

THREE OPEN SECRETS | *Philippians 4:8-23*

1. Introduction.

- a. **Subject:** The Secrets to Peace, Contentment, and Generous Giving
- b. **Text reference:** Philippians 4:8-23
- c. **Outline:** (1) the Secret of Peace; (2) the Secret of Contentment; and (3) the Secret of Generous Giving.

Three Open Secrets	
Philippians 4:8-20	
•	The Secret of Peace (vv. 8-9)
•	The Secret of Contentment (vv. 10-13)
•	The Secret of Generous Giving (vv. 14-20)
•	Application

2. Philippians at a Glance.

- a. Philippians at at Glance Charts.

Philippians at a Glance	
Book Theme	Joyful Advance in Messiah
Author	Paul
Recipients	Believers in Philippi
Date	62 ad
Historical Setting	Paul imprisoned in Rome because of the gospel (1:7). The Philippians have sent Paul a financial gift through Epaphroditus (4:18). Paul is sending Epaphroditus back to the Philippians with this letter (2:25). Paul plans to send Timothy soon (2:19). Paul expects to be released from prison and see the Philippians again (2:24).
Key Words	Gospel, in the Lord, joy/rejoice, Messiah Jesus, mind/think, partnership
Purpose	To thank the Philippians for their financial partnership. To urge them to unity and spiritual maturity. To commend Epaphroditus and Timothy. To encourage the Philippians to imitate Paul's own.
Message	Joy, peace, and contentment are available to believers in Messiah as they partner together in the gospel and advance to spiritual maturity.

Philippians at a Glance			
Ch.	Chapter Theme	Paragraph	Paragraph Theme
1	Advance of the Gospel	1:1-2	Grace and Peace
		1:3-11	Affection and Prayer for the Philippians
		1:12-18	Paul's Imprisonment Advances the Gospel
		1:18-26	Paul's Attitude to Life and Death
		1:27-30	Striving Side by Side for the Gospel
2	Jesus' Mindset	2:1-5	Unity through Humility
		2:6-11	Jesus' Humiliation and Exaltation
		2:12-13	Co-Workers with God
		2:14-18	Lights in the World
		2:19-24	Timothy's Proven Worth
3	Paul's Mindset	2:25-30	Epaphroditus's Proven Worth
		3:1-6	No Confidence in the Flesh
		3:7-11	Knowing Jesus Intimately
		3:12-16	Pressing toward the Goal
		3:17-21	Two Ways to Walk
4	Secret of Peace and Contentment	4:1-3	Agree in the Lord
		4:4-9	Secret of Peace
		4:10-13	Secret of Contentment
		4:14-20	Well Supplied
		4:21-23	Final Greetings

- b. Let's check our work against the Bible Project: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oE9qqW1-BkU>.

3. Read Philippians 4:10-21.

4. The Secret of Peace (vv. 6-9).

- a. The secret of peace (vv. 7, 9) is to:
 - (1) Pray (v. 6);
 - (2) Ponder on what is true, honourable, and just (v. 8); and
 - (3) Practice what Paul practices (v. 9).
- b. Peace is shalom, which is total wholeness, wellbeing, fulfilment, freedom from all anxiety, harmony in relationships, and full realisation of God's favour.

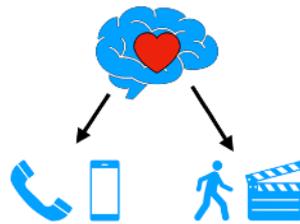


- c. We are to keep thinking (λογίζομαι, pres.) about six types of excellent and praiseworthy objects.

Six Excellent and Praiseworthy Objects

- **True:** truthful, honest, and in accordance with fact
- **Honourable:** worthy of respect, noble, dignified, serious
- **Just:** in accordance with justice, fair, equitable
- **Pure:** chaste, innocent, unblemished
- **Pleasing:** causing delight, agreeable, lovely
- **Commendable:** praiseworthy, worthy of commendation

- d. The heart is the centre of the mind out of which come all our words and actions.
- (1) **Mt 15:18-20** 18 ...What comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. 19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. 20 These are what defile a person.
 - (2) **Mt 22:37** 37 You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.



- e. We are not stop thinking, as in Eastern Pantheistic Monism. Rather we think about the right objects through Jesus.
- (1) Paul doesn't say, "Stop thinking." He says, "Think about the right things."
- f. Here Paul provides the theological basis for a Christian aesthetic or view of art.

5. The Secret of Contentment (vv. 10-13).

- a. The secret of contentment is something we are to learn along with Paul (vv. 11-12).
- b. Contentment is desiring only God and being totally satisfied with what we already have *right now*.
 - (1) **Mt 6:31-33** 31 ...Do not be anxious saying, What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or What shall we wear? 32 For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.
 - (2) **1 Ti 6:6-8** 6 Godliness with contentment is great gain, 7 for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. 8 But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content.
- c. We must be prepared to pass the poverty test and the prosperity test (v. 12).

- d. Contentment in all circumstances is possible because God promises not to abandon us.
- (1) **He 13:5-6** 5 Keep your life free from love of money and be content with what you have. For he has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you. 6 So we can confidently say, The Lord is my helper. I will not fear. What can man do to me?
- e. Paul's secret of contentment is doing all things through Jesus (v. 13).
- (1) Jesus is able to strengthen us in all circumstances (v. 13).
 - (a) **1 Ti 1:12** 12 I thank him who has given me strength, Messiah Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service.
 - (b) **2 Ti 4:17** 17 The Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the nations might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth.

"It is a bad world, an incredibly bad world. But I have discovered in the midst of it a quiet and holy people who have learned a great secret. They have found a joy that is a thousand times better than any pleasure of our sinful life. They are despised and persecuted, but they care not. They are masters of their souls. They have overcome the world. These people are the Christians—and I am one of them."



- Cyprian

6. The Secret of Generous Giving.

- a. The Philippians have an excellent track record of giving (vv. 15-16).
 - (1) The Philippians funded Paul's ministry in Thessalonica (v. 16).
 - (2) The Philippians funded Paul's 18-month ministry in Corinth.
 - (a) **2 Co 11:7-9** 7 ...Did I commit a sin in humbling myself so that you might be exalted, because I preached God's gospel to you free of charge? 8 I robbed other churches by accepting support from them in order to serve you. 9 And when I was with you and was in need, I did not burden anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied my need. So I refrained and will refrain from burdening you in any way.
 - (3) The Philippians funded the Jewish believers in Jerusalem.
 - (a) **2 Co 8:1-5** 1 We want you to know, brothers and sisters, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, 2 for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. 3 For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, 4 begging us earnestly for the favour of taking part in the relief of the saints— 5 and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the desire of God to us.
 - (b) **Ro 15:26** 26 ...Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem.
- b. Our generous giving increases our heavenly (not earthly) bank account (v. 17).

- (1) **2 Co 9:6-7** 6 ... Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.
- (2) How often do you check your earthly bank account? How often to you check your heavenly bank account?
- c. God promises to supply all our needs from his abundant riches (v. 19).
 - (1) **2 Co 9:8-11** 8 ... God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. 9 As it is written, He has distributed freely. He has given to the poor. His righteousness endures forever. 10 He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.

7. Application.

- a. **With a peace that comes from a disciplined mind, and a contentment in all circumstances that comes from doing all things through Jesus, give generously toward the renewed vision of Caversham Community Church, trusting God will well supply your needs from his abundant riches.**
- b. Now is the time to give. Give so that we can put Jesus' vision for CCC into reality. So that we can go and make disciples in Caversham and South Dunedin.