

“Tune in to Channel 6 News”

Text: Philippians 4:4-9

In the Apostle Paul’s early portion of his second missionary journey, he received a vision from the Lord directing him to cross over into Macedonia (Acts 16:9, 10), to spread the Good News regarding our Savior, Jesus Christ. He heeded this call and the church at Philippi in ancient Macedonia was the first European church founded by Paul and represented the first major penetration of the gospel into the Western World. The congregation was primarily Gentile. Although, strictly speaking, there is no development of one theme, the main thought of Philippians is the all-sufficiency of Christ in any circumstance, good or bad, and to rejoice in the Lord. It is ironic that this Letter was written 61-63 A.D. while he was imprisoned in Rome yet he found reason to rejoice in the Lord. In short, he was still able to declare Good News during Bad Times.

Now over 2000 years later we are beseeched with Bad News during Bad Times. Today the tendency is for news casts, newspapers, and blogs to lead with traumatic events. Yes, we know the stories all too well; the Congress is dysfunctional, catastrophic unemployment, senseless murders, and stock market swings. All these mediums of communication purport to keep you informed, but the impact can keep you incensed, and angry. Informed, Incensed, which is for you as you absorb a daily diet of negative news? Even commercials of recent date have begun to use violent themes to get their product’s benefits across. I need not cite specifics just think about commercials you have seen in the last 24 hours. These reported events have a negative impact on your psyche, your outlook, your future, and yes, your optimism for the future.

Paul’s admonishment in our text holds true today as it did then, note in our text vs. 4 “Rejoice in the Lord”, he is alive; he is ever vigilant to look after his own. Vs. 9 promises “peace of God” (the corresponding Hebrew word-*shalom* primarily signifies wholeness, finished, made perfect). In essence he is saying, tune in to a different Channel, let’s call it Channel 6 as there are 6 affirmations to think on to keep you mentally and spiritually assured and buoyant above the fray. Think on virtues that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report....and you will find peace.

Kenneth S. Wuest, in his “Wuest’s Word Studies from the Greek New Testament” translates these six virtues as follows:

True –the word in the Greek text does not mean “truthful” in the sense of veracious, but true in character in the widest sense.

Honest –is the translation of a word which was used in classical Greek in the sense of “venerable, inviting reverence, worthy of reverence. The word exhorts here to a due appreciation of such thing as produce a noble seriousness.

Just –is from the Greek word meaning both “just” and also “righteous,” here, “righteous” in a comprehensive sense.

Pure –The Greek word “pure” speaks of purity in all things.

Lovely –speaks of that which is adapted to excite love and to endear him who does such things. One could translate by the words, “winsome, pleasing, amiable.”

Good Report –The words “good report” in the Greek Text are literally “fair speaking,” thus “winning, attractive.”

He therefore renders vs. 8 as follow: “Finally brethren, , whatever things have the character of truth, whatever things are worthy of reverence, whatever things are righteous, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatsoever things are attractive, whatsoever excellence there be or fit object of praise, these thing make the subject of carful reflection.”

I asked a question early, which is it for you, to be Informed or Incensed? As responsible citizens of this great Country, we must assuredly be an informed citizenry. However, I urge you to counterbalance your responsibility to be informed with inspirational messages, devotionals, books, and hobbies that give you joy. The RBC Website, <http://rbc.org> , an excellent repository of resources that can not only keep you Informed but also Encouraged.

Yours in Christ,

Dempsey Scott Harrison, Jr.