WORRY: THE FOURTH THIEF OF JOY

Overcoming the D's | Philippians 4:1–9 | Rev. Michael Wiseman

1. The Problem: Worry Steals Joy

Paul had reasons to worry: disunity at Philippi, division among believers in Rome (1:14–17), and the possibility of his death.

Anxiety pulls us in competing directions: hope one way and fear another. Worry affects both body and mind; spiritually it distorts our thinking and feelings about circumstances, people, and things.

2. The Promise: A Secure Mind | Philippians 4:7

God's peace will "keep" (guard, like a soldier) our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Paul identifies three practices for a guarded mind:

Right praying (vv. 6–7) • Right thinking (v. 8) • Right living (v. 9)

3. The Practice: Pray, Think, Live

Right praying: Bring everything to God through prayer, supplication, and thanksgiving. Prayer includes worship, devotion, and adoration. Turn your worry list into a prayer list.

Right thinking: Focus on what is true (Phil. 4:8; Isa. 26:3; 2 Cor. 10:5). Do not let imagined fears or matters beyond your control govern your mind.

Right living: Put God's truth into practice (Phil. 4:9).

4. The Encouragement: Do Not Drift Alone

Despondency, despair, and discouragement may arise amid mental, physical, social, or spiritual struggles. Rev. Wiseman illustrates this with Stuart Bee, stranded at sea after his boat capsized and later rescued by a passing ship.

When you feel adrift: Seek God and allow others to help. When someone else is adrift: Be a "ship" of encouragement and practical help rather than judgment.

Personal Application

What concern can I surrender to God in prayer? Who might need me to be a source of help this week?

Additional references: Proverbs 11:14 | Course resources: Lee Snow, Warren W. Wiersbe, H. A. Ironside