

PEACE
Peace in Our Circumstances
 Philippians 4:4-7

“And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, ‘Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, **and on earth peace** among those with whom he is pleased.’ When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.’ And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.” **Luke 2:8-16**

Main Idea: Peace is Not Found in Circumstances, but in the Presence of God.

Read the Text: “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” **Philippians 4:4-7**

Three Ways to Recognize God’s Presence this Christmas:

I. Joy of the Lord - “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.” **Philippians 4:4**

“Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished & rose up in haste. He declared to his counselors, ‘Did we not cast three men bound into the fire?’ They answered & said to the king, ‘True, O King.’ He answered & said, ‘But I see four men unbound, walking in the midst of the fire, & they are not hurt; & the appearance of the fourth is like a son of the gods.’” **Daniel 3:24-25**

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.” **Romans 15:13**

II. Grateful Praying “Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” **Philippians 4:5-6**

Christmas can be one of the most anxiety-ridden times of year for so many. What are we to do when circumstances cause us to be anxious?

“Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.” **1 Peter 5:6-7**

III. Peaceful Heart - “And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” **Philippians 4:7**

“But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God....he called out, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’” **Acts 7:55, 59b**

The birth of Jesus, the Prince of Peace, brought peace on earth and goodwill toward men, but if you are only looking at the circumstances of life, you may not believe it’s true. Even with the encouragements of Philippians 4, you might not see it so clearly, because the KEY is tucked away in verse 7.

...the Lord is at hand...

At Hand: This means that God is near. As you are dealing with your anxiety, remember that God is near. As you are grieving a loss...struggling with addiction...wrestling with forgiveness...

Main Idea: Peace is Not Found in Circumstances, but in the Presence of God.

“And they went and woke him, saying, ‘Master, Master, we are perishing!’ And he awoke and rebuked the wind and the raging waves, and they ceased, and there was calm. He said to them, ‘Where is your faith?’ And they were afraid...” **Luke 8:24-25a**

What are the circumstances of your life that are keeping you from peace? Turn to Jesus!

“You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.” **Isaiah 26:3**

Sources & Further Reading Opportunities:

- Tyndale Bible Dictionary – Elwell & Comfort (2001)
- Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary – Hughes & Laney (2001)
- New Bible Commentary – D.A. Carson, R.T. France (1994)
- Critical & Explanatory – Jamieson, Fausset & Brown (1997)
- Bible Knowledge Commentary – J.F. Walvoord & R.B. Zook (1985)
- Faithlife Study Bible – J.D. Barry (2012)