

No.

96.

"IF YE THEN BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, SEEK THOSE THINGS  
WHICH ARE ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE  
RIGHT HAND OF GOD." COL. 3. 1.

P H I L I P P I A N S I V .  
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*An Address (revised) at*

61, Upton Lane, Forest Gate.

13th November, 1916.

by

PERCY W. HEWARD.

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## PHILIPPIANS IV.

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An Address by Mr. P. W. Heward,

At 61, Upton Lane, Forest Gate.

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There are many things in this chapter, beloved friends, all of which will repay our thought. Indeed everywhere in Scripture we find that which will more than repay thought. Truth is powerful. Truth is precious. Truth is a reality, and when the words of the Holy Spirit are applied by the Holy Spirit they cause a holy spirituality in the lives and experiences of God's blood bought people. The apostle plainly alludes in this chapter to a difference of opinion, a difficulty between Eucdias and Syntyche. It appears that throughout the epistle he had this difference upon his mind, for he urges throughout to a holy and godly unity, and here he ventures to give the names, and exhorts them to be of the same mind in the Lord. Thus he reaches the various anticipatory endings of the epistle with the common Greek salutation, he says, "Rejoice". Farewell greetings are different in different languages. Many of them are suggestive. The Hebrew greeted with the word "Peace", the Greek with the word "Joy". The fruit of the Spirit is love, JOY, PEACE. "Rejoice" then says the apostle, but not in a natural way, "In the Lord". Here we have the action, the sphere, the time; or if you will, to take the usual grammatical division, we have the manner, the place, and the -

time; - "Rejoice - in the Lord - alway". Then the apostle adds, "Let your moderation be known to all men." You will notice in verse 5 we have a making known to men. In verse 6 a making known to God. To men make known by your life, your gentleness, your yieldingness, - not of truth, but of comforts, - "The Lord is at hand" to right your case. He is spiritually near now, and His return will soon put you above all the difficulties which surround you at the present. Then comes the command "Be anxious as to nothing". I was noticing that seven times over in the Gospel of Matthew, the Lord Jesus brings before us the sin of anxiety. And the word "Anxious" is from a root which signifies "a-part". An anxiety is when the mind is pulled in two ways, or as we say in English, "dis-tracted". The very syllable "tract" is from the word "to draw", as our word "traction" will show. To be DISttracted is to fail to appreciate what it is to be Attracted toward Christ, and just as DIStraction of the body means the rack, which some of the martyrs suffered, when their joints were pulled the one from the other, so DIStraction is a mental rack; therefore the definite command of God "Be anxious as to NOT ONE THING". This is as much a command as not to steal. God's dear people, on the one hand, are to be earnest, but, on the other hand, they are not to be anxious. The context has already mentioned a oneness of mind. "Minding the same thing".

### 3.

We have here brought before us FELLOW-workers, and then the apostle says, "Be anxious as to not one thing". This signifies the thought of a united heart and a fixed mind, in connection with united hearts becoming one, by grace. The contrast with the words "Be not of doubtful mind", or rather the parallel, in that those words also contain the Lord's prohibition; but the contrast with the doubtful mind itself is here brought before us. Anxiety MUST mean a doubtful mind. God's dear people are the only ones who are entitled to be free from anxiety, and they have every reason to be so free because they have only one object in life, they have only One Person to please. The man of this world is trying to please himself, trying to please someone else, and so forth. Children of GOD have only to please Him. The opinions of men are of small esteem. Circumstances, difficulties, - these are all to be comparatively uncounted, they are only to afford backgrounds for confidence in the greater Lord. "Be anxious as to not one thing" - this was the apostle's encouragement, because the Lord was near. The Epicureans regarded their "god" as living in a distant heaven, where he was unmindful of the needs of his earth. The apostle took a very different aspect, a Divinely REVEALED aspect, - "The Lord is near, be anxious for nothing". I have referred to the way in which Christ lays this stress in the Gospel of Matthew. He particularly forbade His people's anxiety

three times in the Address on the Mount, mentioning the word "anxious" six times. He told them they were not to be anxious as to their earthly needs, as to eating and drinking. He told them they were not<sup>to</sup>/be anxious as to the morrow, and in Matthew 10 we find brought before us the com-<sup>to</sup>mand that they were not<sup>to</sup>/be anxious when brought before men for their judgment. We have thus, beloved friends, some of the anxieties which are still, alas, so common among children of God. They are anxious for food or clothing, they are anxious about to-morrow, and they are anxious how to answer and appear before men. The Lord forbad all these, definitely forbad them because of HIS sufficiency as to needs, - as to the morrow, as to persecution, and all standing in front of men. He forbad, for He knew where the difficulties would be. Anxiety therefore being against a Divine command brings WITH it many problems and perplexities. It brings a lack of communion with God, as all disobedience must bring; it brings chastisement, wrapped up together with every departure from the will of the Lord. And so the apostle, echoing the words of his Lord, said to the saints at Philippi, "Be anxious as to nothing, but, on the contrary, in everything in the prayer and the supplication with thanksgiving, let your things asked be made known toward God". Your moderation known to men, the things you ask made known to God. You have already asked them in your mind, but let them be MADE KNOWN. God anticipated (Isaiah 65. 24) -

but let them be made known. "In THE prayer and THE supplication" I think implies not only a stress on private prayer, but on collective prayer. "In everything" might also suggest "In every time"; that is to say, whatever be the circumstances, whatever be the difficulties or the hindrances, So the apostle stirred up believers to have confidence in God instead of anxiety. They were not to drive out anxiety by self-confidence; nor was it that they were to have a vacuum instead, nor that they were to have a human provision to take the place of anxiety, but a Divinely appointed prayer-FULness. This was to be their contrast with the world's anxiety. Anxiety, necessarily, even in a child of God must, as the cares of this age, choke the Word; but the Word of the Lord when rightly appreciated stifles anxiety, for He is in one mind, and who can turn Him? Our God is in the heavens, He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased. None can stay His Hand. His eyes run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show Himself strong. We must not forget the Lord our Maker, man is but as grass. The nations are as a drop of the bucket. God measures heaven, comprehends the dust of the earth in a measure, has all power, and all His attributes are on behalf of His people. "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything let your requests be made known to God, AND the peace of God" - Ah, what will the peace of God then accomplish? "Peace with God" - that

is salvation, "Peace of God" - that is enjoyment. "And the peace of God which hath a position over every mind, a position in authority, shall guard your hearts and the operation of your mind in Christ Jesus". The word "guard" seems an interesting one. It has been rendered "sentinel" or "garrison". It is, indeed, a garrison word. It appears to come from two Greek words. One signifying "beforehand" and the other "to see". In other words it is exactly our English word "pro-vident" or "provident" - "to see before". It is this idea of "seeing before" from which "guard" is derived, and the exact word in its fuller form comes in Acts 2. There, quoting from the second Psalm, Peter says in verse 25, "I have SET the Lord always BEFORE me", literally "I was 'seeing-before' the Lord in sight of me through everything, because He is at My right hand in order that I should not have been moved. Because of this my heart rejoiced, and my tongue exulted". It is rather remarkable that here we have the life of the Lord Jesus Christ marked out as a contrast with anxiety. He was beholding the Father before Him. Now anxiety is to behold, and to be occupied with, the CIRCUMSTANCES; but Christ says "I set the Lord always before Me, He is at My right hand that I should not be moved". Here was the confidence, therefore He rejoiced in hope, He endured a cross, despising the shame. He set His face stedfastly as a flint, and He knew that He would not be ashamed.

There was no anxiety, but a confidence in the will of the Father, and a confidence there would be a reaching of the promised goal, and that is the aspect which comes before us in connection with the word in Philippians 4. The peace of God will not only guard and sentinel, but will "see before". This is the very meaning. The peace of God will see before. Instead of your "anxious concern" as to what is in front of you, you will be willing that the Lord Who through the Ark searched out a way for Israel, should direct your steps, and willing that He should lead you in the way. In the words of the Psalm, "He shall choose our inheritance for us". This will involve a "sentinelling" of the heart, and the operations of the mind, but the order of the verses must be noticed. First we have "Be anxious for no thing", then "Be prayerful in everything, next, the peace of God shall sentinel, - There must be the prayerfulness with thanksgiving, then there will be the sentinelling, and a leaving of everything with God; and the mind will thus be freed from many operations which would waste its strength, and thus there will be the opportunity for the precious thinking which verse 8 shows, - "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any <sup>||</sup> virtue, <sup>'</sup> and if there be

any praise, think of these things," - reckon these things, let these be your concern, for your mind will be freed from that which would distract and degrade it, and you will be able to have more time for thinking of the things which are well-pleasing to God. Oh how often we lose time, and strength and blessings, because of anxiety. Then the apostle adds, "Not only THINK on these things", but "The things which thou didst learn and receive, and hear and see in me, these things DO, and the God of peace shall be with you"; and then the apostle adds, "I rejoiced in the Lord". That which he encouraged he was able to say he illustrated. "I REJOICED in the Lord that your care for me already once flourished" - that it sprung up. He refers to their loving interest in him, and then adds, He does not desire a gift, he desires fruit to THEIR account. He is content, having learned in whatever state he is to be CONTENT. Here is an important key to victory over anxiety. Anxiety is the fruit of self-wishes. Peace is the fruit of a willingness for God's wishes to be realised. A willingness to be apart from self's arrangements. And so the apostle could say that he rejoiced in the Lord, and that he was encouraged spiritually because he had learned in whatever state he was - TO BE CONTENT. He was willing to abound, willing to suffer loss, and to suffer need, that he might not suffer loss in a future day. Thus he was encouraged

and spurred on, and could add, "My God shall supply all your NEED according to His RICHES IN GLORY in Christ Jesus". It is HEREIN that we have the encouragement to God's people. Our God has reserves of blessing. Yes, our God has RESERVOIRS of blessing, and will graciously supply every NEED of His people, - not only by drops, but by oceans-full, - "Supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory", i.e. corresponding with His riches, - His riches of grace, His riches of love, His riches of Truth, His riches of wisdom, His riches of power, His riches in glory. There is no portion of true riches wherein God is deficient. His wealth in glory in Christ Jesus is at our disposal. It is not for us to MAKE God kindly toward us. He HAS loved us absolutely and LOVES us at the present time. The important point is to realise that God has placed at our disposal everything we need, that we may avail ourselves of His blessing, avail ourselves, in the Holy Spirit's power, of that which He has provided, and that we may thus be EMANCIPATED from the cares of this world, EMANCIPATED from the usual arrangements, and attitude of this world, because the living God is fully equal to everything. We mention everything to Him because we know this. We bring our concerns and our problems to Him instead of spending our time upon self's solution of them. True we are not to be idle, but we CANNOT trust to "our arrangements". Our labours are in vain in themselves, however we may expect

naturally they will have fruit. God must give the increase, even to ordinary toil or there will be no result. God must give the blessing even to ordinary food, or the system will not be built up. We look to God our Father for everything, and receiving everything from Him thank Him for everything, and God will supply every NEED and as we feel our NEED and bring it to Him and realise the NEED, we are to realise that need met according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. The apostle could well add to this "Now unto God and our Father be glory for ever and ever". Remember he wrote these words when a PRISONER. Remember he wrote these words when he could NOT visit the Philippians. But he realised that His God was a God equal to every emergency and every concern, and so He encouraged the believers at Philippi not to be distracted as to putting things right in a ruined world, not to be distracted as to themselves and their concerns and their difficulties, but first in everything, and at every time by prayer and supplication (the word denotes a sense of need) with thanksgiving, to make their requests known to God, though He ever knows them already, and then to realise He would arrange, and that there would be a wondrous "military" authority as to their hearts and minds. A military, i.e. absolute AUTHORITY for there is a need to place the mind under martial law. It is important not to compromise with the agitated heart. But the MARTIAL LAW is exercised by the PEACE of

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God. So strange it seems to be told of peace sentinelling, and peace garisoning, but the peace of God WILL forsee, and therefore instead of the mind forseeing the difficulties and being anxious for the morrow, the peace of God will forsee the sufficiencies of God and God is ever greater than to-day's difficulties, and God is ever greater than to-morrow's difficulties, and God is ever greater than each problem of past, present or future, greater than that problem we "fear" most. Therefore we can have a restfulness which God causes, and a richness which God causes, that He may be in every-thing exalted and praised and honoured and glorified. Oh! that in the Spirit of God, it may be our privilege and joy to enter more and more fully into these precious words of command and encouragement.

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