

Gentle Joy

Scripture Reading — Philippians 4:2-5

*Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.
Philippians 4:5 —*

Believers will inevitably face conflict with each other because of the lingering influence of sin. Yet they are also under the influence of the Holy Spirit, who commands them to exercise the gentle joy that comes to us through the good news of Jesus Christ.

Gentle joy recognizes that believers share a common hope. Regardless of our differences, our names are all written in God's "book of life." Believers also share a common purpose. They contend together in the single cause of the gospel even though each one has a different role. Finally, believers exercise common sense. Each child of God lives at a different stage of Christlike development. Some are seasoned veterans, while others are just beginning the journey of joy. We all know that we need the gentle patience of others.

What's the point? Unresolved conflict thrives under a horizontal view of life. It exalts self-interest, promotes prejudice, and drains away human joy. Gentle joy, however, pursues a vertical view of life. It is always willing to aim "to agree with each other in the Lord," for it refuses to undermine the common hope, common purpose, and common sense of Jesus Christ.

A follower of Jesus refuses to be imprisoned by conflict. Instead, the believer will make every effort to gently "keep the unity of the Spirit" (Ephesians 4:3).

Prayer

Dear Lord, make me a channel of your peace; Where there is darkness, let me bring your light; and where there's sadness, ever joy. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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