

# Spiritual Balance & Stability

(Phil. 4:1-9)

## Introduction:

1. Study Phil. 4:5 in context & make some applications.
2. “Let your moderation be known unto all men” (KJV), or, “Let your forbearing spirit be known to all men” (NASV).
  - a. Moderation - sense of balance, reasonableness, maturity, levelheaded, equilibrium, stability; not excessive or extreme, fair.
  - b. Ill. with Prov. 25:16-17.
3. Read Phil. 4:5 in light of context: vv. 1-9
  - a. Note how vv. 1-9 shed light on things which shape & define moderation.
  - b. Vs. 1 - Strong stand for the truth (as 1:27 & chapter 3).
  - c. Vv. 2-3 - Work for unity—note importance of women in Lord’s work, great help or hindrance.
  - d. Vs. 4 - Rejoice, not murmur or complain.
  - e. Vs. 5 - Moderate, fair, reasonable toward all men—always conscious we are in God’s presence
  - f. Vv. 6-7 - Complete trust in God.
  - g. Vs. 8 - Pure in heart, thought, meditation—focus on things holy, pure, uplifting.
  - h. Vs. 9 - Obey Apostles’ teaching—precept & example.
4. Moderation needed in all walks of life:
  - a. Everyday life.
  - b. Home life.
  - c. Local church.
5. The Bible presents things we must understand & properly apply if we are to develop spiritual balance & stability.

## I. Balance In Zeal & Knowledge

- A. *Rom. 10:1-3 - Zeal of Judiazers Not Balanced with Knowledge of Truth.*
  1. Religious world full of examples today—practice of celibacy by Roman Catholic priests, nuns – Mormon youth give 2 yrs. to evangelism – Jehovah’s Witnesses go door to door.
  2. Can lead to cultic, radical, fanatical practices – Jim Jones in Guyana, David Koresh in TX, Heaven’s Gate cult in CA.

3. False teachers in the church create much zeal, misdirected (Gal. 4:16-17) – new ideas, persuasive speakers, carnal excitement, fanatical devotion to human teachers & laws – fail to test all things by Scripture – Crossroads Movement
- B. *Rev. 3:15-16 -Knowledge of Truth Without Zeal*
1. Realize Jesus gave himself to die for us and for the truth – love for him should produce undying zeal.
  2. His zeal for the truth & love for the lost should inspire us (Jn. 2:17).

## II. Balance In Knowledge & Wisdom

- A. *Jas. 3:13-18 -Desire to Teach Knowledge But Need to Learn Wisdom First.*
1. Anxious to teach others but not have wisdom to apply truth to own life
  2. Carnal mind, carnal methods, carnal results—under pressure, lose control of temper & tongue—contrary to cause of truth
  3. When knowledge of truth is joined to true wisdom, very different results
- B. *Before Aspire to Teach & Lead Others, Consider Jas. 3:1.*
1. Do I have the wisdom & maturity of Phil. 4:5?
  2. Control temper, tongue, reactions under pressure at work & home?
  3. Develop moderation, forbearance, fairness, reasonableness in home life, then demonstrate that wisdom in leadership roles in church (1 Tim. 2:8; 3:4-5, 12).

## III. Balance In Emotion & Truth

- A. *Acts 19:20, 23-28, 34 - Ephesians Put Emotion Above Truth*
1. Could not answer the confirmed truth of gospel, reacted with blind emotionalism.
  2. Their shouts not change the reality of one true God—not change reality of vanity of idols.
  3. Pentecostals & charismatics shout, “Jesus, Jesus”—emotionalism not change 1 Cor. 13:8-10.
  4. “What if someone died on way to baptism?” – emotionalism not change Mk. 16:16
  5. “Anti’s let sinners & orphans starve”—not change 2 Cor. 9:1; no authority for church donations to human institutions for evangelism, edification, or benevolence.
  6. “People can stay in adulterous marriages because children involved”—does not change Mk. 6:18; Acts 2:28
- B. *Judge Truth by Emotion OR Emotion by Truth - Emotions change like weather but*

truth of God abides forever (1 Pet. 1:25).

C. *Emotion Results from Truth, Not Truth from Emotion.*

1. Great joy when understand & obey true gospel, know sins forgiven (Acts 2:41; 8:39).
2. Spiritual balance & stability when stand for truth, then rejoice in Lord (Phil. 4:1, 4-5).
3. If no joy in serving the Lord, if murmur & complain, then unbalanced & unstable—falling back into sin.

## IV. Balance In Broad Principles & Details Of Application

A. *Matt. 23:23-24 - A Form of Hypocrisy: Obey Details & Violate Broad Principles*

1. Selective obedience: obeyed details which suited them, but violated broad principles when it suited them.
2. Some baptized & attend each worship service, but dishonest in business, having immoral relationship, curse & use profanity (even take the Lord's name in vain).
3. Some very careful with details of public service (man wait on Lord's table, woman teach class), but constantly fuss & fight at home, bitter rather than forgiving, make harsh demands on each other rather than patiently help each other (Eph. 4:26, 31-32).

B. *Matt. 22:36-40 - If Disobey in Details, Violate Underlying Principles*

1. Some claim if love God & fellow man, details of Scripture do not matter—Jesus said love of God & man underlie “all the law & the prophets”
2. “If love God, does not matter what church we are in, how baptized, or when eat Lord's Supper—such details not important”—actually, show love by obey (Eph. 4:4-6; Acts 20:7).
3. “If love fellow man, what we believe about sex outside marriage or abortion-on-demand or homosexual marriage does not matter”—God defines & directs true love for each other (Rom. 13:9-10).

## V. Balance In Absolute Obedience & Relative Growth

A. *Col. 2:11-13 - Absolute Command—Requires Absolute Obedience*

1. Nature of some commands absolute.
2. Baptism necessary for forgiveness through blood of Christ.
3. Baptism absolute as burial, immersion.
4. To change such teaching is sin, rebellion (Rev. 22:18-19).

B. *2 Pet. 1:5-7 - Growth in Relative Qualities—Involves Ongoing Process.*

1. Grow for a lifetime & still not attain the perfection of God—always room to grow.
2. Judged according to whether gave “diligence,” not by perfection.
3. God allows time for growth into duty involving relative quality (Heb. 5:12; 1 Tim. 3:2).
4. If treat relative qualities as absolute commands, have unrealistic expectations of self & others – depressed, sense of defeat, no security – hypercritical, impatient.

C. *Dangers to Self & Others if Make All God’s Word Absolute Command Or Make All of It Relative Quality—Must Have Balanced Understanding of Each Category.*

## **VI. Balance In Bearing Burdens Of Self & Of Others**

A. *Gal. 6:1-5 - Burdens of Self & Of Others Discussed.*

1. Vv. 1-3 Humble ourselves to help each other with burdens of life—cannot help others if we ourselves are out of balance, living in sin—law of Christ defines & directs this love.
2. If we have eyes to see, can find many occasions to lighten the heavy loads of life which burden others down—sickness, death, loneliness, temptation, discouragement, divorce, etc.
3. Vv. 4-5 Burdens which each man must bear for himself (vs. 1, “considering thyself”)—rather than looking down upon others in their hour of trial, need to consider ourselves—are we meeting our own duties, facing our own trials? (2 Cor. 13:5).

B. *Moderation, Balance, Maturity Required to Help Brethren Caught in Web of Sin (Phil. 4:2-3, 5).*

## **VII. Balance In Desire To Be Right & Humility**

A. *Eccl. 7:15-22 - Emphasizes Importance of This Sense of Balance—Temper Desire to Be Right in Following Ways.*

1. Vs. 15 Cannot right all the world’s wrongs
2. Vs. 16 “Righteous over much:”
  - a. Self-righteous arrogance which leaves impression I think I can never be wrong about anything.
  - b. Demanding immediate perfection in others rather than being patient, kind, considerate, & helpful.
  - c. Exaggerate faults of others, minimize own faults.
  - d. Lack of humility easily leads to making laws for others God did not

- make, binding every personal judgment as divine command.
- 3. Vs. 17 Swing to opposite extreme if abandon desire to do right.
- 4. Vs. 18 Good understanding delivers us from both extremes.
- 5. Vs. 19 True wisdom is source of true strength.
- 6. Vs. 20 Recognize we all make mistakes.
- 7. Vs. 21-22 Do not be overly sensitive to criticism.

B. *If Lack Moderation, Danger to Self & Others—Proper Balance Gives Personal Strength & Stability, & Ability to Help Others.*

## VIII. Balance In Matters Of Revelation & Judgment

A. *2 Jn. 9-11 - Divine Revelation: Basis of Fellowship With God & His People.*

- 1. The doctrine of Christ—what Christ revealed in person on earth & then through his Apostles (Jn. 16:13).
- 2. Vs. 9 Basis of fellowship with Father & Son—some claimed fellowship with God while teaching & practicing different doctrines.
- 3. Vv. 10-11 Basis of fellowship with God’s faithful people – not unity-in-doctrinal-diversity
- 4. Premise of ecumenical, interdenominational programs: “Christian doctrine has evolved over the centuries—God allows unity in Christ & diversity in doctrine.”
- 5. Christ requires unity in doctrine & practice based on New Testament revelation (Gal.1:6-9; Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Tim. 1:3).
- 6. Must adhere to whatever Christ revealed on any matter—his deity, morality, marriage, the basis of salvation (his death on the cross), the terms or conditions of pardon (faith, repent, confess, baptized), his church (its work, worship, organization), heaven & hell, etc.

B. *Rom. 14:1-6, 14, 20 - Realm of Liberty, Expediency, & Personal Conscience*

- 1. Vv. 1-6 God receives men with such differences—we must receive each other.
- 2. Vv. 14, 20 Nothing unclean, all things pure in this realm—God not bind, not require, not prohibit anything--no violation of doctrine of Christ.
- 3. Many things in this realm—then & now (see my list in *Guardian of Truth*, 2 Sept. 1982, pp. 533-34).

C. *Moderation, Balance Necessary Lest We Bind or Loose Where God Did Not*

- 1. If put matters of divine revelation into realm of liberty, expand basis of grace & unity – tend toward denominationalism, even universalism—create havoc in the church.
- 2. If put matters of liberty into realm of divine revelation as binding, narrow basis of grace & unity—tend toward factionalism, even radical individualism – create

havoc.

## **IX. Balance In Saving The Lost & Keeping The Saved**

- A. *1 Tim. 2:3-7 - Must Preach to Save the Lost.*
  - 1. Preach sin separates man from God.
  - 2. Preach death of Christ as basis of salvation.
  - 3. Preach terms or conditions of pardon: faith, repent, confess, baptized.
  - 4. Preach faithful endurance unto death (Rev. 2:10).
  - 5. Preach reality of heaven & hell.
- B. *1 Tim. 1:3 - Must Preach to Keep the Saved.*
  - 1. Plain, pointed opposition to every doctrine departing from the doctrine Christ gave.
  - 2. Constant warnings (Acts 20:31; 2 Tim. 4:3-4).
  - 3. Positive encouragement in the truth while rebuking sin & error (2 Tim. 4:2).
  - 4. Constant reminders of known truth (2 Pet. 1:12-15).
  - 5. "All the counsel of God" (Acts 20:26-27).
- C. *To Be Balanced, Our Preaching Must Be:*
  - 1. Saturated with Scripture.
  - 2. Doctrinal & devotional, principle & application.
  - 3. Personal & propositional.
  - 4. Positive & negative.
  - 5. Deal with a wide range of subject matter, textual & topical.

## **X. Balance In Truth & Love**

- A. *Eph. 4:14-16 - "Speaking the Truth in Love," Necessary to Spiritual Growth & Safety.*
  - 1. Only truth can save (Jn. 8:32; Col. 1:5; 1 Pet. 1:22).
  - 2. Learn how to preach it "in love:"
    - a. Passages which discuss manner & attitude of preaching (Col. 4:2-6; 2 Tim. 2:15-18, 23-26).
    - b. Examples of preaching in the Bible—Old Testament prophets (Jer. 1:7-10; 6:14-16; 9:1), John the Baptist, Jesus, the Apostles, other N.T. preachers.
- B. *Love Not Soften or Mitigate the Truth But Provides Proper Motive – Love for God, for the Truth of His Word, & For the Lost.*

**Conclusion:**

1. Strive toward greater balance, maturity, forbearance, reasonableness, & stability in our service to God & our efforts to help each other reach heaven.
2. Erring Christian, come home to God: repent, confess sin, pray.
3. Alien sinner, saved by grace through faith by obedience to gospel: (Gal. 3:26-27).

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