

INTRO: Turn your Bibles or turn them on to Philippians chapter 4. Oh, it's good to be back in the pulpit after 4 weeks away. Thank you for the prayers for Cathy and myself. And thanks to all the men who filled the pulpit while I was sick. Everyone did a great job.

(HEY, We are very honored to have Jim Hearrell's dad, Pastor Mike Hearrell from El Paso, TX, here with us today. It is very nice to meet you sir.)

Today I want to preach on the subject, "PEACE FOR AN ANXIOUS SOUL". Everyone desires peace, don't we; peace of mind, peace in our relationships, world peace, and the list goes on and on. But sadly, anxiety seems to be much more prevalent than peace in most lives and homes.

Facts & Statistics: Did You Know?

- Anxiety disorders are the most common mental illness in the U.S., affecting 40 million adults in the United States age 18 and older (18% of U.S. population).
- Anxiety disorders cost the U.S. more than \$42 billion a year, almost one-third of the country's \$148 billion total mental health bill, according to "The Economic Burden of Anxiety Disorders," a study commissioned by ADAA.
- People with an anxiety disorders are five times more likely to go to the doctor and six times more likely to be hospitalized for psychiatric disorders than those who do not suffer from anxiety disorders.

God, in His infinite wisdom, knew we'd need help with this one, so He give us a word on the subject. Before we look at it, let's pray for God to open our hearts to receive what we need from Him today. (PRAYER)

Philippians is one of the prison epistles, of which there are four. They are Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and the little book of Philemon. Paul visited Philippi on his 2nd missionary journey. The converts at Philippi were the first to be saved on the Continent of Europe.

This epistle was written by Paul the Apostle. It is personal and practical in tone and teaching. It is considered the book of JOY. Joy and Rejoicing are mentioned 18 times in this short book. Amazing, when you consider the fact that it was written from a prison cell.

As we get to chapter 4, Paul is speaking about peace. And particularly, the peace of God that comes from a joyful heart. Those who rejoice in the Lord, receive peace from the Lord. SO it's here in chapter 4 verses 6-7 that I want to spend a little time today.

Let's read...

Philippians 4: 6-7 "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Notice...

I) THE PHILOSOPHY: v 6a "Be careful (anxious) for nothing (NO thing)..." Everyone needs a philosophy for life. And if you're going to have one, it needs to be a good one. This is good! Paul adapted the "don't worry, be happy" mind set long before the song came out.

I) THE PHILOSOPHY: v 6a CONTINUED “Careful (anxious)” in the original language is a cool word. (Gr. Merimnate / Mar-em-not-a) The way I remember that is by the word MARINATE. They kind of sound alike, but it’s also a good word association with anxiety, because if you marinate in the wrong thoughts...if you soak in all the wrong stuff, you’ll eventually fill up with all types of fear.

Then I like how it’s merim-KNOT-a, it gives us the idea that anxiety gets us all tied up in knots inside. All knotted up...double knot, triple knot, spend half your day just trying get the knots out of your gut and emotions. Some of you wake up feeling that way. You know what I’m talking about.

Paul says, “Be MERIMNATE for nothing” He’s not being flippant. He just has perspective!

The word, merimnate can have both a negative or positive meaning. Paul uses it both ways in this little letter. Turn back a few pages to **Philippians 2:19-20** “But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. 20 For I have no man likeminded, who will **naturally care** for your state.” (Here, “naturally care” is translated from the word, merimnate - It can mean genuine concern or needless anxiety) Let me see if I can illustrate the difference... for the past three weeks, I was a little anxious about my health. Now, I tried to not to be, but the truth is, I was. I had a couple days in the middle of it all that I thought I might be headed for the hospital and that made me a little anxious. And having 6 friends, and people that I know, die during those same three weeks I was sick didn’t help with my anxiety either. I was anxious! And that’s a bad use of merimnate. BUT THEN THERE IS THE GOOD KIND OF ANXIOUS. Like today, when I was anxious to get in the pulpit and open God’s Word and share this truth that has brought me peace with you.

So when we rightly divide the Word of Truth, the infallible, inerrant Word of God, we find that we should be ANXIOUS for NO-THING, but we should be CONCERNED for SOME-THINGS. Listen, be concerned about the state of your soul, where you’ll spend eternity. Be concern about the state of your children’s relationship with God. There are times that we need to be filled with genuine concern for those around us, but we never have to be anxious about THINGS. Listen, God has a plan for your life. And if you trust Him, He will bring it to pass. GOD IS GOOD!

Charles Spurgeon “anxiety does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, but only empties today of its strength.”

Let me show you this in Romans. Paul is talking in Romans about some pretty heavy stuff. He says in **Romans 8:31-32** “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” **vv 37-39** “Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, (Let me just put a blank here and you fill it in, BANKRUPTCY, JOBLESSNESS, HOMELESSNESS, ADDICTION, WHATEVER) shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

“Be anxious for NO-THING” **Romans 8:28** “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”

I) THE PHILOSOPHY: v 6a “Be careful (anxious) for nothing...”

II) THE PRECEPT: v 6b “...but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God.”

Notice the divine conjunction “BUT”. It’s a word of change! You are going in one direction, then there is a change of mind and heart, and you turn to go in a different direction! “Be anxious for nothing **BUT IN EVERY THING** by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God.”

And this is the way we should live our lives. This should be the precept, the rule, of how we live! From time to time, there will be exceptions to the rule. But as soon as we can we get back to this place that Paul was speaking of, and live our lives in this peace and poise that God has ordained for all of us!

So we see the PHILOSOPHY of peace, and the PRECEPT of peace, now notice...

III) THE PROMISE: v 7 “And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep (guard) your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

“Peace” (Gr. Eirene - err-ray-nay - means, joining or binding together what is broken or divided) Literally means to set at one again, a meaning conveyed by the common expression of one “having it all together”. Think of a compound fracture that is set back in place so that it can properly heal. And we’re told that this peace comes from God. It’s the “peace of God”.

Listen, it is God who has PROMISED to set all things right! God has PROMISED to take what is broken and put it back together. If God has promised you peace, why are you so anxious?

Notice what it says... “And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep (guard) your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” When Satan can cause us to fret, to be anxious over things, and sometimes over no-thing, it’s our heart that stresses, and our mind that is vulnerable. God knows this! So He assigns His only Son to the task of caring for us, to bringing us peace! The PEACE of God guards our minds and hearts. Oh, they used to sing the song, “No One Ever Cared For Me Like Jesus”. Oh, how true that is. **1 Peter 5:7** “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.”

CONCLUSION: Dwight Pentecost “Do you ever find yourself worrying? Do you know that Scripture calls worry a sin? When you realized that you were worrying, did you go to God and confess it as a sin? Worry is just as much a sin as adultery, or murder, or theft. Yet how often we as believers treat it lightly when we find our stomachs tied in knots because we have worried ourselves into a nervous frenzy. We don’t realize that we have fallen into sin.

Wow, what a powerful statement. And true! Can I be so bold to ask, are you at peace today? Or, have you let the enemy consume you with the cares of this world? If you are anxious about the things of life, will you have enough room in your heart and mind to be concerned about the people that are dear to you? Are you concerned about your relationship with God, or anxious about life? Do you know Christ as your Savior?