

Weekly Sermon Discussion Guide

November 3, 2024

Choosing Peace

The Choices Before Us

Philippians 4:2-7

KEY VERSES

² I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³ Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life. ⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

A conflict has arisen in the church between two women, Euodia and Syntyche, so large that even Paul is aware of it from prison. Paul urges them to have the same mind in the Lord, knowing of their deep faith and their history of standing by the cause of the gospel. **Think about those in your family or community with whom your opposing views are the most significant. How are you being urged to live amidst your struggles when you don't agree with everything?**

When working through disagreements, our first choice as people of faith must be **internal**. That which unites us in Jesus does not need to be diminished because we don't agree with everything. The path that Paul urges us to take follows the high road and takes effort. Thomas offered the example of his college daughter and her roommate declaring their love for one another in spite of their voting differences. **Where do you see examples of this internal choice of the mindset of unity around you?**

The rhetoric and divisive elements that surround us on a daily basis impart more stress and anxiety than we even sometimes realize. We can make a choice, Paul says, to combat being consumed with worry. The second choice we must make as people of faith is not to be anxious about anything, but instead, to let the **peace** that passes all understanding guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (v. 6-7). The Lord is near to all who call on him (Psalm 145) and we trust this promise. As we cling to a future that seems to be spinning out of control, may we choose this different path of peace. **How can you ensure that this promise of peace resonates with you? Take some time to memorize verses 6-7 and recite them to each other, so they are readily accessible to guard your hearts. May we not walk in fear and anxiety, especially this week - because we know and claim the One who walks beside us.**