



## SERMON REFLECTION GUIDE

Joy to the World, Part 4: Joy When You Are Anxious - Philippians 4 - December 21, 2025

### SERMON OUTLINE

Intro - the beer can that was not a beer can and a paint catastrophe, aka, getting served up one more thing than you can handle.

*In anxiety*, we imagine unlikely scenarios as very real possibilities, and mild inconveniences feel like back-breaking disasters.

This has become so normal that an entire industry of pharmaceuticals has arisen to treat it.

**"Do not be anxious about anything...."** - Philippians 4:6 // Is this helpful at all?

The Thesis Statement of Philippians

**Rejoice in the Lord always, again I will say, rejoice.** (4:4) First and last word match = emphasis!

Causes for Anxiety in Philippians?

From Outside - there is sorrow for those who reject the gospel (3:18-19)

From Inside - there is ongoing conflict between two church members (4:2-3)

Connecting back to 3:14-16, Paul instructs the Philippians to focus on the honorable and beautiful blessings of life (4:8-9) and that these will lead to peace as they practice them.

Is this unrealistic? *How can Paul be so anxiety-proof?*

He says that he has "learned the secret" (v. 12) - through years of great joys and extreme hardship, the Lord has proven able to sustain him.

Therefore, he can say, **"I can do all things through him who strengthens me."** (v. 13)

This verse is NOT about super-ability, but suffering-ability! It is **"when I am weak, then I am strong!"** (2 Cor. 12:10)

Philippians 4:13 means: **When there is ZERO way I can do this on my own, God will help me.**

Paul's statements were undergirded by very real experience:

**The following night the LORD stood by him and said, "Take courage, for as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you must testify also in Rome."** - Acts 23:11

Paul 100% means it when he says that we can rejoice always, because **"The Lord is at hand"** (v. 5)

Therefore, we can pray to the Lord who is always *right here, right now!*

**"Do not be anxious"** (v. 6) becomes **"the peace of God"** (v. 7) through **prayer!**

**The pathway from panic to peace is prayer.**

**The Lord is at hand.** (v. 5) — ὁ κύριος ἐγγύς (ho kyrios engus)

**Illustration Story:** Wildor Tiga, the unofficial Prince of Grand Grave Haiti and a frightening escort through a 3rd world city after dark.

Christmas Connection:

**"The Lord is at hand"** is THE message of Christmas, and everyday since!

**"They shall call his name Immanuel"** (which means, God with us). - Matthew 1:23

**And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.** - Matthew 28:20



### **SERMON REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

1. How anxious are you, day to day? Is anxiety a constant companion, or more often associated with increased stress or difficult circumstances?
2. How hard is it to “rejoice in the Lord” when you are anxious?
3. Read Philippians 4:8 - how often do you obey that verse?
4. What does Philippians 4:13 really mean?
5. How is Philippians 4:4-7 really a great Christmas text? How can you work to memorize and apply that section of the Bible yourself?