

THE BIBLICAL CURE FOR WORRY

Philippians 4:4-9

Philippians was written by Paul while confined in house arrest in Rome. It is one of the prison Epistles (others being Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians)

The Philippians were suffering severe persecution, internal Church conflicts, false teachers were plaguing this Church and they were struggling for the necessities of life (Philippians 4: 19)

It is in this setting that Paul writes some words of encouragement to a Church that was struggling to make it through the worries and anxieties of life.

VERSE 4 – 5: REMEDY # 1 FOR WORRY - REJOICE IN THE LORD!

Paul says rejoice in the Lord always (imperative, a command)

Remember what they were going through - yet they were to rejoice

rejoice = “chariot” = related to grace; joy is a direct result of God’s grace, joy, delight, gladness.

Who are we to rejoice in? *In the Lord, not in what’s happening around us.*

The way that we can rejoice in the mess and in any anxiety provoking situation, is to have our focus on the Lord, not on the problem - *this is huge!* Our minds can only focus on one thing at a time.

FOCUS > FOCUS > FOCUS ON GOD!! We belong to our sovereign God; circumstances cannot change this!!

How do I focus on the Lord when my mind is fixated on the problem? Great question.

The only way to do this is by abiding in Jesus, making our home in Jesus. Seems simple enough, yet so many believers do not do this. Do not allow an anxious situation to kick you out of abiding in Christ.

When anxiety comes, *lean into Jesus*; do not lean into your problem.

Jesus’ promise to those who abide in Him – *fruit*

What is fruit? Godly attitudes produced by abiding = Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness - (Galatians 5: 22)

Rejoicing in the Lord in the impossible produces something in you - **Gentleness** (verse 5)

Let your gentleness be known to **all**

gentleness = gracious, patience, forbearance,

The world sees this miracle lived out in you, (gentleness, patience, forbearance); it is a **witness** to the world of God’s sustaining power. **Christianity really does work! Jesus really does make a difference!!**

The ability to do this is *from the Lord*; He is near, “*at hand*”, close to you!

Psalm 121: 1-7 God, the help of those who seek Him

*“I will lift up my eyes to the hills, where does my help come from?
My help comes from the LORD the maker of heaven and earth
He will not let your foot slip, He who watches over you will not slumber; indeed,
He who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep
The LORD watches over you, the LORD is your shade at your right hand.
The sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night, the LORD will keep you from all harm,
He will watch over your life”*

You can rejoice, knowing this is true!

Rejoice in the Lord - **ALWAYS**

Let your gentleness be known to **ALL** - !

VERSE 6 – 7: REMEDY #2 FOR WORRY - PRAYER

Peace comes through prayer!!

Please note: “**Do not be anxious about ANYTHING**” - the believer is not to worry about anything!!

The only way **not to worry** is to receive an *injection* of supernatural power

Where do you think this comes from? **GOD, through PRAYER!!**

No matter how awful something might be, God will infuse the believer with the peace of God Himself; a peace that can carry you through the trial. In this way God, will enable a believer to overcome worry and anxiety.

Remember what worry and anxiety can cause:

Fear to act – withdrawal -depression – discouragement - a defeatist attitude - physical sickness – emotional problems – distrust – unbelief - and the list goes on and on.

Principle: *Deal with your worry or your worry will deal with you!!*

The key to victory “*in everything*” – **PRAYER**

1. **Prayer** - refers to special times of prayer - set aside a daily time of prayer – make it a normal part of your life.
2. **Petition** - prayer that focuses on special needs, pour out your soul prayer, I need Your help now God prayer
3. **Thanksgiving** - have a grateful heart for what God has done and what He will do. Praise God for who He is, the Creator, the Sustainer, our Way maker, our Shield, our Rock, our Fortress, our Deliverer

2 Samuel 22: 2-3

“The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock in whom I take refuge. My shield, and the horn of my salvation, He is my stronghold and my refuge and my Savor”

4. **Requests** - specific requests - be specific when you ask God; do not hold back. Remember we can boldly approach the Throne of Grace with our requests, without fear.

When we allow the world to see our gentleness - gracious, patience and forbearance in the trial

When we pray in all things, trusting God through it all, knowing that I know, “*He is my Rock, my Fortress and my Deliverer*”

WE ARE GIVEN A PROMISE: PEACE

“The peace of God which surpasses all understanding” (beyond anything we can imagine) - The God of heaven has entered into my situation, *this is mind blowing!!*

Peace = “*eirene*” = to be bound, joined, and woven together with God

A state of untroubled, undisturbed, well-being. (God enters our chaos and calms the storm, and says, “*Peace be still*”) - A sense that **GOD WILL** guide, guard, encourage, and save us!

THIS IS SOMETHING ONLY GOD CAN GIVE - REAL PEACE!!

We not only get the peace of God that surpasses all understanding

GOD GIVES US A GUARD!

His peace “*will guard our hearts and our minds through Christ Jesus*” (as we dwell in Christ)

Guard - a military term meaning to garrison, to keep guard and protect.

A sentinel who stands watch over our minds.

Please here this loud and clear:

God guards our hearts and our minds as we **dwell in Christ**; *no dwelling in Christ, no sentinel, no peace!!*

It really is that simple! We can dwell in our worry and our anxiety, or we can dwell in Christ. Only one will occupy our thoughts, our inner person!! ***You can choose peace!!***

How do I know this to be true? *Hear the words of Jesus - John 14:27*

“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you” - Peace is here for the taking!

“I do not give to you as the world gives” - The world knows nothing about this peace!!

“Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” - This is a command from our Lord!

When we walk in the Spirit, our character changes; what we think about and how we act changes!

Galatians 5:22 - The Fruit of the Spirit

The fruit of walking in the Spirit, of abiding in Christ = “*Love, joy, peace . . .*”

God has made a way for us to have peace in the *impossibles* of life

Our part is to do what He says, *it's not automatic!*

Remember: It's all about our **FOCUS!!**

Where is your FOCUS? *On God, or your worries?*

VERSE 8 – 9: REMEDY #3 FOR WORRY - YOUR FOCUS

When “*stinkin thinkin*” creeps in, take a pause, regroup and refocus; *think rightly!*

Control your thoughts, we “*take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ*” - **2 Corinthians 10: 5**

Remember: it's all about your **FOCUS**

God's filter for your thinking (what your FOCUS is on)

1. **True** - when your mind is focused on the truth, (the truth of God and His Word) - enter peace
2. **Noble** - worthy, revered, dignity, holy - enter peace
guard against flesh thoughts (lust, jealousy, greed, being light minded) - no peace
3. **Right** - doing what is right in the eyes of God and man
4. **Pure** - morally clean
5. **Lovely** - pleasing, kind
6. **Admirable** - worthy things, highest quality; do not allow the onslaught of negative, ungodly thoughts in
7. **Excellent or praiseworthy** - think about such things; only allow these thoughts to occupy your mind
PLACE A GUARD OVER YOUR MIND!!
8. **Meditate on these things** - to eliminate negative thoughts, “*stinkin' thinkin*”
- use God's filter and refocus your mind!!

If thoughts are bombarding your brain that do not meet these criteria, do not allow them to consume your thinking!
YOU CAN IF YOU ARE ABIDING!!

CONCLUSION:

Now hear this!! Things not to do:

1. Do not go down the road to negativity; negativity can become a habit
2. Do not allow negative thoughts to consume your mind, to control you
3. Do not live as an anxious, worried, overwhelmed by everything person
4. Do not allow your worry, anxiety, and negative thoughts effect those around you.
Worry and negativity spread like wildfire!

Now hear this!! Things to do:

1. DO - what you have learned, received, and heard
2. DO - put into practice what you have learned
3. DO - practice putting positive thoughts into your mind
4. DO - live through the *impossibles* of life by focusing on what God says for us to do
5. DO - know you can live through the chaos of life and have His peace **if** your **FOCUS** is on Him!

Remember: what you think about, what you dwell on, is what you become!

You can live as an anxious, worried, overwhelmed-by-everything person, with a critical spirit, **or**
You can live through all the *impossibles* of life by focusing on what God says!!

IT'S ALL ABOUT YOUR FOCUS - THIS IS THE BIBLICAL CURE FOR WORRY!!