



Encouragement in Ministry & Life

10 minutes – Greeting & Fellowship

- Light refreshments (optional)
- Welcoming and Introducing new members or visitors to the Group
- Sharing upcoming events (Conferences, Seminars, Network Meetings, etc.)

20 minutes – This Week's Discussion

Objective: To be encouraged in our walk; in relation to our own lives and in being used to minister to others.

Read Philippians 4:2 - 3 - Blessed are the Peace Makers!

- Here we have Paul genuinely concerned about the dispute that has arisen between two women.
- Paul urges them both individually and an unnamed person to help situate and resolve this dispute.
- Paul is very concerned that these two women who co-labored in the work of The Gospel; women who were fighting the good fight of Faith along side Paul and his team; are in a dispute.
- There is a need for the faithful to now be the Peace Makers that Jesus declared Blessed!
- It is also important to note that these women indeed were laboring and struggling in the Work of the Gospel together.

Read Philippians 4:4 - 4:7 - Rejoicing in the Lord and Guarding Ourselves with His Peace!

- In the midst of asking for help in resolving a dispute, Paul now begins to exhort the Philippian believers to Rejoice in the Lord *Always!* (Paul reiterates the need to rejoice a second time!)
- The exhortation also calls on the believers to be of gentleness and reasonableness, recognizing that the Lord is ever near and always at hand.
- Because of this, believers should not be anxious about anything, regardless of what a situation may appear to be - we are to remain faithful and not anxious!
- We do so, by always being in prayer and supplication, walking in thanksgiving and letting our requests be made known to God.
- Doing this we will be able to; through Christ; guard our hearts and minds with the Peace of God that surpasses all understanding!

Read Philippians 4:8 - 4:9 - What shall we Think About?

- In closing out his exhortation, Paul gives challenging instruction for the Philippian believers to live by; to think about what is true, what is honorable, what is just, what is pure, what is lovely, what is commendable, things of excellence and what is worthy of praise - we must keep our minds on these things!
- Each of these things carries its own depth and its own weight in our lives, we must continually seek to allow the Word of God to transform our minds and guide us in concentrating on these things!
- In concentrating on and practicing these things - God will be with us!
- Concentrate and meditate on the Word and the Lord - you will be changed forevermore!



20 minutes – This Week’s Discussion Questions

Question 1: Have you been the person in the dispute, or the person trying to be the Peace Maker? Discuss the importance of resolving disputes among believers.

- Just because we are believers does not mean we will not be in disagreement at times, we can see from these ladies, as well as Paul and Barnabas being in dispute over John Mark, that Christians do disagree with each other - we need to resolve the dispute in a Godly manner and Build the Kingdom!
- We should work diligently to resolve issues so bitterness and discord don't take root causing division!

Question 2: Anxiety seems to await around every corner at times, lurking and waiting to attack, how can we keep each other encouraged to stay grounded in prayer and supplication - not anxiety?

- First and foremost, we need to remain connected to the Body of Christ and have Spiritual Parents, Spiritual Siblings and eventually Spiritual Children to keep us in prayer and in the Word of God!
- We must remind one another, that no matter what it seems like, the Lord is always there, ever available, for us to commune with at all times!
- A lot of anxiety comes from the feeling that we lack something that others may have, we must exhort each other to be content with the provision the Lord has given us!
- We must be comfortable and confident in who we are in Christ and peace will replace anxiety!

Question 3: Discuss the difficulties we may have with the Eight Characteristics Paul exhorts us to keep our minds on, what if any, are the hardest for you personally?

- We live in a world that is contrary to what Paul exhorts us to keep our minds on, so it can be easy to fall into the mindset of the world, if we do not keep our minds on things above.
- If we tie the Eight Characteristics that Paul mentions to the nature of Christ, through which they exist most powerfully, we can judge our thoughts on being of Christ or not.

10 minutes – Closing in Prayer

- Pray that each person learn and apply a lifestyle based on our lesson
- Pray that the group keeps each other accountable in doing so
- Pray prayers of agreement with individuals with prayer requests
- Close with a prayer that everything be sealed by the Holy Spirit and for safety in traveling

Post Meeting Fellowship

- Leader should collect contact information from any new attendees
- Time of Post Meeting Fellowship does not have to be restrictive but held within reason
- Good time to share testimonies
- Be sure no one feels they are *obligated* to stay if they need to go

Dismiss the Group

- Post meeting – Leader should log in to Connect Leader’s Web Report and enter attendance and any new member or visitor information then submit the data