



THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE GOSPEL

PHILIPPIANS 4:4-7

The Christian's Countenance

Small Group Study Guide

One's countenance is the way one carry's or holds oneself. It is the look on a person's face that reveals the true nature and character of the person. According to Philippians 4:4-7, there is to be a particular countenance that Christians are to exhibit. This countenance reveals the new nature in us, which is Christ the Lord.

1. The first feature that one ought to see in the face of those who are part of the ***Fellowship of the Gospel*** is joy. Paul, in fact, commands Christians to "rejoice in the Lord always." This joy, or rejoicing, is not something dependent on circumstances, but is founded upon convictions.
 - What convictions become the bedrock for true joy in the life of the believer? (name as many as you can think of).
 - In what ways do these convictions (which you named above) produce a deep-seated joy that can weather any circumstance?
2. Based on your opinion, do you find the majority of Christians to be those who exhibit the countenance of true joy? Explain your answer.
3. If you know a Christian that seldom, if ever, rejoices in the Lord, why do you think this is? What might you do to come alongside and encourage this person in exhibiting the Christian's countenance of rejoicing in the Lord always?

Don't Forget:

Discuss the Sermon Notes from this week

BIBLE MEMORY:

*Rejoice in the
Lord always;
Again I say
rejoice.*

Philippians 4:4

4. The second feature that one ought to see in the face of those who are part of the ***Fellowship of the Gospel*** is gentleness of spirit. The Greek word translated in English as “gentle” has multiple meanings. To best understand the fullness of the Christian’s countenance is to look at a number of these meanings and think on how the Christian can faithfully live this out.

- Big-heartedness - In what ways can you show “big-heartedness” toward others? Is this a characteristic of who you are? Explain your answers.
- Mild disposition - In what ways can you show “mild disposition” toward others? Is this a characteristic of who you are? Explain your answers.
- Generosity - In what ways can you show “generosity” toward others? Is this a characteristic of who you are? Explain your answers.
- Consideration of others - In what ways can you show “consideration” toward others? Is this a characteristic of who you are? Explain your answers.

5. The third feature that one ought to see in the face of those who are part of the ***Fellowship of the Gospel*** is the peace of God in everything. John MacArthur stated “people become worried, anxious, and fearful because they do not trust in God’s wisdom, power or goodness.”¹ Do you agree or disagree? Explain your answer.

¹John MacArthur, *MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Philippians* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2001), 283.

6. What role does prayer play in easing anxieties and work to have the peace of God guard your heart and mind?

7. We live in a post-Christian and what many call a “post-modern” culture. How can the Christian’s countenance speak forth the Gospel?

- In a society filled with sadness, loneliness, depression and despair, how can true Christian joy be a witness to Christ?
- In a society filled with strife, division, disunity, harshness and contention, how can true Christian gentleness be a witness to Christ?
- In a society filled with fear, stress and worry around every corner, how can true Christian peace be a witness to Christ?

For Next Week:
Prayerfully meditate and study the following: Philippians 4:8-9