

NETCAST SERMON NOTES

Series: This Isn't Normal

Date: July 13th, 2026

Title: The Lord is at Hand

Speaker: Travis Boyd

God's Presence Brings God's Peace

Key Scripture: Philippians 4:2-9 (with Daniel 6:10 and Isaiah 53:5)

The Big Idea: Peace is not a product or the absence of trouble; it is found in the presence of a Person. Because "the Lord is at hand," we can trade the exhausting grip of anxiety for the guarding peace of our Heavenly Father.

The Terrible Advice of "Just Stop It"

In a famous old Bob Newhart comedy sketch, a psychologist listens to a patient's deep fears and offers two words of advice: "STOP IT!" We laugh because it's terrible counsel, yet we often read Philippians 4:6 ("Do not be anxious about anything...") the exact same way. We treat it like a demanding command to instantly shut off our worry.

But Paul is not an awful psychologist with a Bible. He isn't shaming those who feel the crushing weight of anxiety at 2:30 AM. He is pointing us to a powerful, stabilizing reality: "The Lord is at hand."

First Things First: Resolving Conflict

Before Paul addresses personal anxiety, he addresses interpersonal division between two godly ministry leaders, Euodia and Syntyche.

- The Issue is Not the Issue: God doesn't record what their disagreement was about. Why? Because the specific conflict didn't matter. What mattered was that they allowed something smaller than Jesus to become bigger than Jesus in their hearts.
- Agree in the Lord: Christian unity does not mean agreeing on every preference or opinion. It means collectively acknowledging that Jesus is vastly more important than the things we disagree about.

Three Pillars of Divine Peace

1. God's Presence is the Promise

Paul declares, "The Lord is at hand" (Phil 4:5). This means He is near both in space (His Spirit is actively dwelling within us) and in time (He is returning soon to set every wrong right). Because the King of Glory is close, we do not have to frantically win every argument or control every outcome. We can be gentle and reasonable, trusting Him to hold the results.

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2. Prayer is the Practice

Anxiety must not become our lord. Instead of letting worry dictate our lives, we are called to bring everything to God.

- Anything vs. Everything: We often split life into "big things" to pray about and "little things" to handle ourselves. But if it matters to you, it matters to God.
- Prayer with Thanksgiving: Thanksgiving is not pretending we already got what we wanted; it is an active expression of trust. It says: "Father, here is my fear. But before I even know the outcome, I trust Your goodness."
- The Lion's Den Peace: When King Darius banned prayer, Daniel didn't hide. He opened his windows and prayed with thanksgiving (Daniel 6:10). The threat of the lions was real, but Daniel's peace was greater because he trusted the God in the storm over the storm itself.

3. Peace is the Protection

Paul promises that God's peace will "guard" our hearts and minds. In the original language, this is military terminology—like a garrison of armed soldiers surrounding a vulnerable city to protect it.

- True Peace vs. Counterfeit Peace:
 - Counterfeit peace says, "I don't care anymore," hardening and detaching us from reality.
 - Christian peace says, "I care deeply, but I am not ruled by fear." It attaches us deeper to Jesus right in the middle of our pain.

Let Truth Disciple Your Mind

Anxiety wants to disciple your imagination, teaching you what worst-case scenarios to assume and rehearse. Paul counters this by telling us to focus our minds on whatever is true, honorable, just, pure, and lovely.

- Preach to Yourself: Stop letting anxiety preach the sermon. Instead, preach truth to your own soul: The Lord is near. My Father cares. My name is written in the Book of Life.
- The Product vs. The Person: Notice the shift in the text. Verse 7 promises "the peace of God," but verse 9 promises "the God of peace." God does not merely send peace as a package; He comes with it.

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The Campfire Reality

Imagine a child camping in the pitch-black woods who gets terrified thinking she sees a bear. She doesn't stop to research bear behavior or ask for a lecture on wildlife safety. She runs directly to her father.

When she is in her father's arms, the woods are still dark. The potential danger hasn't vanished. The circumstances haven't changed—but who she is standing next to has. Her peace is not found in the absolute absence of danger, but in the protective presence of her father.

The Ultimate Rescue

How can anxious, imperfect children draw near to a holy God? We can only do so because of the Gospel. On the cross, Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" so that we would never have to experience abandonment. He was crushed to pay the chastisement that brought us peace (Isaiah 53:5).

We don't draw near because we prayed perfectly or finally fixed our emotions. We draw near because Jesus purchased our access with His blood.

Call to Action / Reflection: What does running to your Father look like today?

- Bringing the hidden anxiety you've been carrying into prayer.
- Initiating the difficult reconciliation you've been avoiding.
- Choosing to let truth preach to your soul instead of letting your fears dictate your day.