

Phil 4:1-7

1 Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved.

2 I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. 3 And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life.

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

5 Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.

6 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 surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

Verse 1: Stand fast - Be immovable in the Lord

Verse 2: Be of the same mind as the Lord

Verse 3: We are to labor together as true companions

Verse 4: Rejoice in the Lord always

Verse 5: We are to look for the Lord's return

Now in verse 6 Paul says to be anxious for nothing.

Prov 12:25

Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, But a good word makes it glad.

A synonym of anxious is "eager." To be eager is marked by enthusiastic or impatient desire or interest.

Here in Philippians to be anxious is to have concern, based on apprehension about possible danger or misfortune-'to be worried about.'

When you're "anxious" you're pulled in different directions.

- your hopes pull you in one direction
- and your fears pull you in the opposite direction
- thus pulling you apart.

Jesus said to Martha, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things." He used the same word there as is used here in Philippians.

In Matt 6:34 Jesus said, “do not worry about tomorrow” He used the same word.

1 Cor 7:32

32 But I want you to be without care. He who is unmarried cares (anxious) for the things of the Lord – how he may please the Lord.

The word “anxious” is derived from the Greek word “merimnáœ” which is really two Greek words.

- “meridzo” to tear, to divide or to separate
- and the second word “Naos” which is “the mind.”

Together they mean to “divide the mind.”

James said a double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

- Anxiety is a thief. It wants to steal your joy
- which is the very heart of this letter,

Jesus said in Jn 10:10 that the thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.

When people are unsettled, they often begin to worry about everything.

The old English word for worry is “to strangle.”

Out of worry often comes stress which then causes physical issues.

Paul issues a command in verse 6 which is in

- the present active imperative.
- He’s commanding that people not worry!

Matt 6:25-34

25 “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? 26 Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? 27 Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

28 “So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; 29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. 30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

31 "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

Instead of worrying, Jesus said: 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

1 Peter 5:7

7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

When we worry,

- we should see that as a call from God
- telling us that it's time to pray.

Prayer is the first thing Paul mentions after telling us to be anxious for nothing.

- the more you worry, the less you pray.
- The more you pray, the less you worry.

We should always be ready to pray.

Right praying involves the three things which Paul mentions,

- prayer, supplication and thanksgiving.
- It carries the idea of adoration, devotion and worship.

Let's look at the first, prayer or adoration:

Are we honoring the Lord as divine?

When we pray, we're praying to the one who answers all of our prayers.

God is big enough to solve anything you're going thru.

When we consider in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth Gen 1:1.

God created my inmost being;
you knit me together in my mother's womb. Psa 139:13

Ah, Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you. Jer 32:17

By the word of the Lord the heavens were made,
their starry host by the breath of his mouth. Psa 33:6

7 The LORD keeps you from all harm
and watches over your life.

8 The LORD keeps watch over you as you come and go,
both now and forever Psa 121:7-8

That's the God we come to in prayer:

Be specific in your prayer:

Listen, if you're stressing over something you've got no control over, let it go.

Someone once said, Worry is like a rocking chair; it will give you something to do, but it won't get you anywhere.

Oswald Chambers once said that worry is an indication that we think God cannot look after us.

It may seem to you that God is nowhere to be found. Job was a great example of that. He felt as though he was receiving the silent treatment from God in his time of need.

Job 23:8-10

8 "Look, I go forward, but He is not there,
And backward, but I cannot perceive Him;

9 When He works on the left hand, I cannot behold Him;
When He turns to the right hand, I cannot see Him.

10 But He knows the way that I take;
When He has tested me, I shall come forth as gold.

The Psalmists struggled with feeling that the Lord wasn't listening:

Ps 13:1-2

1 O Lord, how long will you forget me? Forever?
How long will you look the other way?

2 How long must I struggle with anguish in my soul,
with sorrow in my heart every day?

How long will my enemy have the upper hand?

Ps 10:1

1 O Lord, why do you stand so far away?
Why do you hide when I am in trouble?

If anyone understood the mindset of not wanting to experience pain and suffering it was Jesus Himself.

Matt 26:39

39 He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."

When Paul struggled with a thorn in his flesh he pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from him:

2 Cor 12:9

9 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Jesus assured that God will only give what is good and right.

Luke 11:11-13

11 If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 13 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

Paul said, I've got the solution to your struggles, it's by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Replace anxiety by prayer and supplication and making our requests known to God, then we'll have the peace of God verses 6 & 7.

- supplication means to pray out of necessity,
- to ask with more emotion.

When we approach the Lord, He expects us to be sincere, not half-hearted.

Col 4:12

12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

Remember Peter when he began to walk on water toward Jesus and the wind became very loud,

Peter said, "Lord, save me!"

- He didn't go into this long drawn out prayer.

Notice Paul says to pray with thanksgiving.

We are to express gratitude for His blessings.

When we come to the Lord in worship,

- we're expressing gratitude for benefits and or for blessings.

It's always easy to thank the Lord when things are going well in our life,

But what about the times when challenges come your way!

- Giving thanks isn't always at the top of your priorities list.

But guess what, we're giving thanks not for the problem itself,

- but for the God we are inviting
- into our specific problem.

Thank you God that You're on my side!

When we offer thanksgiving,

- it's a demonstration of faith in God's goodness
- and provision despite what we see.

We should thank God for the past, present and future.

Luke 17 - ten lepers.

- After Jesus healed 10 lepers,
- only one returned to thank Him, a foreigner, a Samaritan.

And Jesus asked, "Were there not ten cleansed? But where are the nine?"

They received what they wanted but didn't go back to thank the Lord!

Our response to God's greatness is to humbly worship and adore Him: "Praise him for his acts of power; praise him for his surpassing greatness" (Psalm 150:2).

God is so great that He cannot be compared with anything or anyone else (Psalm 71:19).

Since He created everything in existence, He is far superior to those creations. He is bigger, in the sense that He cannot be confined by time or space. He is wiser, using foolish things to confound those who think themselves wise (Isaiah 40:13; 1 Corinthians 1:27).

He is infinite, while all created things are finite (Psalm 90:2).

That's the God that deserves to be praised and worshipped and for that we can all be thankful!

After you've thanked the Lord, make your requests known to Him.

Throughout the Bible, we see evidence of God's greatness,

- from the creation of the world,
- to the parting of the Red Sea,
- to the miracles of Christ,
- to the final judgment.

Make your requests known to God.

When we make our requests known to God,

- we're admitting our weakness and His strength.

In the OT, Hezekiah's greatest strength was humility. However, in 2 Chronicles we are told that he was sick and near death, so he prayed to the Lord and the Lord healed him and gave him a miraculous sign.

But following his miraculous healing, Hezekiah's "heart was proud" (2Ch 32:24-25).

He had become very foolish and couldn't discern how foolish he was

- in showing the king of Babylon his treasures.

Once he saw his folly,

- he once again "humbled himself
- for the pride of his heart,"

It wasn't until then, 2 Chron 32, that God withheld His judgment.

He wants us to come to Him:

James 1:5

5 If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.

The Lord wants us to bring our anxieties to Him.

After we've done that, then we make our requests known to Him,

7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Paul said that we can experience calm in the midst of chaos.

God gives us a peace that surpasses all understanding.

Peace as used here metaphorically speaks of "peace of mind."

When a person becomes a believer, he has “peace WITH God.” He’s made peace with God. He now sees Jesus as his savior.

But when a person makes Jesus the Lord of his life,

- then he has the peace of God
- because he is no longer at war with God.

When we stop fighting against God, the war is over.

Rom 5:1

1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

When we see the word translated “peace” in the OT, “Shalom,”

- it means more than the absence of hostility
- or an inner sense of well-being.

We’d have to use words

- such as wholeness,
- harmony, flourishing, delight, fulfillment to describe “Shalom.”

Isa 26:7

3 You will keep him in perfect peace,
Whose mind is stayed on You,
Because he trusts in You.

What a wonderful testimony to the world

- when we have God’s peace in the midst of trials.

Daniel slept in a den of lions

- and had a peace about it since he trusted God.

Paul and Silas sang praises at midnight while in prison.

Peter knowing he was going to be executed the following day

- slept comfortably in a prison cell.
- An angel had to wake him up
- in order to take him out of prison.
- Peter thought he was dreaming.

Jesus slept on a boat during a storm with no worries.

Notice what Paul says to close verse 7, that God:
will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Your heart refers to your emotions

- and your mind to your thoughts.

Not every Christian comes to the Lord practicing these verses,

- because having the right prayers
- means having the right mind.

A double minded man is unstable in all his ways, so how would he praise God.

And if we have the submissive mind of chapter 2

- then we can come to the Lord with supplication.

However, since a proud person doesn't feel the need for God,

- he's not going to ask God to supply his needs.

And if we have the spiritual mind which Paul speaks of in chapter 3

- then we'll show our appreciation to God.

Whereas a worldly person doesn't know

- that everything he has is from God,
- therefore, he can't appreciate what he has.

So we must practice the first 3 chapters in order to experience

- the secure mind that Paul speaks of
- in this last chapter.

Paul said in Romans 5:1 having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

But this doesn't mean we will not have trials in our life.

But when we learn to give everything to the Lord,

- then we'll begin to experience the peace of God.

So you make peace with God,

- then you start to mature
- and experience the peace of God.

The Lord gave us a wonderful example of His peace in the book of Daniel.

The king announced that no one was to pray to anyone

- except to the king,
- Daniel went to his room and prayed.

When these men went and told the king that Daniel was praying to his God,

- Daniel was thrown into a lions den.
- Even then Daniel was at peace.