

Scriptures for May 9, 2021

Introduction to Philippians 4:4-7

The translator of “The Message,” the late, great Eugene Peterson, describes the letter to the church at Philippi as the happiest letter. The writer of this happy letter starts out in chapter 4 with these words: “Celebrate God all day.” Listen to four verses of chapter 4:

Philippians 4:4-7

⁴⁻⁵ Celebrate God all day, every day. I mean, *revel* in him! Make it as clear as you can to all you meet that you’re on their side, working with them and not against them. Help them see that the Master is about to arrive. He could show up any minute!

⁶⁻⁷ Don’t fret or worry. Instead of worrying, pray. Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns. Before you know it, a sense of God’s wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It’s wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the center of your life.

Introduction to the Gospel of John 15:9-17

The gospel of John is unique of the four gospels in one important respect: the ways Jesus refers to and describes himself to the disciples. In a series of “I AM...” statements, we get a sense of how Jesus sees himself. He calls himself: ► I am the bread of life; ► I am who I am; ► I am the good shepherd; ► I am the road and the truth and the life; ► I am the vine.

In our text in chapter 15 this morning, Jesus refers to himself and the vine and “you are the branches.” Listen to verses 9-17 in chapter 15 from “The Message.”

John 15:9-17

⁹⁻¹⁰ “I’ve loved you the way my Father has loved me. Make yourselves at home in my love. If you keep my commands, you’ll remain intimately at home in my love. That’s what I’ve done—kept my Father’s commands and made myself at home in his love.

¹¹⁻¹⁵ “I’ve told you these things for a purpose: that my joy might be your joy, and your joy wholly mature. This is my command: Love one another the way I loved you. This is the very best way to love. Put your life on the line for your friends. You are my friends when you do the things, I command you. I’m no longer calling you servants because servants don’t understand what their master is thinking and planning. No, I’ve named you friends because I’ve let you in on everything I’ve heard from the Father.

¹⁶ “You didn’t choose me, remember; I chose you, and put you in the world to bear fruit, fruit that won’t spoil. As fruit bearers, whatever you ask the Father in relation to me, he gives you.

¹⁷ “But remember the root command: Love one another.