

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

Be Anxious for Nothing Philippians 4:6-7 Part 3

We are all going to be tempted at times to become anxious. But for the Christian there is absolutely no reason for them to succumb to their anxious thoughts. There is help available. And the help that I am talking about is not the help that is being extended by the world. I am talking about the help that is being extended to us in Christ. A source of help that is perfect and deserves not only our attention but our accolades. I am extremely disappointed when the help that is available to us in Christ takes a back seat to the help being offered by the world and subsequently the praise that should be going to Christ is deflected and diminished.

The help from the Lord that I am talking about is referenced in the passage that we have been examining, Philippians 4:4-9. Let me read this passage for you. **“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! (5) Let your forbearing spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. (6) Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. (7) And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (8) Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things. (9) The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things; and the God of peace shall be with you.”**

This passage contains a series of exhortations that will point us toward the conclusion of this epistle. The first exhortation that we examined was in Philippians 4:4, **“Rejoice in the Lord always, again I will say rejoice.”** The second exhortation that we examined was in **Philippians 4:5 “Let your forbearing spirit be known to all men, the Lord is near.”** The third exhortation that we began to examine several weeks ago is at the very beginning of **Philippians 4:6 “Be anxious for nothing.”** It just so happens that this third exhortation which is at the very beginning of Philippians 4:6 is the first of several things that we learn about anxiety in verses 6-7. So the question that we have been seeking to answer from these two verses is this; What do we learn about anxiety in Philippians 4:6-7?

First of all we learned that we are to be anxious for nothing. No matter what concern or care we may have we are not to become apprehensive or fearful. We are to be totally free from any sense of dread. This is an extremely high standard for our lives. If the verse ended here we could be very frustrated in knowing how God would want us to go about reaching this very high standard. But God does not leave us guessing.

What else do we learn from **Philippians 4:6-7?** Let us once again look at **Philippians 4:6** but this time we will read the entire verse, **“Be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”** Not only have we learned that we are to be anxious for nothing but we also learned that God’s solution to anxiety is prayer. But we are still not yet done there is one more thing that we learn about anxiety from **Philippians 4:6-7.**

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

The last thing we learn is that God has promised His peace to those who bring all their anxieties to Him in prayer (Philippians 4:7). Let us again read **Philippians 4:6-7** “**Be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. (7) And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**”

Experiencing peace is not the product of us believing that we will always receive from God everything that we have requested from Him in prayer. If anything, believing that we will always receive what we ask for from God in prayer should cause us to experience even greater anxiety.

Let me ask you some basic questions. Where is the perfect place for you to live? Who is the perfect person for you to live with? What is the perfect job for you? What is the perfect amount of money for you to earn? Where is the perfect place for you to retire? I know in respect to our own lives we may all have opinions about each of these questions. And certainly there is no crime in us having opinions but the fact of the matter is this: Though we may have opinions we do not have the answers.

We lack the necessary knowledge and insight to make these judgments. So why in the world would we want a blank check when it comes to prayer. I would like to think that we are astute enough to know that this is not what we want.

The peace that God is offering is not based on the belief that I will get what I ask for but rather that I will get what I truly want based on God’s purpose for my life.

And what is that purpose? Is God’s purpose for our lives that we be without pain, or difficulty, or suffering? What is the answer. NO! Is God’s purpose for our lives that our lives be filled with pain, or difficulty or suffering? No. God’s purpose for our lives is not about us suffering or not suffering. God’s purpose is for us to be conformed to the image of Christ. Prayer plays a key role in this process (Romans 8:26-29).

Let me read for you **Romans 8:26-29** “**And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; (27) and He who searches the hearts know what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. (28) And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those called according to His purpose (and what is that purpose?) (29) For whom he foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son.**”

Hopefully in light of **Romans 8:26-29** we understand the very key role that prayer serves in moving the hands of God to mold us according to His purpose. And if we understand this then as we cast our cares and concerns upon the Lord in prayer this will produce in us this wonderful sense of peace knowing that God’s purpose for our lives is being advanced through our prayers.

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

I shared with you last week that I recently have had some health issues and because of these health issues early next month I will undergo a biopsy for cancer. This is a concern. But there is absolutely no reason for me to become anxious because I know that as I commit this concern to the Lord in prayer that God's hands will be freed to work in a very special way to further mold me into the image of His Son.

Peace is a wonderful thing. Peace is something that the whole world desires and to some degree at various times enjoys but a peace that the world might enjoy apart from God's peace is a very poor substitute for the peace that can be ours through prayer. Why? There are a number of reasons.

The peace that we can enjoy through prayer is far superior to anything that the world has to offer because it has a superior source. What does the verse say, **“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 comprehension shall guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”** The peace that we can enjoy through prayer comes from God. It is His peace.

Why would the source of our peace be an issue? Why would a true born again believer view the peace that comes from God as superior to a peace that might come from some other worldly source.

Let me go back in our study of the book of Philippians to answer this question. Let us go back to **Philippians 3:7-9** and read this passage for you, **“But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. (8) More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish in order that I may gain Christ, (9) and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith.”** Paul in these verses describes an adjustment that he made to His spiritual ledger which was done by faith and which resulted in Him coming to know Christ in a personal way as His Lord and Savior.

Having come to know Christ by faith the overwhelming passion of His life became to know Christ better. We see this in **Philippians 3:10** **“that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death.”** When we come into a personal relationship with Christ we will want to get to know Christ better. We will want to experience Him perfectly. We will want to know His love. We will want to know His joy, We will want to know His peace. In other words we will want His life not only to be lived in us but through us as well.

Because of our desire to be conformed to Christ perfectly the peace that comes from God through prayer will be viewed as far superior to the peace derived from any other source. I don't want to know the peace that might come to my life through drugs. I don't want to know the peace that might come to my life through various psychological techniques. I don't want to know the peace that might come to me through the various written declarations signed by the leaders of the most powerful countries in the world.

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

I have no interest in any of these things. All of these things have very little or nothing to do with my ultimate goal. But I do want to be conformed to Christ and therefore I am very interested in entering into His peace through prayer.

But this is not the only reason why the peace that can be ours through prayer is superior to the peace that might be ours through some other worldly source.

The peace that we can enjoy through prayer is far superior to anything that the world has to offer because it is superior in quality. Let us again read **Philippians 4:6-7** “**Be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. (7) And the peace of God which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.**” The peace that we can enjoy through prayer is so superior to anything that the world has to offer that it exceeds the world’s ability to comprehend it.

Let me ask you a question. How peaceful is God? His peace is absolute. God enjoys perfect peace. He is free from all anxiety.

Why is that? He is sovereign. He is subject to none, influenced by none, absolutely independent. God does as He pleases, only as He pleases, always as He pleases. None can thwart Him, none can hinder Him.

God says about Himself in **Isaiah 46:10** “**My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all of my good pleasure.**” Nebuchadnezzar says about God after being humbled by Him according to **Daniel 4:34,35** “**But at the end of that period I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever; For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom endures from generation to generation. (35) And all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth; and no one can ward off His hand or say to Him, ‘What hast Thou done?’** Since God is sovereign over all things and throughout all of eternity, He always is in a state of absolute peace (Isaiah 46:10; Daniel 4:34-35).

This is not the case with those who are looking to the world for their peace. The peace that the world offers is very fragile. The peace that the world offers may be here today and gone tomorrow. Why? Because the very factors that were at work to produce the initial peace can change at any moment. The world and everything in the world is very fluid.

If you had a choice what would you rather have? The peace that the world offers, which is fragile and transitory or God’s peace, which is perfect and forever? Is there really even a choice. Of course we would much rather have the peace of God.

And you might be saying to yourself I sure wish I had the peace that God enjoys. That peace that comes from knowing that absolutely everything is under His control at all times and moving toward a perfect conclusion. I would like to give you some good news. Let me read for you **John 14:27.**

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

These are the words of Christ to His disciples as He is getting ready to leave them. What did He say? **“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.”** God’s everlasting eternal peace is in our possession in the person of Christ (John 14:27).

Unfortunately what we possess in Christ is not always experienced simply because we have failed to honor the command of **Philippians 4:6-7** as a way of life.

But if we will consistently as a way of life embrace God’s solution for the problem of anxiety we will experience a quality of peace that the world will not be able to understand. They will look at us when everything around us might seem to dictate to them that we should be anxious and all that they see in us is an absolute and perfect peace. A supernatural peace that is ours in Christ which they will not be able to fully understand.

But not only is the peace that we can enjoy through prayer superior because of its source and superior because of its quality. But it is superior for another reason.

The peace that we can enjoy through prayer is far superior to anything that the world has to offer because it is superior in its effect. Let us again read **Philippians 4:6-7** **“Be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving make your requests be known to God and the peace of God which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.**

The word “guard” (PHROUREO) is a military term used of a detachment of soldiers who stand guard over a city and protect it from attack. The peace of God which will be enjoyed by those who take advantage of God’s solution will protect their mind and hearts from further worry.

CONCLUSION

What have we learned about anxiety from Philippians 4:6-7?

(1) We have learned that we are to be anxious for nothing.

(2) We have learned that God’s solution to the problem of anxiety is prayer. And finally we have learned that God has promised His peace to those who bring everything to Him in prayer with thanksgiving.

Why is the peace that God bestows on those who pray superior to the peace that is offered to us in this world?

(1) The peace that we can enjoy through prayer is far superior to anything that the world has to offer because it is peace that God Himself enjoys.

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript

(2) The peace that we can enjoy through prayer is far superior to anything that the world has to offer because it is superior in its quality surpassing all comprehension.

(3) The peace that we can enjoy through prayer is far superior to anything that the world has to offer because it is superior in its effect guarding our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

I understand that some Christians because of brain damage caused by strokes or tumors can be far more challenged in the area of being anxious for nothing than others who have had no such damage.

I understand that some Christians because of the side effects of certain very powerful medications they are taking for serious medical problems can be more challenged in the area of being anxious for nothing than those Christians who have no such side affects.

I understand that some Christians because of past emotional, physical or sexual abuse may be more challenged in the area of being anxious for nothing than those Christians who have had no such problems.

I understand that some Christians because of their very present very painful circumstances may be more challenged in the area of being anxious for nothing than those Christians who have no such problems.

But none of these considerations alter the course that we as the disciples of Christ must set when it comes to the matter of anxiety. Based on the teachings of Philippians 4:6-7 all true disciples of Christ need to believe that the peace of God is available and is able to protect them from anxious thoughts as they bring everything to God in prayer.