

Thank God Philippians 4:6-7

⁶ Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. ⁷ Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. NLT

When you read that from the NLT it is so simple that everyone can understand it.

Don't worry about anything - pray about everything - tell God what you need - thank Him for all He has done. Is there anyone here that does not understand those four simple phrases. You don't even need a college education to understand that. Then why are we so slow to do that.

For most people, here is the way that it works. Worry about everything, pray about nothing, never confess your needs to God and never thank Him.

You all know of course that this Thursday is our national holiday we call Thanksgiving. We will travel or entertain travelers. We will all eat too much. Some will cook too much. And we will sit on the sofa and watch a game or a parade or our favorite movie. And when it is all done, at the end of the day, how much of it will we have spent thinking about God's wonderful blessings on us and the nation in which we live.

So maybe we should spend some time on this passage this morning.

- I. Don't worry about anything;
 - A. What is worry
 1. "Fret and worry indicate a lack of trust in God's wisdom, sovereignty, or power."¹
 - a. Lack of trust in God's wisdom.
 - b. Lack of trust in God's sovereignty.
 - c. Lack of trust in God's power.
 2. Mt. 6:25, *Take no thought for your life*; that is, avoid anxious care and distracting thought in the wants and difficulties of life. ²
 3. "He prohibits the Philippians from worrying about their own problems. Instead they are to commit their problems to God in prayer, trusting that He will provide deliverance."³
 - B. "This is no glib word, no pious cliché, no easy moralizing about complex issues. Remember, Paul was in prison."⁴
 1. Ever since Paul has converted to Christ his life has been in jeopardy.
 2. They tried to kill him at Damascus after his conversion and they continued to pursue him until after his third missionary journey he was arrested in the

temple area and spent the next few years in prison.

3. Listen to a list of Paul's trials.
 - a. 2 Cor 11:24 From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. 25 Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27 in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness—— 28 besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. NKJV

C. Anything, be anxious for nothing

1. Does he really mean we are not to worry about anything?
2. Would that be like a person who just doesn't seem to get upset about anything? No!
3. Some people just do not care, they are not motivated in the least.
4. It doesn't take much to get them along in life.
5. But that is not what he is talking about.
6. For you see those people are not even concerned enough to take the matter to God in prayer.
7. If we find ourselves beginning to be overtaken by worry, anxiety, then we don't just shake it off and go on our merry way, we take the matter to God.

II. Instead, pray about everything.

A. That is what the word instead is there for.

1. Instead of worry we use prayer.
2. Instead of becoming disoriented, confused or flustered.

B. Pray about everything.

1. I have told this story before but it is worth repeating. There was a poor family that did not have much but they did know how to build faith in their children. Each night they would ask God's blessing on the evening meal and then each person would ask God for something. So the boy began to ask God for a new shirt. Now most of us would think that is a pretty small thing to bother God with. But that is what he wanted. After several weeks

of each night asking God for a new shirt the mother received a phone call from a local clothing store who was aware of their situation. They had sold out of a season of boy shirts but they had some that they just needed to get rid of and they thought that the boy might be able to use these shirts. The mother of course was elated. The store delivered the shirts and that night the parents helped their son's faith grow by leaps and bounds. You see they were just simple enough to believe that those shirts were sent by God in answer to a little boy's prayer. So that night as they gathered around the table and they gave thanks, the little boy just like always asked God for a new shirt. But his parents stopped him and said, "Oh you don't have to pray for shirts any more." And then they went in the next room and brought him a brand new shirt. And then they brought another and another and another. Until finally they had brought in a dozen new shirts just his size. They wanted him to know that God listens even to a simple prayer of a young boy and that He has the ability to do more than we ask or think. That's the God we have.

2. Sure pray about the big things, but pray about everything.

III. Tell God what you need,

- A. Now us intelligent people wonder that if God knows everything why do we need to be informing God.
- B. We are not informing God of something that he does not know, but we are admitting to Him that every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father.
- C. But don't think of only material things.
 1. Ask Him for wisdom.
 2. Ask Him for courage, understanding, a loving heart.

IV. Thank him for all he has done.

- A. And everything we have is from Him.
- B. Every time Jesus broke bread with the disciples He gave God thanks.
 1. For such an insignificant thing as a crust of bread.
 2. We surely have more than a crust of bread.
- C. But the idea is also that in everything we should give thanks.
 1. Now it is easy to thank God for a sunny warm day in November but what about a cold dreary one.
 2. It is easy to thank God for a day when we feel great, but what about a day of the flu.

3. It is easy to think God for the mistake you made on your taxes and they send you a refund check but what about when you have taxes due.
4. If God is sovereign, and He is, then we should be thankful in everything.
5. Nothing will raise you from the doldrums of a discouraging day than to sit down and begin to thank God for everything.
6. When Matthew Henry was robbed of the street one day and went home and penned a note of thanks to God. He thanked God that although the thief had taken his money he had not taken his life. He thanked God that he had never been robbed before. He thanked God that he was the one robbed rather than being the robber.
7. Isn't amazing what we can be thankful for when we put our minds to it.

V. Then you will experience God's peace,

A. Do you see the cause and effect here.

1. Pray, give thanks and then you will experience God's peace.
2. The children of Israel were always in a turmoil in the wilderness under Moses' leadership. Almost never do we find them giving thanks.

B. Which exceeds anything we can understand.

1. God's peace that He gives His people is a spiritual peace and has not explanation in this life.
2. Those who do not grieve the Spirit with continual complaints and discontent but are always thankful have the Spirit to give them the very peace of God.
3. If your life is filled with anxiety and disappointment then tell God the problem and ask Him for His peace.
4. Ask Him to remind you to be thankful.

C. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

1. He guards our minds and hearts against bitterness and unbelief.
2. He guards our hearts from unthankfulness and complaint.

This is Thanksgiving week. Spend some time thinking of all the things you are thankful for. Tell Him you are thankful. Pray about those things you want, relying on Him to answer your prayers.

¹MacArthur, John: The MacArthur Study Bible. Electronic ed. Nashville, TN : Word Pub., 1997, c1997, S. Php 4:6

²Henry, Matthew: Matthew Henry's Commentary : On the Whole Bible. electronic ed. of the complete and unabridged edition. Peabody : Hendrickson, 1996, c1991, S. Php 4:1

³Radmacher, Earl D. ; Allen, Ronald Barclay ; House, H. Wayne: The Nelson Study Bible : New King James Version. Nashville : T. Nelson Publishers, 1997, S. Php 4:6

⁴Dunnam, Maxie D. ; Ogilvie, Lloyd J.: The Preacher's Commentary Series, Volume 31 : Galatians / Ephesians / Philippians / Colossians / Philemon. Nashville, Tennessee : Thomas Nelson Inc, 1982 (The Preacher's Commentary Series 31), S. 309