Disciples Church

Joy in Anxiety- Philippians 4:1-9

Week of August 23, 2017 <> Joshua Kirstine

**TEACHING NOTES**

**INTRO:**

**Philippians 4:1** Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

Anytime we see therefore… the author is about to bring application to a principle of foundation.

In order to fully understand the application we must first have received the principle of foundation.

For this we need only turn back a few verses to 20-21

**Philippians 3:20-21**But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

Paul gets that when we look out into life and see everything changing… everything is all over the place…. That the center hub of it all is Jesus… is Life with God.

This bottom line of Paul’s has been the theme for him in his letter to the church in Philippi. We have witnessed bad circumstance after bad circumstance be trumped in Paul’s life by the overwhelming power that he has found in Christ Jesus … his savior and greatest Treasure.

***Loneliness, suffering, the threat of death, frustration, temptation, conflict, exhaustion, just to name a few.***

In all of this mess… Paul continues to speak of the lasting Joy he has in Christ.

A Joy here in verse 20-21 that is centered in the Good News of his Salvation.

**His new life in Christ.** He as been saved from his sin and set free to serve the King of Kings with his life. He celebrates his ongoing Gospel Partnership with men like Timothy and Epaphroditus… and people in Philippi like Euodia and Syntyche that we are about to read about.

**1. Help from the Body of Christ**

Paul is now going to apply this Good News to one of life’s biggest hurdles… **ANXIETY!**

Lets read it….

**Philippians 4:2-3** I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. 3 Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

What we read here is 2 prominent believers in Philippi have a conflict that is affecting the church.. & it has made it’s way to Paul’s jail cell.

This conflict that taken its toll on the church has it has made its way to Paul’s prison cell in Rome. Now notice first his counsel to his Gospel partners…

**Philippians 4:2-** I entreat (plead) Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord

**He starts by centering the church’s focus on Jesus…. He is saying.. remember who you are.**

**“agree in the Lord” Agree on who you are in Christ.. then your differences will have an entirely new importance & in unity you can disagree and still go forward.**

**Philippians 4:3** Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

These are not rogue women in the church stirring up trouble but are true believers and Gospel Partners with Paul in ministry. To what extent we don’t know .. they have lost sight of who they are and are arguing over something petty.

**Notice, they need a mediator. This is one of the great benefits of being in the body of Christ.**

Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women,

Paul is saying one of the main purposes of the Body of Christ is help through Godly counsel!

The roll of the Body of Christ… to help each other

Who do you look to for help? A Mature Christina Friend… a Group leader.. an elder

\*\*Essentially an Unbiased Godly person who can hear both sides and help both parties understand each other and come to resolution in Christ.

**2. Defining and Dissecting Anxiety?**

Paul is going to fight for their peace and freedom from anxiety with his counsel in the next few verses.

I love this section of scripture. It is truly one of a favorites because it is so applicable for us all the time.

**Anxiety is one of the leading struggles of people in our society today and even thought Paul wrote this letter a long time ago we are able to gain great insight into who we can have lasting Joy in Christ when we start to feel anxious.**

**What is Anxiety?**

**Anxiety** loosely defined is this: anticipating the future in a variety of possible negative outcomes and then **“”””FREAKING OUT ABOUT IT””””**

**10 years old- snow day to go sledding…**

There is something similar to anxiety that is not bad it’s ok.

This is **Expectation**- Simply anticipating the future in a variety of possible positive outcomes and then **“”’ getting really excited about it”’’’**

This is anticipation for good things to come. This is ok….

**Night before my wedding… Day of My wedding and the first time I saw rush in concert.**

Back to Anxiety.. or Worry! **Do you know that worry is worthless?**

**It absolutely does you no good.**

**1- Past things-** they can’t be worried to a different outcome!

**2- Future things-** they can’t be worried into existence

**3- Present things-** if your worrying in the moment you’re not focusing on a solution because you are to busy crying about it.

**Paul gives us a great instruction to deal with anxiety in the text today.. but…**

**To often this passage and many others are read and taught as simple biblical methods to have a better life.**

**🡪But if applied that way we cut the source off ….**

**We cut the trunk off the tree and then try to make sense of the branches by themselves….**

**🡪**The Bible does something.. Paul continues to do something we must not miss….. **Jesus is life! Our Greatest treasure .. our reason for living.. our source for loving… is God.**

IN this text Paul gives us three methods or disciplines which results in us having a peace that cuts through all anxiety

1. **Rejoice in the Lord always**
2. **Live in Holy Moderation**
3. **Experience Peace through Prayer**
4. **Know the God of Peace**

**3. Rejoice in the Lord always.**

**Philippians 4:4** Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.

Joy is lasting and not related to our circumstances when it’s out of the overflow of the Lord.

When we understand that God is our source for lasting Joy we will endure hard moments and even loss. More then endure we can rejoice. **Why?** Because we have God.

**Matthew 6:19** “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where they are taken or stolen

but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, there they are secure and lasting

🡪 where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

In other words.. where ever your treasure is.. .That what will give you reason to rejoice.

In God’s word we discover the God who created us **to be satisfied**.. **to experience great Joy** **and Delight**.

But in our sin we seek and try to find that delight in the creation of God and not in God himself.

**In 2 Timothy 3:4** Paul warned that in the last days men would be "lovers of pleasure rather that lovers of God." \*Surely we are in those kind of days.

**God himself is the one who put our deep desires in us.**

***🡪 He put them there that we might Feast on and Be satisfied in HIM.***

**As it is said in JOB 22:25** the **Almighty himself will be your treasure**.  He will be your precious silver! -NLT

What the resounding truth of the scriptures teach us is that to ultimately ENJOY GOD is to abandon the **two bit, low yield, short-term, never satisfying, life-destroying God-belittling, treasures of the world** and to replace them with the **lasting, satisfying, amazing pleasure found in only in GOD Almighty!**

There are several other teachings of Jesus that cause us to not only have God as our Treasure most important but to actually give away the treasures of this world for Christ’s sake rather than accumulating it.

For example, consider

**Luke 12:32-33** "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys."

Here Jesus explains how you "provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old" and how you "provide yourselves with treasure in the heavens that does not fail," ….

**How?** 🡪 **"Sell your possessions and give to the needy."** That’s how you do it—you live open handed, willing to put others above yourself for God’s glory and their good.

The illusion that we are at war with is that “**earth is our home**"

**It’s not; Christ is our home**.

And therefore to live is Christ and to die is gain. And it will be all the more gain as we learn to lay up treasures in heaven by giving the temporary stuff away.

Church: This is how we rejoice despite what we face. It is all dependent on whom you are building your life. If on Christ we have so much to be thankful for.. we have so much reason to trust him and cling to joy in Him despite our hardships. Paul gives us another layer of this in the next verse..

**4. Live in Holy Moderation**

**Philippians 4:5** Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand;

Now, “reasonableness” doesn’t translate well here…

in king James the word is Moderation in other translations the word is Patience

or gentleness.  **IN the Greek this word means a “radical evenness of temper”**

***Let your radical evenness of temper be evident to all***

Now, We only have a radical evenness of temper because of Christ who lives in us and through us…

Paul describes this discipline in **1 Corinthians 7:29-31**This is what I mean, brothers: the appointed time has grown very short. From now on, let those who have wives live as though they had none, 30 and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods, and those who deal with the world as though they had no dealings with it. For the present form of this world is passing away.

What is Paul saying here is: We must have a right view of this life in the shadow of the eternal life that is before us… Only God can give us a radical evenness of temper regarding the things of this temporary life we are now living.

When we understand what Paul is saying here and have a right view of God and our eternal standing will we have a radical evenness of temper in good and bad times.

**In trouble or hard times**…**those who are truly trusting in Christ** say .. I am sad but his is not my bottom line. So I am not crushed by this. Nothing can touch my bottom line. My bottom is Jesus.

**Same thing when we experience great success…** Someone who is truly trusting in Christ… says, “settle down heart!”

This is nice.. This is cool .. but it is not my greatest Joy. It is not the most important thing. Christ is the most important thing. Jesus is my greatest joy.

Without this as our foundation we are left to hope for and lean on “other things” as our bottom line & instead of experiencing peace we are filled with **worry** & **anxiety**!

**WHY?** Because only God can eternally satisfy, and as we know; creation can break… can be lost… can fail us!

But with a **Christ filled Radical even temper**. A clear understanding that Jesus is Life… that the Gospel is our greatest hope and we have already received it… We don’t have to swim any longer in pools of worry and fret. God sets us free from that.

**🡪Let’s pull back and see the bigger picture Paul is giving us here…**

The scriptures do this all the time but we too often focus so much on the single verse we miss the bigger context.

Paul says here verse 4 & 5- Rejoice in the Lord.. Let your radical evenness of temper be evident to all

Now we can say, **How do we do this?**

Remember the basis for all of this… is up above…. In verse 20 & 21 our citizenship is in heaven.

Our names are written in the book of life!

Let me show you an amazing application of this very same truth that Jesus himself gave to the disciples.

**Luke 10-** The disciples have just returned from one of their Missional excursions Jesus sent them on as part of their training… and they are excited to report.. “**Can you believe it .. the Demons even submitted to us in the power of your name.”**  Jesus is quick to help them understand … and says, **do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”**

What Jesus understands and is trying to teach the Disciples… it’s great the Demons responded today… but they may not tomorrow—the most important thing is having Christ forever.

He is saying, **De-center that temporary treasure**. Stop rejoicing in your circumstances!

But rejoice that your names are written in Heaven.

🡪This is what a Christian does… we understand our bottom line is not the things or people or status of this world.. but found only in our Greatest Treasure which is Christ… the one whom makes us able to have our names written in the book of life.

🡪**This is Holy moderation**…. **This is keeping the main thing the main thing!**

In every circumstance.. we have to get good as leaning on the truth that we LIVE in Christ.

So when the world is crumbling around you.. you claim.. your victory is in Christ.

And when the trophy or the raise is awarded you… you claim victory is in Christ.

***Now Paul gets very practical on us with his next step..***

**5. Experience Peace through Prayer**

**Basically he says when you feel tempted to worry** … .when the clear understanding of who you are in Christ is not center in your heart and mind… the way you refocus is very specific! **You need to pray!**

**Philippians 4:6-7**  do not be anxious about anything, 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 understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

This is my most quoted verse… I have memorized the NLT translation as I like it better… *Do not worry about …*

It is awesome when you memorize a scripture out of constant use not just out of flash card practice!

🡪**We should have more of these ready on our lips.. They are powerful revelations!**

**Why is this verse so heavily gone to?** … cause life is hard… and Prayer is essential to stay centered… and the peace of God is way better than the peace of the world.

**God’s peace is different than the world’s peace.** True peace is not found in positive thinking, or in absence of conflict, of in good feelings.

It comes from knowing that God is in control. Our citizenship in Christ Kingdom is an untouchable assurance.

Paul says to Pray about two things… with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

1. Be thankful to God 2. and to be straight forward with God in our request

**1. Why is it vital that in our prayer life we are thankful to God constantly?**

**1 Thessalonians 5:18** 18No matter what happens, **always be thankful**, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.

WE enter into an understanding of how to experience peace and not anxiety by being thankful for and to God!

But we struggle with this. Don’t we? We get very used to the nice things we have and the many convinces of this modern life we live.

<>Sometimes we are so blessed that we begin to think we’re entitled to all the good things that come our way.

**OUR human nature is like this** --If you give a small child a gift, he’ll treasure it.

But if you give him two gifts, he’ll might wonder why he didn’t get a third.

What happens when you lose things you’ve come to expect?

What happens when there’s a power outage and you can’t watch TV or operate your hair dryer?

What happens when you get sick and can’t do some of the things that you’d planned?

**We become resentful and angry. 🡪 We do not Rejoice and we are not full of God’s Peace!**

**This is why being thankful to God in all things… helps us stay focused on the total blessing that we have in Him… & not in the stuff we feel we need or have come to expect!**

**2. Why is it vital that we constantly bring our request & desires before God in prayer?**

**Perspective & Trust!**

**Prayer is:** *Prayer is pouring out our hearts to God in praise, thanksgiving, confession of sin, and expressing our requests to Him while submitting to His sovereign will. An aim of prayer is surrendering our limited worldly perspective and so we can grasp and trust in God’s divine perspective over that situation. we learn through constant prayer to trust in God’s sovereignty to trust it in his hands!*

Prayer is laying our hearts at God’s feet until we begin to line up with his point of view… with his power, with his wisdom, with his timing, with his Glory,

**Prayer is our way of preparing to join God in what he is going to do!**

Because realize, the worst thing that can happen is not **“what you want… not going your way”**

The worst thing that can happen is that you stand in opposition to what God is doing!

**Therefore, We must practice yielding prayers.** Yielding Prayers are how we surrender our grip on what we want and we cling to what God wants!

Jesus modeled this time and time again, but most memorably in the garden of Gethsemane when dripping drops of blood over the reality of his torturous death. What does he say, **“Not my will but your will be done!”**

**Now, be honest, Do you believe your life and the life of your loved ones is best in God’s hands?**

**Your true peace will be directly linked to whose hands it’s in!**

**A basketball in my hands is good for a couple lucky shots.**

**A basketball in Michael Jordan's hands is worth 6 NBA national Championships**

**It all depends on Whose hands it's in.**

**A baseball in my hands is worth about $6.**

**A baseball in Alex Rodriguez’s hands is worth $252 million.**

**It all depends on Whose hands it's in.**

**A Golf club in my hands is a consistent bogey.**

**A Golf Club in Jack Nickolas hands is thing of precision**

**It all depends on Whose hands it's in.**

**The controls of a Jumbo 747 in my hands is a lot of dead people**

**The Controls of a Jumbo 747 in the hands of a professional pilot is speedy travel at 300 miles an hour**

**It all depends on Whose hands it's in.**

**A rod in my hands will keep away a wild squirrel.**

**A rod in Moses' hands will part the mighty sea.**

**It all depends on Whose hands it's in.**

**Two fish and five loaves of bread in my hands is a couple of fish sandwiches.**

**Two fish and five loaves of bread in JESUS hands will feed thousands.**

**It all depends on whose hands it's in.**

**Nails in my hands might produce a birdhouse.**

**Nails in Jesus Christ's hands is SALVATION from death to LIFE for who Repent & Believe.**

**It all depends on Whose hands it's in**

**AMEN!**

**So is your life, the things you are prone to worry about… are they in your hands or God’s hands?**

Prayer is laying our worries and request at God’s feet until we begin to see things through his point of view… with his power, with his wisdom, with his timing, with his Glory,

The Result = **Peace.. and not worry! Hope and not despair!**

🡪So much so that is it is a peace beyond our human understanding…

This is where our testimony begins to have great effect on others who are looking in… They say, **“ how in all that mess are so peaceful?”** Many times we don’t know but we do know from whom it comes!

**The Peace of God does not mean an absence of hardship**

**The peace of God does not mean an absence of hardship in your life ….it is a power to have PEACE instead of Worry in that hardship.**

**Psalm 55:22 days,** Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you;

**6. Know the God of Peace**

**Philippians 4:8** Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

**Jennifer and I have a picture framed of verse 8 in our master bedroom. It is a great reminder for us as we begin and finish our days. But it is more than just a helpful encouragement.. think about it with me for a moment…**

What is **one thing** best fits the description of true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, praiseworthy? **God**!

Paul is saying… Keep God the center of your mind… Keep his kingdom and the true children of his Kingdom in your sights… and on your mind!

**Let them influence you toward God…. Towards… life!**

**Philippians 4:9** What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things,

**Who is in your life that you are watching.. that you are learning from?**

Not that they have all the answers but there walk with God is further than yours… their Joy in Christ is more constant! They trust God when times get hard. They are not undone in anxiety but model a radical evenness of temper. We need this in our lives. We need mature brothers and sisters to point us to Jesus when they are going through hard times so we can follow their example.

This is Paul’s way of saying, “see these hard situations I am in.. it is not my end.. it is all in God’s hands. I am full of Joy in the midst of this hardship and stress. He has me. See this and follow me into peace in Christ. So you too can Rejoice always.”

Now see where he goes with this..

**Philippians 4:9** What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, **and the God of peace will be with you.**

By talking to him regularly in prayer, by thinking about and watching the true children of God press deeply into him… Then you will not only have Peace instead of Anxiety but ….**the God of peace will be with you.**

Notice in verse 7- the peace of God will guard your hearts…

And finally in here in verse 9 Paul says, the God of peace will be with you

**It is one thing to seek the “peace of God”…**

**It is entirely bigger thing to seek the “God of Peace!”**

**Here is how you know that you are only seeking the peace of God… you only Pray, and pursue God or the church family when you are in trouble.**

**Can I let you in on something life changing this evening?**

**🡪 If you only seek the blessings of God but you don’t seek God you will never truly know the blessings of God.**

**You must first seek the God of Peace, before you can know the peace of God.**

**AMEN!**