand firm in love.
 - When obedience is costly—I continue stand firm in obedience.
 - And when I crave control—I stand firm in dependence.
- And just to be clear—this is not about having a perfect life.
 - It's not the absence of struggle or weakness.
- Standing firm is merely staying rooted in Christ when everything in you wants to drift.
- (Next Slide: notes first!)



Standing Firm

- Roots that run deep
 - Eph 4:14 – not tossed by the waves
 - Eph 3:17 – Rooted in Christ's love
- Philippians Connections
 - Right examples (3:17)
 - Right identity (3:20)
 - Right thinking (4:8)
 - Right practices (4:9)

Standing firm is the quiet, steady refusal to let go of Christ in real life.



- A tree doesn't stand firm because there's no wind—
 - it stands firm because its roots go deep.
- And Paul says in Ephesians that we are to be rooted and grounded in Christ's love... and later talks about not being tossed around by everything that comes at us.
- So, the goal isn't a life with no pressure— it's a life with deep roots.
- Because when your roots are shallow, every circumstance shakes you...
 - but when your roots go down into Christ, you can actually stand firm—even when life is hard.
 - That's what Paul has been building in Philippians.
 - Right examples. Right identity. Right thinking. Right practice.
 - These are the ways to stand firm in Christ
- (Next Slide: notes first)



•² I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. ³ Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.



- **(Don't read verse yet)**
- Paul now seems to shift from addressing the whole church to focusing on a specific conflict between two women in the church, Euodia and Syntyche.
 - But what I want to show you is that he's not actually changing topics.
- (Read verse)
- (Next Slide: notes)



Euodia and Syntyche

- The situation:
 - Faithful women in gospel partnership
 - Now in real relational conflict
- The call
 - “Agree in the Lord” – **phroneō**
 - Return to the mind of Christ (Phil 2:5-11)



- Paul is naming two women in the church—Euodia and Syntyche.
- These are not outsiders. These are women who had labored side by side in the gospel.
 - But something has broken in their unity.
 - And Paul’s answer is simple: ‘Agree in the Lord.’
- That phrase is the same mindset language can be seen all throughout Philipppians—*phroneō*—the mind of Christ.
 - And he immediately connects it back to Jesus in Philipppians 2.
 - Because the only way to restore unity... is to return to the mind that Christ Himself had—humility, obedience, and self-giving love.
- (If time) Also notice that Paul speaks directly to *each* of the women. He says, ‘I entreat/urge Euodia,’ and then he repeats it—‘and I entreat/urge Syntyche.’
 - He’s intentionally placing responsibility on both of them.
 - In doing this, Paul gives us a model to follow. Having the mind of Christ means taking responsibility for our part—even when we can’t control the outcome.
 - Syntyche can’t make Euodia reconcile, but she can take responsibility to pursue peace, as far as it depends on her. And the same is true for Euodia.



True Companion

- The help
 - A trusted gospel partner is called to intervene
 - A “yoke fellow” - one who shares the load

- The role
 - Not passive
 - Not distant
 - Spiritually steady enough to step in

- Core Idea
 - God often restores unity through people who are willing to carry the burden with others.



- Paul then turns to someone he calls a ‘true companion’—literally a yokefellow.
 - This is someone who is yoked together in gospel work—sharing the same burden.
 - Just like these two oxen
 - And Paul asks this person to step into the situation and help restore unity.
- This matters because it shows us something very practical: **God often brings healing through people who are close enough—and steady enough—to help others come back together**
- (Next Slide: notes)



E&S vs. True Companion

	Euodia & Syntyche	The True Companion (Syzgygus)
Current Stance	Unsteady , relational fracture	Steady , rooted in the Lord
Mindset (phroneo)	Focused on disagreement	Focused on unity in Christ
Instruction from Paul	"Agree in the Lord"	"Help these women"



- Paul has given us two pictures: Euodia and Syntyche, and the true companion.
 - One pair is struggling to stand firm together.
 - The other is steady enough in Christ to step in and help.
 - And the difference is *phroneō*—what the mind is set on.
 - One has drifted into a local conflict.
 - The other is anchored in the bigger mission of Christ—unity in the body.
- And this is where it gets very practical.
 - We make this choice every day—are we E&S or are we the True Companion?
 - When conflict surfaces, do we drift into gossip—or do we move toward prayer and restoration?
 - When a text went out to the church about someone having marital problems, are you gossiping about it or are you instantly praying for them?
 - And if you're close enough to the situation, are you coming around them to bring them back to unity? Are we bearing each other's burdens, yoking ourselves together, or are we turning our backs to them?
 - **Let's call gossip what it is! There is no room for it here – we are women of Berean. We should be willing to serve one another, to bear each other's burdens!**
 - But if we're honest, sometimes, we're more like E&S. We allow our

minds to be set on earthly things and need to be redirected to stand firm in the Lord. Let's be humble enough to accept that redirection

- So how firm is your stance in the Lord? Because standing firm in the Lord doesn't just affect how we believe—it also shapes our relationships with people.
- (Next Slide: verse)



Philippians 4:4-7

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. ⁵ Let your reasonableness^[d] be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶ do not be anxious 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.



- (Next Slide: notes)



From Anxiety to Peace (v.4-7)

- Commands:
 - Rejoice in the Lord
 - Be gentle
 - Do not be anxious
 - Pray about everything
- Foundation
 - The Lord is near
- Result
 - The peace of God will guard you



- Paul has a list of imperative verbs here!
 - There are four here (well five, as one is repeated)
 - Rejoice, rejoice (again), let your reasonableness be known to everyone, do not be anxious, let your requests be made known to God
 - All because the Lord is near
 - And then the promise:
 - The peace of God will guard your hearts and minds
 - Paul is showing us the formula for how to stand firm in the Lord!



Rejoice... (v. 4-5)

- Rejoicing is a choice
 - Not based on our circumstances
 - Commanded – even in suffering
 - Rooted in the Lord, not life
- Rejoicing Flows from Right Thinking
 - Seeing life through an eternal lens
 - Trusting God’s purposes through hardship
 - Following Christ in obedience



- His first command to us is to rejoice in the Lord.
 - And then he doubles down—‘again I will say, rejoice.’
- This isn’t a small theme for Paul—this is actually the seventh and eighth time he’s used the word ‘rejoice’ in this letter.
 - And remember—he’s writing this from prison. And not only that, he’s expecting even more hardship. Back in 3:17, he even urged the Philippians to follow his example—a path that could lead to suffering.
- So that raises the question—what is there to rejoice about?
 - The answer is this: when our minds are anchored in Christ, we begin to see reality rightly—and when we see rightly, joy starts to grow from that.
- Think about Jesus—He set aside momentary comfort, humbled Himself, and obeyed the Father—even to the point of death on the cross. And because of that, He was exalted above every name.
 - And here’s the connection: we’re not called to the exact same role as Christ—but we are called to the same kind of **mindset**. A mindset that trusts the Father, values obedience over comfort, and believes that God’s way is always better—even when it’s hard.
 - So, when our minds are set like that—when we trust God’s purposes instead of just our circumstances—rejoicing isn’t something we have to force.
 - It becomes the natural result of seeing our lives through that lens

- Remember, just before this, Paul contrasted two kinds of people—those whose minds are set on earthly things, and those whose citizenship is in heaven.
 - So, this command to rejoice is rooted in our identity. If our home is heaven, and Christ is our Savior, then we have a reason to rejoice that goes beyond our circumstances.
- And in 4:1, Paul told us to ‘stand firm in the Lord.’
 - This is what that looks like on the inside—it looks like choosing joy.
- (Next Slide: notes)



... & Rest in Who God is (v. 4-5) cont.

- Reasonableness - ἐπιεικὲς -> gentleness
 - Graciousness
 - Moderation
 - Considerate spirit
 - Gentle spirit
- Trusting God to handle what you cannot
- Gentleness Reflects Trust
 - Patient, steady, not self-seeking
 - Doesn't demand control or outcomes
 - Frees us to love others well
- Foundation
 - The Lord is at hand
 - He's coming back soon!



- Then he says, 'Let your reasonableness be known to everyone.'
 - This is our third command
 - Reasonableness is translated 'gentleness' every other time it's used in the ESV and in other versions is translated graciousness, moderation, considerate spirit, gentle spirit
 - This word describes the heart of a person who will let the Lord fight her battles (Ex 14:14 NIV - ¹⁴The Lord will fight for you; you need only to be still.") This person knows that the Lord has said "vengeance is Mine," (Romans 12:19) so we can respond with gentleness instead of grasping for control.
 - It describes a person who is really free to let go of her anxieties and all the things that cause her stress, because she knows the Lord will take up her cause!
- And this connects directly to what we saw in verses 2 and 3.
 - There was conflict between Euodia and Syntyche, and Paul called them to unity. This is the kind of gentle spirit that makes unity possible.
 - Gentleness is what shows up when we're not fighting for our own way, when we're not demanding control, when we're anchored in Christ instead of ourselves.
 - In other words, a life that is standing firm in the Lord is not harsh or self-protective—it's steady, patient, and gracious.
- And then Paul gives us the foundation for all of this: 'The Lord is at hand.'
 - This connects us back again to 3:20–21—our citizenship is in heaven, and we are waiting for a Savior.
 - So Paul is reminding us: "the Lord is coming again soon."

- And that's why we can rejoice. That's why we can be gentle. Because our lives are not anchored in what is happening here—they're anchored in Christ.
- (Next Slide: notes)



What Does Rejoicing Look Like in Real Life?

- When life feels heavy:
 - Kids who need constant care
 - Hard conversations or conflict
 - Marital strain
 - Caring for someone who isn't getting better
 - Feeling overwhelmed by responsibilities
- What rejoicing can look like:
 - When life feels heavy
 - "Lord, You're in control, even here."
 - When you feel overwhelmed
 - "Thank You that You see me and sustain me."
 - When comparison creeps in
 - "You have been good to me!"



- There are so many moments in life when things feel heavy—when the weight of responsibility, relationships, or uncertainty presses in.
 - Kids that need constant care. Hard conversations with people we love. Marital tension that feels unresolved. The list goes on and on...
 - And in those moments, rejoicing can feel almost unnatural.
- But when Paul says, "Rejoice in the Lord always," he is not calling us to pretend life is easy or to manufacture a feeling we don't have. Rejoicing is not denial. It's not forced positivity.
 - No, Rejoicing is the intentional turning of our hearts toward what is true about God—right in the middle of what is hard
 - And because our focus is off ourselves and our circumstances, we are free to rejoice in who HE is and what He has done for us
- So what does that actually look like in real life?
 - It sounds like this: when life feels heavy, we say, "Lord, You are in control, even here."
 - When we feel overwhelmed, we say, "Thank You that You see me and You are sustaining me."
 - When comparison starts to creep in, we say, "Lord, You have been good to me."

- This is what it means to rejoice—not that everything around us is good, but that God is still good in the middle of it.
- And this matters, because rejoicing is not just something we do when life is calm.
 - It's a command for real life.
 - And our hearts don't always stay there naturally. They drift. They get pulled toward fear, toward what-ifs, toward anxiety.
 - And so that's exactly where Paul goes next.
- Because once he calls us to rejoice, he then shows us what to do when our hearts struggle to stay there—when anxiety rises, when peace feels far away, when our minds start to spin.
- So this is where he takes us next: into prayer, and into the peace of God that guards our hearts



From Anxiety... (v. 6-7)

- The Struggle
 - Anxiety = trying to control what we can't
 - A mind fixed on what is temporary and uncertain
- The Command
 - Do not be anxious for nothing
 - Bring everything to God
 - Prayer = talking to God
 - Supplication = asking specifically
 - Thanksgiving = remembering His goodness



- And it may sound surprising, but Paul simply says: “Do not be anxious about anything.”
 - Our 4th imperative
- And this connects directly back to what we saw in 3:19—those whose minds are set on earthly things become consumed with what’s right in front of them... and anxiety naturally follows.
 - But if our citizenship is in heaven... if our hope is in Christ... then we don’t have to be controlled by those same fears.
- We have a choice to rejoice instead of being anxious
 - And this is hard because the opposite of rejoicing is anxiety, sorrow, fear, and fret
 - There is an epidemic amount of that going on in this culture, but in women especially because the Lord has created us to be feelers!
 - It’s so easy to spin off into anxiety
 - Think about it: when our husbands doesn’t call and is 15 minutes late – we think he’s in the ditch somewhere
 - And if we do it with the small things, we’ll also do it in the big things!
- So he gives us another option: He says, ‘In everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.’
 - So Paul isn't suggesting that we just ignore our anxiety—He's saying that anxiety it’s meant to be redirected.
Instead of carrying it, we bring it to God.
- So, when our mind does go into anxiety, we have the choice – do we allow our mind to spin or do we meditate on good passages – reminding ourselves of the promises of God

- He will guard our hearts (v. 7)
- He will never leave you for forsake you (Deut. 31:8)
- His mercies never come to an end (Lam 3:22)
- This can be a 'simple' rhythm shift in our hearts
 - Notice what you're dwelling on (sometimes that half the battle!)
 - Name what is true about God
 - Redirect your heart back to Him through prayer
- This is another way of standing firm in the Lord—not letting our minds be carried away by anxiety.
 - Instead, Paul gives us a better way:
Not 'try harder.'
Not 'figure it out.'
Not 'just stop worrying.'
But bring it to God.
- This is where we live out what we said we believe in 3:20—that Christ is our Lord. Instead of trying to manage everything ourselves, we bring it to Him—trusting that He is actually in control.
 - Because at its core, anxiety is often an attempt to control what we were never meant to control.
 - We start running scenarios in our minds—"What if this happens?" "What if that goes wrong?"
We replay conversations, we anticipate worst-case outcomes, we try to mentally prepare for things that may never even happen...
 - and in the process, we carry weight we were never meant to carry.
- Paul is saying here, do to be anxious **about anything**.
 - Because there is nothing in your life that falls outside of God's care.
 - And thanksgiving pulls our hearts back to what is true—that God has been faithful, and He will be faithful again.
- This is how we shift our mindset—
 - not by ignoring our problems, but by bringing them to God.
- So here's the question:
How many things am I carrying... that I haven't actually brought to Him?
 - Because God invites us—
'Let your requests be made known to Me.'
 - And this is the shift:
Prayer isn't the absence of concern—it's the redirection of it.
- And next Paul doesn't leave us carrying this struggle of anxiety—he tells us what God Himself will do in response to us bringing our anxieties to Him through prayer.
- (Next Slide: notes)



... to Peace (v. 6-7) cont.

- The Exchange
- The Promise
 - God gives us peace beyond understanding
 - Not based on circumstances
 - Guards your heart and mind



- v. 7 'And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.'
 - This is the opposite of what we saw in 3:19. Instead of a mind set on earthly things that leads to destruction, we have hearts and minds guarded in Christ.
 - And that word 'guard' is powerful—it's a military term. It's the picture of God's peace **standing watch** over your heart and your mind.
 - So instead of being ruled by anxiety, we are **surrounded** and **protected** by His peace.
 - And notice—this peace is "in Christ Jesus." It's not something detached from Him; it only exists when our lives are anchored in Him
 - **So this isn't just a promise about feeling better—it's a picture of a completely different kind of life. One where our hearts and minds are actually secured by Christ as we live in Him**
- And I want to say something briefly, because I know in a room this size, there are women here who are walking through anxiety in deeper ways—some of you may even be on medication for it.
- And I just want you to hear this clearly:
 - This passage is not meant to shame you—it's meant to invite you.

- Because anxiety isn't always just a spiritual issue—it can also involve our bodies, our chemistry
- But what Paul is addressing here is something all of us share—
 - What we do with our thoughts...
 - Where we take our fears...
 - What we anchor ourselves in.
 - So this doesn't mean, "If you were trusting God more, you wouldn't feel anxious."
 - It means, "In the middle of whatever you're facing—even ongoing anxiety—you are invited to bring it to Him."
- Medication may help carry part of the load—but it was never meant to replace dependence on Christ.
 - And dependence on Christ was never meant to shame you for needing help.
- The invitation is still the same for all of us:
 - Don't carry it alone—bring it to Him.
- So Paul has taken us from
 - our direction...
 - to our relationships...
 - to our inner life...
 - and he's showing us that stability comes when every part of us is anchored in Christ.
 - And that's what produces real contentment.
- (Next Slide: notes)

Berean Ladies' Retreat 2026

When Anxiety Rises: Anchoring Your Mind in God's Character

When worry starts to creep in, what we need most isn't just relief—we need to remember who God is, because peace is tied to His character, not our circumstances.

"You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you..." — Isaiah 26:3

When you feel anxious... set your mind on what is true about God

God is WITH you
"Fear not, for I am with you... I will strengthen you, I will help you." — Isaiah 41:10
"He will not leave you or forsake you." — Deuteronomy 31:8

God is SOVEREIGN
"Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases." — Psalm 115:3
"The Lord works out everything to its proper end." — Proverbs 16:4

God CARES for you
"Casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you." — 1 Peter 5:7
"You are of more value than many sparrows." — Matthew 10:31

God is FAITHFUL
"His mercies never come to an end... great is your faithfulness." — Lamentations 3:22-23
"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." — Hebrews 13:8

God will SUSTAIN you
"Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you." — Psalm 55:22
"My grace is sufficient for you..." — 2 Corinthians 12:9

God gives PEACE
"You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you..." — Isaiah 26:3
"My peace I give to you... Let not your hearts be troubled." — John 14:27

A Simple Practice for Anxious Moments

1. **Notice** - What am I thinking or feeling right now?
2. **Name** - What is true about God in this moment?
3. **Redirect** - Turn your thoughts into a prayer:
"Lord, You are _____, so I can trust You here."

A Gentle Reminder

- You are not alone
- You are not out of His care
- You are not outside His control

Peace doesn't come from having easy circumstances—it comes from trusting an unchanging God.

One Truth to Hold Onto
Contentment grows when we trust who God is more than we fear what we face.

cultivating
CONTENTMENT
Philippians 3 & 4

- Before we go there, I wanted to point you to handout I created for you to slip into your Bible to help you when life feels heavy and your mind wants to spiral into anxiety
 - These are just some of the many truths about God and His character that can help you redirect your heart to rejoice.
 - He is with you
 - He is in Control
 - He cares for you
 - He is faithful
 - He will sustain you
 - He will give you peace
 - (click) And on the bottom left you can see that simple practice to help you walk through those anxious moments and help you set your mind back on Him
 - So next time you feel anxious, take this out and let it be an encouragement for you to look up these promises in your Bible and remember that our Father is a good, good Father who will never leave you or forsake you and you can trust Him in whatever you're going through.

- (Next Slide: notes)



What Have We Made Normal?

- We take other sin seriously
 - We don't excuse it
 - We don't normalize it
- But anxiety?
 - "Of course I'm worried..."
 - "That's just life."
 - "Every woman/mom/senior in high school/etc. feels this way!"
- Scripture says
 - "Do not be anxious about anything..." (v. 6)
- Have we normalized what God calls us to fight?



- Let me ask you something that might feel a little uncomfortable...
- What if I walked into a room like this and said, 'I've been looking at porn all week—and I'm not really trying to fight it.'
 - I would hope we have a group of women here that wouldn't brush it off. We wouldn't say, 'Oh, that's normal.'
 - But how often do we do that with anxiety?
 - How often do we say things like, 'I've been up worried about this all night'—and everyone just nods and says, 'Oh man, I'm sorry. I've been there.'
- And listen—we all feel anxiety. We all face it.
- But what if we've gotten so used to it... that we've stopped seeing it the way Scripture does?
 - Paul hasn't said, 'Manage your anxiety.'
He gives us the command - 'Do not be anxious.'
- And yet culturally—especially as women—we've created categories where worry feels completely acceptable.
 - Of course we worry about gray hair...
about weight gain...
about our kids getting their license...
- And we almost feel justified in it—like *this is what good moms and women do*.
 - We treat anxiety like a personality trait
 - But what if the expectation is actually different?
- What if, instead of normalizing anxiety, we helped each other fight it??

- What if we reminded each other: ‘You don’t have to carry that—take it to the Lord. Let me pray with you.’
- How much more encouragement, peace, and freedom might there be if we held each other accountable to what Scripture actually calls us to?
- We are women of Berean, let’s encourage one another to bring our anxiety to the Lord
 - If a woman comes to you and tells you she been worried about something, don’t just placate her. Love her well - point her back to Jesus, encouraging her to pray and bring her anxieties to Him. And pray with her. Help bear her burdens and bring them to Jesus with her— and then He promises that His peace will guard her heart – a peace that’s beyond our human understanding
- (Next Slide: notes)



Philippians 4:8-9

⁸ Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹ What you have **learned** and **received** and **heard** and **seen** in me— practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.



Next Paul pens these verses...
(Next Slide: notes)



Renew Your Mind (v. 8)

- Think
 - Dwell
- What is True
 - True
 - Just
- What is Pure
 - Pure
 - Honorable
- What is Beautiful
 - Lovely
 - Commendable
 - Excellent
 - Praiseworthy



- Once our hearts are guarded, Paul now shows us how to guard our *minds*.
- He used the word, “Finally...”—because he’s not changing topics. He’s bringing everything together.
- He warned us in 3:19 about minds set on earthly things...
 - now he tells us what to set our minds on instead.
 - And notice—this is a command.
 - He doesn’t just say *do* these things... he says, **think** about these things.
 - That word means more than a passing thought—it means to dwell, to stay there, to let your mind settle.
 - Because the reality is—your mind is always dwelling somewhere. Paul is just telling us: *be intentional about where*.
- First—whatever is true and just.
 - This is about anchoring your mind in reality—not what you feel, not what you fear—but what is actually true.
 - And truth is not something we create—it’s found in Christ. Who He is. What He has done. What He has promised.
 - So when your mind starts to spiral, the question becomes: **“Is this true? And what does God say is true here?”**

- Next—whatever is pure and honorable.
 - This is about what you allow into your mind.
Because what you take in... shapes what you dwell on.
 - Paul is saying—don't fill your mind with what is shallow, corrupt, or distracting...
fill it with what reflects the **character of Christ**.
 - Because we would never intentionally drink poison—
but sometimes we casually take in things that slowly shape our thinking away from Him.

- And then—whatever is lovely, commendable, excellent, and praiseworthy.
 - This is about what draws your heart toward God.
What is good. What is worthy. What reflects His character.
 - Because what you consistently dwell on...
becomes the atmosphere of your heart.

- So what Paul has given us here is a filter for our minds:
- If it reflects Christ...
if it aligns with truth...
if it draws your heart toward Him...
that's where your mind should stay.
 - Because not everything deserves your attention.
 - Your mind is like a garden— what you dwell on grows.
 - If you plant truth, purity, and what is good...
that's what will take root in your heart.
 - And this is how we actively live out *phroneō*—
choosing, again and again, where our minds will settle.
- So maybe the most practical question is this:
What has been occupying my mind lately?
 - And is it shaping me toward Christ...
or away from Him?
- What if took just one of these ideas that Paul tells us to intentionally dwell on and really, truly dwell on it this week?
 - How much would it shape our minds towards Christ?



Live it Out (v. 9)

- Follow Faithful Examples
 - What you've learned, received, heard, and seen
- Practice, Don't Just Know
 - Right thinking leads to right living
- Walk What You Believe
 - Align your choices with what you know is true
 - Daily, intention obedience



- After providing these things for the Philippians to dwell on, he brings everything to a close—not with more ideas, but with action.
 - He tells them to practice *The things you have **learned** and **received** and **heard** and **seen** in me.*
 - They had also *seen in Paul* his own application of his teaching. Paul exhorts them to follow his example. Paul was incredibly transparent. He says here "What I am telling you is what I do."
 - This connects all the way back to 3:17—'imitate me.' Paul is saying, 'You've seen what this looks like—now live it out.'
- Notice how many ways he says it—learned, received, heard, seen. This isn't new information—they've been surrounded by truth.
 - The question is not, 'Do you know it?' The question is, 'Are you living it?'
 - Christian growth isn't about knowing more—it's about living what you already know..
- And this is where contentment is actually formed—not just in what we think, but in how we live day by day.
 - And this takes intentionality. No one drifts into obedience. No one accidentally lives a steady, Christ-centered life.
 - We have to choose—again and again—to align our lives with what we know is true.
- And then Paul gives this incredible promise: 'and the God of peace will be with you.'
 - Earlier, he said the peace of God would guard you. Now he says the God of peace will

be with you.

- So, as we bring our anxieties to Him and fix our minds on truth and live it out—we don't just receive peace, we walk with the One who gives it
- ***When we intentionally fill our minds with what reflects Christ and live it out, we experience the presence and peace of God.***
- (Next Slide: notes)



The Path to Stability in Christ

Section	Key Action
3:17–4:1	Look Up
4:2–4:3	Look Around
4:4–4:9	Look In



- Before we close, I want you to see that Paul has been showing us something so simple, but so important:
 - **The direction of your mind determines the direction of your life.**
- He's been building a pathway—a way to a stable, steady, content life in Christ.
- **(Row 1)**
 - First—he tells us to *look up*.
In 3:17–4:1, he points us to our heavenly citizenship.
 - This is about identity—remembering who we are and where we belong.
 - *And when our identity is anchored in heaven, it gives us stability.*
- **(Row 2)**
 - Then he says—*look around*.
In 4:2–3, he calls us into gospel partnership.
 - This is about relationships—fighting for unity and walking with others.
 - *Because contentment doesn't grow in isolation—it grows in community.*
- **(Row 3)**
 - And then—*look in*.
In 4:4–9, he addresses our inner life—our thoughts, our anxieties, our focus.
 - This is about what our minds are set on.
 - *And when our minds are anchored in Christ, we experience His peace.*
- **(Bridge Sentence into Your Closing)**
- So Paul has shown us—

where to look...

what to focus on...

and how to live a steady life... a life anchored in Christ

- (Next Slide: notes)



Set Your Mind...

Stand Firm in the Lord

Where is my mind set?



- If we step back and look at this whole passage, one **theme** keeps rising to the surface—and it's this idea in Greek: *phroneō*—to set the mind.
 - Paul has been showing us, over and over again, that the Christian life is not just about what we do—it's about how we think. What our minds are set on.
- In chapter 3, he warns about those whose minds are set on earthly things...
 - But then he calls **us** to remember that our citizenship is in heaven.
- And from there, everything flows—
how we stand firm...
how we handle conflict...
how we respond to anxiety...
what we think about...
and ultimately, how we live.
- So when Paul says in 4:1, 'stand firm in the Lord,' he's not just talking about holding your ground outwardly—
 - he's talking about a life that is anchored inwardly.
 - A mind that is fixed on Christ.
 - A heart that is anchored in truth.
 - A life that is steadily walking in obedience.
- Because the reality is—we are always setting our minds on something
 - Either our minds are being shaped by the world...
or they are being shaped by Christ.

- And the difference shows up in everything—
in our peace...
in our relationships...
in our contentment.
- So, Paul doesn't leave that as a theory—he gives us a way to actively shape our minds.
 - Paul calls us to action:
to rejoice...
to pray instead of worry...
to think on what is true...
and to live it out.
 - Because when our minds are anchored in Christ, our lives become steady—even when everything around us is not.
- And here's the beautiful promise—
 - when we live this way, we don't just get peace...
 - We walk with the God of peace.
- So, the questions we're left with are simple:
 - Where is my mind set?
 - And what would it look like, even this week, to more intentionally set my mind on Christ...
and stand firm in Him?
- **Because Contentment is found when our minds are set on Christ and our lives are anchored in Him.**