

PURSUIING PEACE: PHILIPPIANS 4:4-9

REFERENCES and RESOURCES

Throughout the series there are various quotations and references from the Bible, and from other sources. The main ones are acknowledged and highlighted on screen, but the nature of film necessarily makes such references scarce and brief.

The benefits of an online resource though are that supplementary materials can be easily made available with minimal effort and no cost – so this document is akin to the ‘footnotes’ of a book, for those who are interested in following things up.

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Recommended Resources

Episode 1:

Peace from God

Philippians 4v4-9

- *Bible References:*

- *Main passage: Philippians 4v4-9*
- *Philippians 1v13:* it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ.
- *Philippians 4v12-13:* "I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength."

*The word translated "content" in this passage is the Greek word **αὐτάρκης** (autarkes), means "sufficient" – what Paul is saying here is not simply that he's happy, but rather that he is (self)-sufficient in Jesus.*

- *'Shalom' – David mentions the Hebrew word for peace, which is "shalom" or שָׁלוֹם - we would strongly recommend the excellent short film on peace made by the Bible Project, and available at <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/shalom-peace/>*
- *In the episode there is an interview with Rev Will Van Der Hart, who is one of the founders and directors of The Mind and Soul Foundation. Their website has lots of resources for people wanting help and insight about mental health and faith - mindandsoulfoundation.org. We have also done an "extra" 3-minute film with Will for those struggling with mental health and what peace means for them – it is available in the "extras" section of the series*

page on burningheart.org. In that film, Will mentioned other organisations, which you can find links to below:

- *Your Doctor!*
- mindandsoulfoundation.org
- kintsugihope.com
- sanctuarymentalhealth.org/uk/
- renewwellbeing.org.uk

Episode 2:

Peace through Joy

Philippians 4v4

- *Bible References:*
 - *Main passage: Philippians 4v4: Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!*
 - *2 Corinthians 6v10: Paul describes himself as “sorrowful, yet always rejoicing”*
 - *Philippians 3v8: “I consider everything loss compared to the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ.”*
 - *Philippians 1v21: “For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”*
 - *The story of Paul and Silas' imprisonment in Philippi is told in Acts 16v25-40*
 - *The alternative translation quoted at one point “celebrate joyfully in the Lord” comes from Tom Wright's, The New Testament for Everyone.*
- *In the episode there is an interview with The Venerable Hassan John, who is Archdeacon of Jos Diocese in Nigeria. We have done some “extra” 3-minute films with Hassan on:*
 - *growing in faith in the midst of persecution*
 - *how to support the persecuted church*

both are available on available in the “extras” section of the series page on burningheart.org.

Episode 3:

Peace with People

Philippians 4v5

- *Bible References:*
 - *Main passage: Philippians 4v5: "Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near."*
 - *Matthew 18v21-35: the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant*
 - *Ephesians 1v18: Paul prays that they would know "the riches of his glorious inheritance."*
- *The film focuses in on the Greek word ἐπιεικῆς (epieikes), which means "gentleness" or "gentle forbearance."*
- *The film quotes Aristotle's definition of ἐπιεικῆς, which is from his Nichomachean Ethics, 5.10.8. The full quote is: "the one who by choice and habit does what is equitable, and who does not stand on his rights unduly, but is content to receive a smaller share although he has the law on his side."*
- *The film gives an approximate value for 10,000 talents as being a little more than 310 tonnes of gold (approx. 350 imperial tons). We wanted to "show our workings" on that claim – although in many ways too exact a calculation is probably missing the point, as Jesus was simply making a point about "a lot of money"! For those interested though, here's our working..*

We have used the 'Roman Talent' in our calculations, which weighed around 32.3 Kg, meaning that 10,000 talents would weigh 323,300Kg, or 323.3 metric tonnes (356 tons). It is probably also worth highlighting that gold and silver were worth considerably more in real terms in the ancient world than they are today – not only were they more important

and valued, there was far less of them – much of the silver and gold in the world today was mined in the Americas. We have used data from the World Gold Council on the size of the UK's gold reserves.¹

The talent was actually a unit of weigh though, rather than money, so it is possible that Jesus was thinking of silver or some other substance – we think that is unlikely though, and that this most likely refers to gold. The word "talent" was also used for different actual weights in different places (much like the modern English ton/tonne).

- Again, the film also gives an approximate value of £10,000 or \$10,000 for 100 Denarii. The conversion is not exact, as hopefully the equation of pounds and dollars shows - £1 is actually c.\$1.25, depending on exact exchange rates. Converting historical value into modern monetary terms is notoriously difficult, but we have benchmarked it against wages – which given that the film talks about 1 denarius being 1 day's wage, seemed the obvious way of converting it into today's currencies. To do the calculation we have used the UK's Office of National Statistics data on average weekly earnings in December 2022. That gives a figure of £630,² although if "seasonally adjusted" they are somewhat lower. If we assume that that equates to 5 days actual work, then that would give a day-rate of £126, making 100 denarii worth roughly £12,600. If, however, you assume that that equates to 7 days' pay, then that gives a day-rate of £90, making 100 denarii worth about £9,000. All the numbers are in the same ball-park as £10,000 though!

¹ <https://www.gold.org/goldhub/data/gold-reserves-by-country>

² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours#timeseries>

Episode 4:

Peace in Prayer

Philippians 4v6

- *Bible References:*

- *Main passage Philippians 4v6: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace..."*
- *Psalm 13v5-6: But I trust in your unfailing love;
my heart rejoices in your salvation.
I will sing the LORD's praise,
for he has been good to me.*

- *The film highlights that the word translated "anxious" is the Greek word **μεριμνάω**, which doesn't refer to anxiety in a medical sense, but rather 'concerns.' This is illustrated in Philippians itself, where Paul uses the word positively elsewhere (in Philippians 2v20), talking about how Timothy "will show genuine concern for your welfare." This is an important point, as too often Christians have unwittingly used this verse to condemn those suffering from medical anxiety – that is not Paul's intention here (as is said in the film).*
- *There is a quotation in the film from a great old hymn: What a friend we have in Jesus by Joseph Scriven (there are lots of versions available to listen to online). The quote is from the second half of the opening verse, as follows:*

O what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer!

- *The film highlights that all the commands in this passage are "present continuous" commands (rejoice, be gentle, do not be anxious, present your requests), and that we do not have the distinction in English. It is actually a "present imperative." While we do have the present tense in English, it is the only tense in which we have imperatives (i.e. commands), whereas in Greek you can have an "aorist imperative" or a "present imperative" – the former commands a single action, the latter an on-going action. While strictly speaking we do have "present imperatives" in English, we do not have this distinction, hence the point made in the film.*

Episode 5:

Peace of Mind

Philippians 4v8-9

- *Bible References:*
 - *Main Passage: Philippians 4v8-9:* “Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.”
- In the film the word “lovely” in the list of good things to focus on is qualified “or beautiful” – the word is **προσφιλής** (prospheiles), which does have this dimension. For instance in the Septuagint (LXX) Greek Old Testament it is used to describe Esther’s beauty in Esther 5v1b³.
- The film refers to how various scientific studies have explored how art, music, or nature can have a really positive impact on our mental health and wellbeing. Examples of such studies are available [here](#) (art), [here](#) (music) and [here](#) (nature). The obvious omission in that list is sport – that is because we couldn’t find such a study, which may be because sport can be stressful! We left it in the wider list though, because it is something “excellent and praiseworthy” and loved by many – and we think that if enjoyed as a good (rather than the ultimate thing in our life) it does contribute to the joys discussed in the film.

³ I’m grateful to G. Walter Hansen’s commentary on Philippians for this reference (the PNTC commentary, below).

- The film mentions the similarities between Paul's list here and other ancient "virtue lists" – any scholarly Bible commentary (rather than one that is primarily devotional) is likely to include discussion of this point, such as the PNTC commentary recommended below.
- The film mentions that the word for think is the Greek word λογίζομαι, and that it can mean "to dwell" on something or to calculate the value of something. For more detail, I would recommend the article in TDNT (see reading list below).
- The film references the "white bears experiment" – for more details, see the article "suppressing the 'white bears'" in the *Monitor on Psychology* volume 42.9 (2011), available on the American Psychological Association website [here](#).
- The film encourages us to think about who we follow on social media, as part of dwelling on things that are "excellent and praiseworthy". Here are a couple of accounts we would recommend – if you want to find more, check out who these people follow.
 - Us! @burningheartorg, on [YouTube](#), [Instagram](#) and other socials
 - @RevChris7 on [Instagram](#)
 - @youversion on [Instagram](#) and other socials
 - @jjohnglobal, on twitter or [instagram](#)
 - [@nickygumbel](#), and [@htbchurch](#) on Twitter/Instagram
 - @bibleproject on [YouTube](#) or Instagram
 - @GODTV on [Instagram](#) and other socials

Further Resources

We hope you've enjoyed and found our films useful – there's lots more to discover about Philippians 4 though, and we'd recommend the following if you want to explore more..

- The Bible! – almost doesn't need saying, but only 'almost' – you cannot do better than reading the Bible itself. Everything else is flawed – it's not.
- The Bible Project make great films exploring scripture – the two that are most relevant to this series are their one on "Shalom" <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/shalom-peace/> (they do other great word studies too) and their overview of Philippians, <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/philippians/>
- It can also be really helpful to read a good commentary on a book or passage of the Bible. I tend to divide them in my mind into devotional commentaries (which I tend to read through) and more scholarly commentaries (which I tend to refer to). My favourites on Philippians are:
 - J.A.Motyer, *Philippians* in the 'Bible Speaks Today (BST)' series (Devotional)
 - Tom Wright, *Philippians for Everyone* (Devotional)
 - Nicky Gumbel, *A Life worth Living* (Devotional)
 - G. Walter Hansen *Philippians* in the 'Pillar New Testament Commentary (PNTC)' series (scholarly)
 - Gordon Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians* in the New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT)' series (scholarly)
 - John Calvin, *Philippians* (classic).

- If interested in the meaning of the words in the Bible, I would also recommend:
 - a Bible App (or other electronic form) with 'Strong's numbers' for those who cannot read Greek or Hebrew (or value help with their languages, like me!).
 - a Bible App with the Greek and Hebrew versions of the OT and NT that are hyperlinked and can connect to dictionaries and lexicons (I use the Olive Tree App, and can click on a greek word with my finger and bring up parsing, translations and links to dictionaries etc.)
 - In terms of the actual Greek and Hebrew words, the 'go to' reference resource is the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (TDNT) by Gerhard Kittel and Geoffrey Bromiley, and the abridged version by Geoffrey Bromiley. There is also a companion *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (TDOT) by G. Johannes Botterwick.