

March 29

Philippians 4:7 (NIV) And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Another controversy has made the news. United Airlines stopped two teenage girls from boarding one of its flights because they were wearing leggings. Immediately, those who witnessed the incident voiced their disapproval on various social media platforms. The story hit Twitter like a wildfire and generated volumes of tweets blasting United for its sexist policy. One blogger claimed that United's actions were discriminatory and sexualized these teenage girls. The blogger also stated that it was sexist because men were allowed to wear shorts. However, that is not the complete story. The girls were United employees and were traveling under United's employee pass. The travel pass program includes a specific dress code that bars any employee from wearing spandex or Lycra pants, such as leggings. The airline stated that if the girls were traveling as regular passengers, the leggings would not have caused a problem. The two girls understood and agreed to change.

Taking something out of context can be misleading and can cause problems. This is especially true when it comes to the scriptures. Today's verse reminded me that I, at times, have done just that. I have quoted and prayed this verse many times. I have heard it spoken by peoples of all faith. It is usually quoted by itself, as a prayer or a proclamation. May the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. While this sounds good, we are missing something vital when we make such a declaration. When we read this verse in context, we see that there are conditions that accompany this promise. We cannot claim this truth by itself because there are conditions associated with it.

First, Paul tells us to rejoice always. When we rejoice, we do not have time to complain and grumble. If we cannot think of anything about which to rejoice, then we have forgotten Jesus. Second, we are to let our gentleness be evident to all. It is easy to be gentle to and with those we know and love. Paul, however, tells us that we are to show the gentleness of Christ that we received and that was placed in us when we were saved be evident to everyone. Third, we are not to be anxious about anything. This is difficult because we are so used to worrying. Paul does not mean for us to ignore problems or situations or to pretend they do not exist. Instead of growing anxious, we are to pray in everything. We are to take our concerns to Jesus and petition Him for help and comfort and guidance. Then, we are to end our time with Him with thanksgiving.

After doing all of these, we finally arrive at verse 7, which is the result of Paul's instructions. God's peace is the **RESULT** of our obedience.