

SERMON NOTES

By Pastor John Paul Miller

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Philippians

Philippians 4:4-7 – “How to Have the Peace of God”

Philippians 4:4-7, “Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

A message in a church bulletin said: “Don’t let worry kill you, let the church help!” – Church Bulletin Bloopers

Paul introduces the subject of worry, he says, “be anxious for nothing.”

If anyone had cause to worry, it was the apostle Paul:

- Some of the beloved believers in Philippi weren’t getting along (vs. 2)
- False teachers had invaded the fellowship (3:2)
- Paul himself was in prison, and his future was uncertain

Paul it would seem, had every reason to worry, yet he didn’t!

Why?

Paul had the Peace of God (vs. 7)

In chapter 1 – Paul had the single mind

In chapter 2 – Paul had the submissive mind

In chapter 3 – Paul had the spiritual mind

In chapter 4 – Paul has the secure mind

When you have the secure mind, the peace of God guards you, and the God of peace guides you. (vs. 9)

How can we have the secure mind?

How can we conquer worry, and experience the peace of God?

We learn that in our text today.

How to Have the Peace of God

I. The Prescription for the Peace of God (vs. 4-6) – What to do

Philippians 4:4-6, "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

There are five conditions we must meet to have the Peace of God:

1. Be joyful (vs. 4) "*Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice*".

This is the keynote of Paul's letter.

What does it mean to rejoice in the Lord?

There's a big difference between happiness with joy.

Happiness depends upon happenings or circumstances.

Joy is the fruit, and the work of the Holy Spirit within.

Remember Paul is in prison writing rejoice!

Joy is not just emotion.

Joy is that calm stated confidence that God is in control!

A Christian has times of sorrow, but can still have joy.

The sphere, or source, of our joy is "*in the Lord*"

Count your blessings – Ephesians 1

We don't thank God for everything but rather, in everything and at all times (vs. 4) – "*always*"

James 1:2, "...count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;"

1 Thessalonians 5:16, "Rejoice evermore."

Galatians 5:22, "...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy..."

Joy is the *fruit of the Spirit*

Nehemiah 8:10, "...for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose."

2. Be Gentle (vs. 5a) "*...Let your moderation be known unto all men*".

The word moderation means gentleness, forbearance, or reasonableness

Charles R. Erdman – Joy is closely related to gentleness, one whose own heart is ever singing will not usually be harsh and ungracious toward his fellow man.

The term indicates something of the "power of yielding." The ability to give way to the wishes of others, the poise of soul which enables one to sacrifice his own rights, not by necessity but out of generosity and sympathy. It is the opposite of stubbornness and thoughtlessness. It underlies chivalry and true politeness.

Some have translated it as "sweet-reasonableness"

It's not compromising in doctrinal truth

It's a flexibility with others

It's like a stone wall, others bounce off.

2 Corinthians 10:1, speaks of "...the meekness and gentleness of Christ..."

1 Peter 2:23, "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:"

Notice in verse five, the words "*unto all men*"

Application: Christian parents need to have reasonableness.

James Montgomery Boice – It's a warning not to be unduly rigorous about unimportant matters.

3. Be Alert (vs. 5b) "*...The Lord is at hand.*"

In the midst of four imperatives, Paul inserted a promised truth: "*...The Lord is at hand.*"

It refers to a nearness, either of time or space.

1. The closeness of Christ's coming (time)

2. The closeness of Christ's presence (space)

The Lord's right here!

David Livingstone, the great missionary and explorer of Africa, delivering a speech, after his return to England, answering a question from a student about what sustained him all his years in Africa replied, His promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." – The presence of Jesus!

A hoping Christian will have holiness, joy and peace.

4. Be Careful for Nothing (vs. 6a) *"Be careful for nothing;..."*

The Living Bible – *"Don't worry about anything."* – It's a command

The Greek word translated "careful" means to be pulled in different directions, Our hopes pull us in one direction; and our fears pull us the opposite direction; and we are pulled apart.

Our English word "worry" comes from an Anglo-Saxon word that means to strangle.

Worry is:

1. Wrong thinking – the mind (vs. 7)
2. Wrong feeling – the heart (vs. 7)

Circumstances - Chapter 1 – single mind

People - Chapter 2 – submissive mind

Things – Chapter 3 – spiritual mind

Jesus said we are not to worry (Matthew 6)

Matthew 6:25-33, " Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of

the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

1. About the basic necessities of life

2. About things that cannot be changed (live longer)

3. About tomorrow

It's a lack of faith

It's a wrong set of values

Matthew 6:33, " But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Illustration: Like weeds

Matthew 13:32, " Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."

1 Peter 5:7, " Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."

5. Be Prayerful (vs. 6b) *"...but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."*

The Living Bible – "Don't worry about anything, instead, pray about everything, tell God your needs and don't forget to thank him for his answers."

Notice "...every thing..."

Paul's solution for worry is prayer.

There is nothing too great for God's power and nothing too small for his fatherly care.

How are we to pray?

1. Adoration (vs. 6) – used for the general act of devotion, worship and praise.
2. Supplication (vs. 6) – the cry of conscious need.
3. Appreciation (vs. 6) – with thanksgiving

Thank Him in advance in faith

4. Petition (vs. 6) – requests known unto God

When you pray remember God's:

1. God love's you
2. God is wise
3. God has all power

1 Thessalonians 5:17-18. *"Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."*

II. The Provision of Peace (vs. 7) – The Results

Philippians 4:7, *"And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."*

When a person has joy within, gentleness around, and prayer above, then he will experience peace!

1. Its description – (Two ways)

a. The Peace of God

It's not Peace with God, which happens at salvation (Rom. 5:1)

Romans 5:1, *"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:"*

The Peace of God is the smile of God reflected in the soul of the believer.

Isaiah 26:3, *"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."*

b. It "...passeth all understanding..."

It's foreign to the experience of the unsaved man

Even the Christian can't explain or understand it.

Acts 16:25 – Paul and Silas praise in prison.

2. Its Defense (vs. 7b) “...*shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*”

a. *keep* – it's a military figure to express the power of God's peace.

b. *hearts and minds*

c. Its “...*through Christ Jesus.*”

1. Christian travelers can choose which class they go to Heaven by:

* third class – Christ present

* second class – Christ prominent

* first class – Christ pre-eminent

2. Are you even on the train?

Kenneth Taylor's Living Bible – Philippians 4:4-7, “*Always be full of joy, in the Lord; I say it again, rejoice! Let everyone see that you are unselfish and considerate in all you do. Remember that the Lord is coming soon. Don't worry about anything; instead pray about everything; tell God your needs and don't forget to thank him for his answers. If you do this you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will keep your thoughts and your hearts quiet and at rest as you trust in Christ Jesus.*”

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