

How to have Peace

Philippians 4:1-9

Introduction

Good morning Lighthouse! Are you ready for the Word of God? How to have peace.

A nervous airline passenger began pacing the terminal when bad weather delayed his flight.

During his walk, he came across a life insurance machine. It offered \$100,000 in the event of an untimely death aboard his flight. The policy was just three dollars. He looked out the window at the threatening clouds and thought of his family at home. For that price it was foolish not to buy, so he took out the coverage. He then looked for a place to eat and decided on Chinese. It was a relaxing meal and he felt better about his flight until he opened his fortune cookie. It read, “Your recent investment will pay big dividends.”

A professor at a leading American university studied the things people worry about. His research discovered that: 40% never happens; 30% concerns the past; 12% are needless worries about health; 10% are about petty issues; and 8% are legitimate concerns. That means that 92% of our “worry time” is wasted energy. Whether or not this is 100% accurate, we have God’s Word that teaches us not to worry even about the 8%. Our problems are not solved with worrying. It does not remove the troubles; it removes the peace for today. Thankfully we have a God who is also the called God of peace who invites us to cast all our worries and hardships to Him. Peace is something everyone wants, yet few seem to find. What is peace? It can be defined as “tranquility, harmony, or security.” Depending on the situation, it could mean “prosperity” or “well-being.” When we are talking about peace in the Bible, we are not talking about some hippy peace feeling of no troubles. The Bible’s peace that we are commanded to seek and pursue can be defined as “A confidence in who God is and resting in what He promises.”

Our passage this morning is well known for this subject. It gives us strength and confidence in the Lord and lays out how we can have true peace in our lives. Let's turn to Philippians 4:1-9 for our text.

Background

The church at Philippi was established by the Apostle Paul on his second missionary journey between A.D. 49 and 52. The story of the church's origin is found in Acts 16. The first convert was a woman named Lydia. Later we read about the Philippian jailer and his household were converted after Paul and Silas were thrown into jail after being beaten publicly. This Pauline epistle is often known as the epistle of joy. Paul writes to the church in Philippi approximately A.D 60-62 while he was in prison in Rome for many purposes. A few of the purposes include:

1. To explain his situation at Rome (1:12-26).
2. Exhort the church to unity (1:27-2:18)
3. Thank them for their financial support (4:10-20).

In the preceding verses in chapter 3. Paul mentions our citizenship being in heaven, and the promise of glorification – where our bodies will be transformed and conformed to the image of Christ. On that basis, he then appeals to the believers at Philippi to stand fast in the Lord. The peace of God as defined earlier does not mean nothing bad is happening, but rather it is a confidence in who God is and His promises. Peace does not come from the absence of trials and hardships; but resting in the presence of Christ. It is peace despite your surrounding and circumstances.

Let's read our text this morning.

Scripture

Philippians 4:1-9

(1) Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. (2) I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord. (3) And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life. (4) Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice. (5) Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. (6) Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. (7) And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (8) Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. (9) Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

Outline

I. Resolving conflicts with our brothers, and sisters in Christ, vv. 1-3.

A. Paul expresses his love for the church in three ways, v. 1a.

- (1) Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown. . .
 - 1. We know he is addressing believers based off calling them “brethren.”
 - 2. He calls them his dearly beloved.
 - 3. He says he longs for them.
 - 4. He calls them his joy, and crown.
 - 5. This language Paul uses towards this church is not shared with every church he writes to. This was a church he loved greatly and had close affiliation to. Let’s read Paul’s thanksgiving section found in chapter 1:3-11
- (3) I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, (4) Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, (5) For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now; (6) Being confident of this very

thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ: (7) Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace. (8) For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. (9) And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; (10) That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; (11) Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.

6. The love was also mutual; this church loved the Apostle Paul. They had great concern for him especially when he was in prison.

7. This is something I can personally relate with Paul on. I've had affiliations with other churches, and I think they're great. Pastor Dill would probably be on the same page with me here, but there is a special love I have for this church, Lighthouse Baptist Church.

B. Paul commands them to stand fast in the Lord, v. 1b.

. . . so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.

1. Standing fast is a military term referring to a soldier remaining at his post no matter what happens around him.
2. This command is necessary because we struggle standing fast/firm. If left to our own devices we will retreat or surrender.

C. Paul gives instructions to specific members, vv. 2-3.

(2) I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord. (3) And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life.

1. He urges two women who labored with him in the Gospel to resolve their conflict with each other.

2. He urges the “true yokefellow” to help the two women, Clement and other fellow workers, (whose names are in the Book of Life.)
 - a. We are unsure who this “yolkfellow” is, could be the pastor but he is the one Paul is instructing to help resolve the conflict.
 - b. The greatest honor any of us can be described: Your name mentioned in the book of life.

II. Remaining joyful and living gently among everyone vv. 4-5.

- A. Paul once again commands them to “rejoice in the Lord,” v. 4
 - (4) Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.
 1. This command is to be fulfilled “always.”
 2. This means to choose to make your boast in the Lord in all circumstances.
 3. The verb “rejoice” being an imperative implies that rejoicing in the Lord is not a natural thing to do. Complaining, questioning, anger and shutting those out are the human tendency when we are met with conflict and hardships. We are to rejoice always in the Lord. Give God honor, give God praise in every circumstance.
- B. Paul exhorts them to let their “moderation” (gentleness) be known to all men, v. 5.
 - (5) Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.
 1. In this text, gentleness means “yielded rights; ready to forgive.”
 2. This is to be evident before all men. Not just believers, but to the world.
 3. They are to do this because the “Lord is at hand.”
 4. When we live with the awareness of Jesus’ soon return, it motivates us to rejoice in the Lord and show gentleness to all people.

III. Refusing to worry, and take everything to God in prayer, vv. 6-7.

A. Paul commands them to be careful (anxious) for nothing, v. 6.

(6) Be careful for nothing . . .

1. This word careful from the word that means “anxiety or worried.”
2. The command here is don’t worry but pray instead.
3. What has worrying done for you? Not only is it a wasted energy, it is sin!
Worry is a sin all of us grapple with daily.
4. Not only because it disobeys a command, but because when we worry, we are not saying it out loud, but we are saying in our hearts that God cannot take care of us and our problems are bigger than His promises.

B. Paul indicates the contrast for anxiety is prayer, v. 6.

. . . but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

1. Prayer simply means communication with God in broad sense.
2. A supplication prayer mentioned here means directly asking God or make a request to God.
3. They are to do so with thanksgiving – our prayers should be accompanied by a heart of gratitude for all that God has done for us in the past, and what He has yet to do.
4. Requests speak of specific petitions rather than vague and general.

Illustration: One of my favorite hymns “What a Friend We Have in Jesus” speaks strongly about prayer. The first verses read “What a friend we have in Jesus. All our sins and griefs to bear. And what a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer. Oh, what peace we often forfeit. Oh, what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.”

5. So why worry when you can pray instead? Too often I can myself worrying

instead of praying. However, through the Spirit and disciplining our lives to a life of prayer, we can reject our anxiety, and pray as we are commanded to do.

C. Paul promises that the peace of God will “keep” them, v. 7.

(7) And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

1. This is the promise if we choose to pray instead of worry

2. The peace of God refers to God’s peace that He possesses in His nature.

It is impossible for God to worry. He is not bound by time or any trouble in this world. We can rest assure that our lives are in His hands.

a. The Bible mentions Peace with God and Peace of God. Peace with God is when a person is no longer in the position as God’s enemy. Romans 5:1 lays this out:

(1) Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

b. Believers have peace with God because of the cross, but you can rob yourself of the peace of God when you choose an attitude of complaint and discontentment over an attitude of prayer, and rejoicing.

3. The word “keep” is a military term applied to protecting and camp or castle.

a. Here is a simple 5 reasons why believers should not worry and can be confident in God.

b. Because God hears our prayers. It may not always seem like it. You may have to wait days, weeks, months, or even years for a prayer to be answered. Until then though, praise God in the midst, and continue to praise Him more and more.

c. Because God knows what is best. Have you ever been glad God didn't say yes to some the prayers we have prayed? We may get something else or a no as the answer. Because of whom God is, we can be confident that He knows what is best.

d. Because God cares. We are invited to cast all our cares to Him because He careth for you as mentioned in 1 Peter 5:7. If you ever doubt God's care for you. Look back to the cross. How can you get anymore caring than the Father sending His Son to live a perfect life and die for unworthy sinners?

e. Because God takes care of your needs. In Matthew 6:31-34, we read:

(31) Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (32) (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek;) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. (33) But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (34) Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

f. Because God is in control. This often called the sovereignty of God. He knows all and is in control. Nothing that happens in this life catches Him by surprise. If God is not in control, then you have every reason to worry.

IV. Reflecting on, and applying godly characteristics, vv. 8-9.

A. Paul commands them to "think on" (meditate) on eight qualities.

(8) Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

1. They are to meditate on things that are true.
2. They are to meditate on things that are honest.
3. They are to meditate on things that are just.
4. They are to meditate on things that are pure.
5. They are to meditate on things that are lovely.
6. They are to meditate on whatever is of good report.
7. They are to meditate on anything virtuous.
8. They are to meditate on anything praiseworthy.
9. Its common to think your thoughts cannot be controlled or fixed. Ephesians 4:23-24

(23) And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; (24) And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

10. If you have the new man; if you're spirit was raised from dead to life and you've been born again, your thoughts absolutely can change with discipline.
What you need to consider is what you fill your mind with. Let these things here be your guiding principle.
 - a. What type of music do you listen to? Do the lyrics fit any of these things?
 - b. What type of books are you reading?
 - c. What type of movies and shows?
 - d. What type of friends do you fellowship with? Do the conversations fit any this?

B. Paul commands them to follow his example.

(9) Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

1. They are to do the things that they learned, received, heard, and saw in him.
2. If they do these things; the God of peace will be with them.
3. Not only would the peace of God be with them, but the God of peace would be near to them.

Conclusion

How can we have peace? By:

I. Resolving conflicts with our brothers, and sisters in Christ.

II. Remaining joyful and living gently among everyone.

III. Refusing to worry and take everything to God in prayer.

IV. Reflecting on and applying godly characteristics.

Unresolved conflict will destroy your peace. If we come to into conflict with our brother or sister in the Lord, we have a duty to resolve it quickly. Exercising forgiveness to your brother and sister is not dependent on whether they want it or not. Our attitudes also should be an attitude of rejoicing as Jesus is our reason. Our gentleness should be evident to everyone in the world. A good friend of mine shared with me what motivated him to finally be serious for the Lord. It was when an unbeliever told him: “I wish more Christians were like you. You never bring up Jesus and people wouldn’t know you were a Christian unless you told them.” Our worries should instantly be countered by prayer. We are commanded to not worry for anything. This includes where our country is headed. This does not mean never taking any precautions or have any concerns or ever be nervous, but to not allow anxiety to have rule over you. If we truly want the peace of God, let us pray and bring all our burdens, requests, and needs to Him. Setting time for daily prayer is great and all, but I want to challenge to take it further than that. The Bible

does teach us to devote ourselves to prayer and that 1 on 1 time in prayer for God is crucial. It also teaches this here in 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18. This a verse that can easily be memorized.

1 Thessalonians 5:17-18 (17) Pray without ceasing. (18) In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

If prayer is talking to God, I don't want to be talking to God only in set out and planned times. We can talk to God throughout our entire day. An illustration that helped me is when you go on a long road trip. I can say that I talked to my wife the whole way there. It doesn't necessarily mean there was constant talking, but I knew her presence was there, we pick up talking off and on. I could talk to her at any time. Likewise, throughout my day, I am to be in a continuing conversation. When you come to Him in prayer, be thankful. Thankfulness is central to the Christian faith and love for God. When we do this, God promises to guard our hearts with His peace in Christ. If you do know the Lord, there is something for you to worry about. Where you will spend eternity. If you do not know the Lord, your sin problem has not been dealt with. In His love, He did give us the way we can know Him. That's through Jesus. His death on the cross, His burial and His resurrection from the dead for our sins and by putting your trust in Him (that is what it means to believe in Him in the Scriptures definition), you will be saved from the penalty of your sin. When you do that, then you can start rejecting your worry and have peace in Him.

Question applications

1. How can you discipline yourself to a life of prayer and thankfulness over a life of worrying?
2. Are your daily routines filled with things that'll grow you closer to God or away from God?
3. Are you a living a life of good conduct that others can see?