

# A Special Ally for Our Anxiety!

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**Philippians 4:4-7**



# Philippians 4:4

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*Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say rejoice!*

**I've Got Some Questions for Paul:**

- How can we rejoice in every circumstance we face?
- How can we be joyful when financially we are scraping the toilet?
- How can we be joyful when our loved ones are no longer with us?
- How can we be joyful when everything in our lives is out of order?
- How can we be joyful when times are **JUST TOUGH** for us?

# Philippians 4:6-8

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- Paul is writing words of encouragement from a Philippian Jail, in difficult circumstances (not lecturing Christians from a lofty podium)

- He is writing Godly answers to the previous questions:

*Be anxious for nothing, 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 minds through Christ Jesus, N.I.V.*

- Paul says, if we will do some things for God, then God will do some things for us!
- What are those things that we should do?

**Paul Gives Us Three Strategies**

# #1 Be Anxious for Nothing

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- Easier said than done! We say, “don’t worry about that,” then we worry about that and everything else!
- Is it any wonder why we are uptight?
- We can’t even get out of bed without anxiety
- We wake up in panic to an alarm clock, after hitting the doze button 3 times
- We Look at the news on T.V. and none of it looks good in our communities
- Crime is everywhere
- Homicide is a greater cause for death than Covid at the present time in some of our major cities



# A Study About Worry; National Science Foundation, 2006

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- 40% of the things we worry about never happen
- 30% of what we worry about has already happened to us
- Worrying about the past cannot change what happened, nor can it change the future
- This means that 70% of those things we worry about are unnecessary ....

## That Still Leaves 30%

- 12% of our worries are about unfounded health concerns
- 10% of our worries are about insignificant and petty issues
- That leaves us with 8% of our worries as legitimate ones

# Observations

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- According to the National Institute of Mental Health, anxiety (worry) is the most common form of mental illness, affecting approximately 40 million adults
- Every person has experienced some anxiety from time to time
- One writer says that we are presently living in the Golden Age of Anxiety, as recognized by the Smithsonian Institute
- Not only do we worry about our own problems, but because of social media, the world's problems too!





***But Even Worrying About Legitimate Things Isn't Going to Change Anything!***

***Jesus Said: Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.***

***Matthew 6:34, N.I.V.***

***Remember: Today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday!***

# #2 Pray About Everything

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*“But in everything by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known to God.”*

- Our first response is, *“Man, I don’t have time to pray!”*
- I just informed you that 92% of our worries should be off of our plates, so we should have more time to pray!
- Paul says that we should pray about everything, not just the big things

Not just about religious things (I want to be closer to God)

Not just about the illnesses we or our loved ones have

Pray about your study habits before the test, not just about the test (your time management, your boss, your company)

Pray about hay fever, skin rashes, lunch, car parts, driving



# There is Nothing That We Can't Pray to God About!

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- If it's worth worrying about, it's worth praying about
- Notice that Paul subdivides prayer into two categories:
  - 1) Prayer-General recognition to God of His place in our lives
  - 2) Supplications-humble requests for specific blessings in our lives; requests WE have that may not apply to anyone else but US
- God wants to hear that too! That's what makes our walk with Him special. He knows our issues before we ask Him, Matt 6:8, but don't take Him for granted!
- Listen to how Peter says to pray, 1 Peter 5:6-7:

*Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time, casting ALL YOUR care upon Him, for HE cares for YOU.*
- "Casting"- Throw something on something else, UNLOAD!

# #3 Thank God in Everything

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*But in everything by prayer and supplication WITH THANKSGIVING, let your requests be made known to God.*

- Look at what Paul wrote to the church in Thessalonica:

*“In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” 1 Thess. 5:18*

- Notice that Paul says “IN everything give thanks,” and not “FOR everything give thanks.” The latter phrase doesn’t make sense. We are not thankful for everything:

We are not thankful for evil

We are not thankful for Cancer, or bad car wrecks or difficult medical diagnoses that we must try to overcome

Who is thankful for Diabetes? Genetic Diseases? CKD?

# Christians Must Constantly Remember This:

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- Be thankful in knowing that God's purposes for our lives are bigger than the problems that we face
- Be thankful that God will not permit anything to happen to us without providing a way out, or a way to endure it.

*"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make a way for you to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."* 1 Corinthians 10:13

- As a child of God, if I'm in the situation, God's in it with me!



*But How Can  
I Be Thankful  
For What  
I'VE Lost?*

- Try to focus on, not what you've lost, but what you have left
- Many families lost possessions during the recent Tornado outbreaks in Oklahoma and Texas, but many of the family members survived
- Entirely focusing on WHAT they lost will overwhelm them, but focusing on WHO they have left with help sustain them
- You can possibly replace the possessions, but **NEVER** the people

# In the End Paul Says We Can Expect God's Peace

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- Paul alludes to something that humans cannot understand that will graciously happen to us when we follow these steps (calm down, ask God in earnest, and be thankful)
- This “peace” is beyond the range of human comprehension
- The only explanation I can give you is Paul’s explanation:  
This “peace” will happen: “through/in Jesus Christ”
- It’s promised to those who put their trust in Him through obedience to His will
- The Peace of God will “Guard” our hearts—Paul gives a metaphor of soldiers who are assigned to protect our hearts and minds in times of anxiety in our lives

# To Whom is This Promise Made?

**Christians Who Stand Fast in the Lord (Stand Firm, Don't Waver, Stay on Track in spite of their circumstances; Philippians 4:1)**

- It is obvious to Paul that Christians will be challenged by “anxiety producing events,” in our lives, as all humans are
- Some may last for “a season” (some longer than others)
- Paul saw the need to encourage Christians from his jail cell not lose heart because of the circumstances in which they found themselves (he could identify)
- Paul rejoiced in His circumstances knowing that God knew where he was; and would relieve his anxiety (He ended up baptizing the Jailor, filing a claim against the city for unlawful arrest that he won, and got an escort from prison with an official apology from the city officials (Acts 16)

# The Plan of Salvation

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**Hear the Gospel**

**Acts 15:7**

**Believe the Gospel**

**Acts 15:7**

**Repent of Sins**

**Acts 17:30**

**Confess Christ**

**Acts 8:37**

**Be Baptized**

**Acts 8:38**