

# The Watford Word

[www.watfordchurchofchrist.org](http://www.watfordchurchofchrist.org)

## What's on

**Sunday** 26 April: Danny speaking

**Sunday** 03 May: David speaking

**Sunday** 10 May: Church service

**Sunday** 17 May: Malcolm - Phil 4.10-23

**Thursday** 21 May, 8 PM: Third Thursday Prayer:  
08:00 PM. ID: 988 3430 9524. Passcode: 332426

[https://zoom.us/j/98834309524?  
pwd=wONcU85ShjGHPjWkjA24icjW3j1gLU.1](https://zoom.us/j/98834309524?pwd=wONcU85ShjGHPjWkjA24icjW3j1gLU.1)

**Sunday** 24 May: Church service

**Sunday** 31 May: Malcolm speaking on the Trinity

**Sunday** 07 June: Church service

**Sunday** 14 June: International Service

**Thursday** 18 June, 8 PM: Third Thursday Prayer:

### Events further ahead

**Friday** 22nd to Sunday 24th May: UK & Ireland mature singles retreat – "Trust In The Lord". Penny & I are the guest speakers for this event. Please pray for us.

**Friday** 24th to 27th July: ICCM Preteen Camp

**Saturday** 25th to 31st July: ICCM Teen Camp

**Saturday** 20 to 24 August: Thames Valley Teen Camp

**Friday** 11th - 13 September: UK & Ireland Young Professionals Retreat in Chesham.

**Sept 30th - Oct 04th**: Spirituality Retreat. <https://shop.thewayministry.global/2026-csr/home>

**Friday** 30th October to Sunday 01st November: Autumn Student Retreat for the UK & Ireland.

**Thursday** 12-15th November: UK, Ireland and Nordics leadership retreat.

## Learning to Drive - Philippians 4.9

In last week's lesson based on Phil 4.8-9, we spent more time on v8 than v9. In today's newsletter, let's have a closer look at why verse nine matters

and how Paul's instructions to the Christians in Philippi can help us to enjoy the peace of God.

### Making it real

"...brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things." Phil 4.8

Thinking on the character qualities of God can become an intellectual exercise. That's not the point. Hence why Paul's words are practical:

"Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you." Phil 4.9

His instructions are not complex, but they teach us one way God shapes us into Christlikeness.

### Relationship

Notice how relational the language is. Paul reminds them of what they learned, received, heard, and saw in him. Christian formation is about *embodied* ideas and truth. We learn not just by instruction, but by observation and imitation.

We see this elsewhere in the NT. Paul said, "Imitate me, as I imitate Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). The writer of Hebrews urges believers to consider the outcome of their leaders' way of life and imitate their faith (Hebrews 13:7). Jesus himself said that blessing comes not simply from knowing truth, but from putting it into practice (John 13:17). In other words, one of God's primary tools for our growth is other people.

### Learning to drive

When I was a young lad, I couldn't wait to drive a car. Every time my parents drove us somewhere I watched them from the backseat. I noticed how

they used the gear stick, I leaned over to see what their feet were doing (no rear seat belts in those days). I looked at the dials (analogue, of course!). I observed differences between my mother and my father's driving styles. My dad used a handbrake at sloping junctions, while my mum held the engine on the clutch.

Finally, I was old enough to take lessons. I had very little money so only had three lessons, took the test and passed first time. Please don't think I consider myself to be an exceptional driver. The point is, I had done myself a favour by deliberately and consistently over a long period of time observing people who knew how to drive.

### Imitation

Do we want to know how to be more prayerful, merciful, or hospitable? What about growth in marriage and parenting? Who do you know who has what you need in greater measure than yourself? What will you do to learn from them? Look for something in your life that is less developed in Christ-likeness than other areas, and search out the person who can help you.

### Wisdom

That said, imitation must be handled wisely. It becomes problematic when we copy others unthinkingly, or place them on a pedestal as if they were flawless. No Christian, however mature, is perfect. Each of us must develop our own convictions before God. Healthy imitation is never blind—it is grounded in Scripture, and always filtered through the example of Christ.

### Gifts from God

But the opposite danger is just as real. If we refuse to learn from one another, we miss one of the key ways God intends to mature us. Humility is required: Recognising that God has given gifts to others that we do not possess in the same measure. Their patience, their prayerfulness, their courage, their generosity—these are not

accidental. They are grace gifts, meant not only for their benefit but for ours as well.

### Everyone

This is not about hierarchy or position. Paul's instruction applies to all believers. Yes, we may learn from those who are more mature in certain areas, but *we also* have something to offer. Church life is beautifully mutual—giving and receiving, learning and modelling, encouraging and being encouraged. It goes both ways, all the time.

### Peace Promised

“the God of peace will be with you.” Peace is something we experience more deeply as we live in harmony, practise what we know, and learn from one another.

If we want to experience that peace, we would do well to pay attention to the people God has placed around us. Watch them. Listen to them. Learn from them. And as you do, remember—someone may well be learning from you, too.

Your brother, Malcolm

*If anyone would like to contribute to the Watford Word please let me know. Articles about scripture, poetry, personal devotional reflections, good news, prayer requests, testimonials and more are all welcome.*

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## Watford Contribution Details

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**Church bank account:** Three Counties churches of Christ  
HSBC  
**Sort Code:** 401915  
**Account Number:** 04759613




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## Watford



## Media

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