



Study Questions

The Practice of Rejoicing

1. In studying the background of the founding of the church of Philippi in Acts 16, how was joy on display from the very beginning?
2. Why are the words “in the Lord” so important in Philippians 4:4? What divine qualities enable us to rejoice even when there are no figs on the trees or grapes on the vines (Habakkuk 3:17–19)?
3. In what little way can you be more enthusiastic this week?

The Practice of Gentleness

1. Why did the Lord insert the words, “Let your gentleness be evident to all,” in the middle of the Bible’s premier passage about worry and anxiety?
2. Is gentleness a characteristic of strength or weakness? What more can we learn about gentleness from Proverbs 15:1? Matthew 11:29? Galatians 5:22–23? First Peter 3:15?
3. In your own experience, who has displayed an attitude of gentleness that has touched your life? In what way do you need to exhibit a gentler spirit?

The Practice of Nearness

1. In light of Romans 8:18 and 2 Corinthians 4:17, how should we evaluate our burdens and worries? What current burden can you view differently by doing so against the backdrop of your ultimate future?
2. Read James 4:8 and note its instruction. Now turn to Deuteronomy 4:7 and notice how the latter verse gives us a way to fulfill the former one. How is this reflected in Philippians 4:5–6?
3. What small habit can you begin, tweak, strengthen, or resume this week that will help you better practice the presence of God?

The Practice of Prayer

1. If you had a cell phone linked to heaven, giving you instant access to God Himself whenever you turned it on, how would you feel? How often would you use it? If you could call and discuss with Him any problem in your life, what would it be?
2. How do Paul's words in Philippians 4:5–6 reflect the teachings of Psalm 37:1–9? Of Matthew 6:5–33? How would you could summarize all three of these passages into a simple statement?
3. When Paul said, "Don't be anxious about anything," was he speaking in hyperbole or exaggerating the command? How literally should we practice this advice? In what area of your life can you put this into practice today?

The Practice of Thanksgiving

1. When we read "with thanksgiving" in Philippians 4 and turn the page of our Bibles, we find a list of ways in which we are to live a life worthy of God and please Him in every way. Look at Colossians 1:10–12. What are these three ways, and what role does gratitude have in living a God-worthy and God-pleasing life?
2. Consider a crisis you've endured in the past. Did it contain elements, however small, for which you could express thanksgiving? Were there a few rays of sunlight amid the clouds? What were they? How would your attitude have changed if you had included the concept of "with thanksgiving" into that experience?
3. This chapter suggests ten workable strategies for nurturing a greater habit of thanksgiving. Which habit seems most workable to you? How can you launch this habit today?

The Practice of Thinking

1. If you battle traumatic stress, what triggers it? If you struggle with occasional anxiety, what thoughts switch it on? Do you think it's really possible to change your feelings by changing your thoughts? What role does our mind have in determining our emotions?
2. The same man wrote both Philippians 4:8 and Romans 12:2. Read these two verses. Are they saying the same thing? How does Philippians 4:8 accomplish Romans 12:2?
3. Is there a passage or a verse you can begin to memorize? What initial steps can you take today to begin a lifelong habit of Scripture memory and meditation?

The Practice of Discipleship

1. Name one or two people who had the greatest influence on you as mentors. Why were they so important and what did you learn most from them?
2. Compare 2 Timothy 2:1–2 with John 17:20. What role can you play in this chain of transmission? How does that relate to Matthew 29:19?
3. Think of someone—a child, grandchild, student, friend, or even a stranger—whom you could see yourself influencing, given the opportunity. Who is it? Are there any steps you can take to spur along the process? What are they?

The Practice of Peace

1. Read Psalm 23. Which of these verses describe scenes of peace? What about the green pastures and still waters of verse 2? What about the darkest valley in verse 4? Is there as much transcendent peace in verse 4 as in verse 2? What does this tell us about the peace of God?
2. According to Psalm 29:10–11, what benefits come to us from God's heavenly throne? What's the relationship between these benefits and great gifts? How does one lead to the other?
3. Notice again the three little words at the end of Philippians 4:7: "And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Make sure you've given your life to Him, confessing your sins, receiving Him as Savior, and acknowledging Him as Lord. This is the beginning of the life that buries worry in the vacated tomb of Jesus. If you aren't sure of your relationship with God, offer this simple prayer and follow it up with the truths you've learned in this chapter:

Dear God, I know You love me and I believe Christ died to give me peace with You and inner peace in my heart. I confess my sins. With Your help, I will turn from them. I here and now receive Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord. I thank You for this moment, in Jesus' name. Amen.