



“Living in Peace” Pt 3

Paul specified some specific joy related actions throughout chapter four.

- **Stand firm in the Lord 4:1**
- **Harmonize in the Lord 4:2-3**
- **Rejoice in the Lord always 4:4**
- **Cultivate the Gentleness of the Lord 4:5**
- **Cultivate a life of persistent prayer to the Lord 4:6-8**

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, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-8

There are three basic instructions in this passage leading toward a life of peace.

Cultivate a life of engaging gentleness over unsettling contention.

Cultivate a life of consistent prayer over persistent worry.

Cultivate a life of positive thinking over negative thinking.

The result of following his instructions is God’s supernatural peace guarding our hearts and minds and enabling us to recognize the presence of the God of peace.

Cultivate a life of consistent prayer over persistent worry.

Mandate to eliminate persistent anxiety 4:6a

Be anxious for nothing

Mandate to practice persistent prayer 4:6b

*Be **anxious** for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to (a caring present) God. Philippians 4:6*

The main command is to regularly “let your requests be made known to God”.

Peter urged his readers to do basically the same.

*Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, having cast all your **anxiety** on Him, because He cares for you. 1 Peter 5:6-7*

The implication is that having cast all your anxiety on the God who always cares for you, humbly submit to God’s work in your life not matter how difficult.

Cast your burden upon the LORD and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken. Psa 55:22

The foundation of dealing with fret and fear begins with trust in a loving God who is always near.

In contrast to being anxious about **anything**, Paul urged the Philippians to talk to God about **everything**.

The main verb action in this verse is “let your requests be made known to God.” The other terms elaborate on the main action. Paul called for a habitual action. “Regularly let your requests be made known unto God.” Paul instructed them to talk to God every time anxiety occurs. Stop fretting about ANYTHING but always let your requests be made known to God in EVERYTHING. The noun form (ἀντημα) appears only two other times besides this one. The verb form of this term (αἰτέω), appears 71 times. It communicates the idea to ask, beg, call for, crave, desire, require. Paul encouraged them to let their requests, desires “be made known” to God

Obviously, God already knows what we desire but encourages us to humbly express those desires to Him. The first qualifier in this command deals with the scope of our asking. Paul applied this “asking” to **everything**. One could possibly limit the “everything” to everything related to our anxiety. One could also view the “everything” to include everything concerning our life.

The invitation to ask God concerning the desires of our heart appears often. Connect the invitation with the promise to hear and act and it seems overwhelming. We wonder why we don’t ask more. James clearly indicates that there are some things that don’t happen because we don’t ask. He also encourages us to ask in faith without doubting. Sometimes God answers prayer even when we doubt. Herod had imprisoned Peter with ill-intent. He had already executed John’s brother James and intended to execute Peter next. The scene is very interesting. Despite possible execution, Peter was sleeping chained between two soldiers. A small group of Jesus followers gathered at Mary’s house to pray for Peter. Despite their apparent unbelief, God powerfully sprung Peter from prison anyway. How do I know they didn’t expect God to answer their prayers?

When Peter came to the door and the servant girl reported it to the group...

They said to her, "You are out of your mind!" But she kept insisting that it was so. They kept saying, "It is his angel." But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened the door, they saw him and were amazed. Acts 12:15-16

*All things for which you pray and **ask**, believe that you have received them, and they will be granted you. Mark 11:24*

This practice of asking includes prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving.

“by prayer”

The noun and verb appear 120 times “prayer” and “pray”, “Prayer” is personal interaction with God to exchange our wishes (human intentions) for learning God's will through faith.

John reinforces this idea regarding our conversations with God.

If we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. 1 John 5:14

“by Supplication” δέησις

The noun and verb form appear 41 translated by pray, prayer, supplication, request.

“Supplication” represents an intense request by the petitioner who is deeply, personally involved. By definition, it is not something taken lightly (or merely "external"). This beseeching (focused petitioning) proceeds out of an "emphatic sense of personal need" (Abbott-Smith). Such "petitionary prayer" springs from deep, personal need (lack) and desire.

James apparently viewed the two terms synonymously.

*Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and **pray** for one another so that you may be healed. The effective **supplication** of a righteous man can accomplish much. James 5:16*

When feeling anxious we humbly ask God for help expressing our desires with a sense of deep personal need while submitting to His will.

We do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore, let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:15-16

The attitude with which we present our requests to God is clear.

“with thanksgiving”

Let your request be made known to God **WITH** thanksgiving. The noun and verb appear 54 times.

*Devote yourselves to "prayer", keeping alert in it with an attitude of **thanksgiving**; Colossians 4:2
in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 5:18*

Let your request be made known unto God in everything. Give thanks to God in everything.

The practice of praying about everything demonstrates humility. The practice of praying WITH thanksgiving demonstrates submission. By thanking God in everything I acknowledge that whatever I may be encountering in this life passes through the heart of a loving Father who is at work in us both to will and do His good pleasure which is ultimately the desire of my heart. Thanksgiving intricately tied to prayer keeps our prayers from focusing merely on escape from the difficulties in life or our personal agenda but God's.

Thanking God for hardship is an act of submission and trust.

Let those suffering according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing good. 1 Peter 4:19

Giving thanks in difficulty or trial seems counter intuitive and even impossible. We need supernatural help.

After calling the Ephesians to continually allow the influence of the Holy Spirit, Paul described the manifestation of such influence as speaking to one another in all kinds of music and a song in your heart to the Lord ending with...

*always giving thanks **for all things** in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; Eph 5:20*

In chapter 6 he urged them to pray always in the Spirit.

Paul revealed the Holy Spirit's involvement in prayer to the Roman believers.

The Spirit 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; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. Romans 8:26-27

There is so much to this subject and we have not even touched the principles revealed in the Old Testament.

While in prison Jeremiah received a word from the Lord.

Call to Me and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know. Jer 33:3

God's promised answer to persistent prayer 4:7

And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7

The key word here is "peace". The general sense refers to a state of calm, health, blessing, well-being, quietness, contentment, ease. The term relates to a broad range of categories.

Although it is hard to describe, most everyone recognizes it when it comes.

Environmentally it is the sense of calm after a storm or disaster.

Nationally it is the feeling that comes at the ending of a war.

Spiritually it is the sense that everything is alright between us and God and that God has everything under His control.

Relationally it is the feeling of connection with another person or group.

Psychologically it is the opposite of anxiety a feeling of well-being and calm.

Physically it is a sense of health and wellbeing.

Financially it is a contentment with what we have and elimination of debt.

Circumstantially it is the calm after the passing of a crisis of some sort.

This sense of wellbeing can be the result of a change in circumstance.

Debt paid - Storm passes - Biopsy came back negative - Relationship restored - Test over

It can be a sense of wellbeing despite our circumstances. Peace is not always the result of circumstantial change but perceptual change in the God who has promised to be with us THROUGH the circumstance. God does not always promise to prevent struggle but promises to enable us to go through it. Hebrews 11 is a prime example. The people in the first part all faced stressful and dangerous circumstances and God miraculously delivered them by their trust in God. The People in the last part also trusted God but were not delivered OUT of trouble but THROUGH the trouble.

Jesus passed on His peace to His disciples despite the tribulation they would encounter from the world. All but the Apostle John suffered great persecution and eventual execution.

Such peace comes from a perception change. It comes from the realization that God COULD bring deliverance FROM negative circumstances but if not, He promises to enable them to go THROUGH them. Their peace came from His teaching and the fact that He overcomes the world.

Paul revealed one means of the restoration of calm in chaos or peace in problems. Stop worrying about anything but talk to God about everything. The result?

And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7

Paul revealed three things about this peace, sense of calm or wellbeing.

- **It is from God through prayer**

Since the rebellion of Adam and Eve, chaos rules our world.

The core value of God's kingdom is blessing, well-being, order, peace.

God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. 1 Corinthians 14:33

The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Rom 14:17

At the birth of Jesus, the angels announced...

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased." Luke 2:14

Jesus is called the "Prince of Peace" and the "King of Peace".

God is the God of love and peace.

He Himself is our peace. Eph 2:14

He established peace. Eph 2:15

He preached peace. Eph 2:17

He fills with all joy and peace Rom 15:13

Paul prayed often that believers would experience grace and peace from God.

The fruit of the Spirit is peace. Gal 5:22

God can grant peace in every circumstance by His presence. 2 Thes 3:16

Only God can restore the peace sin has ruined.

You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD GOD is an everlasting rock. Isaiah 26:3-4

- **It defies human logic.**

Paul indicated that this peace would surpass our ability to understand it.

He used the term translated "superior" three times in his letter.

Consider others **superior** to yourself. 2:3

Knowing Christ was a **superior** value to anything else. 3:8

Here, God's peace **surpasses** human comprehension.

The word for comprehension generally is translated “mind” (21 times) or understanding (3 times). This peace or calmness in the face of anxiety or chaos makes no logical sense.

- **It stands guard over our heart and mind.**

When we let our requests be made known to God by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, God promises to send His peace to guard our hearts and minds. The term translated “guard” is obviously a military term. The Philippians would have been fully aware of the function of guards.

“heart” both cognitive and emotional functions were attributed to the heart.

“mind” focuses on intellect, thought, perception.

Paul may not have intended to draw a sharp distinction but indicate the fact that God’s peace would have a calming effect on our whole inner being. Peace guarding our thinking and feeling enables us to face whatever threatening things come our way. One of the keys to winning over worry involves renewed perspective.

Peter indicated that peace increases as our knowledge of God increases.

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. 2 Peter 1:2-3

The more uninformed, the more anxious we become. The more informed, the more peaceful we become.

Peace increases as our knowledge of God increases. Grateful prayer is the product of humble submission to God’s work in our lives. Such submission is equal to “walking in the Spirit” which produces the “fruit of the Spirit” which includes not only love and joy but PEACE. Such humble submission is the core of faith. As we saw earlier, we experience peace through trust in a loving God. Faith involves actively applying knowledge to life situation.

*"Do not let your heart be troubled (anxious); **believe** in God, believe also in Me. John 14:1*

*Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and **peace in believing**, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13*

If genuine trust in God produces peace, it would follow that absence of peace indicates an absence of trust.

God is our refuge and strength, A very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change and though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains quake at its swelling pride. Selah.

*"Cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth."
The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our stronghold. Selah. Psalm 46:1-3, 10-11*

Do we believe like Abraham?

With respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what God had promised, He was able also to perform. Therefore, IT WAS ALSO CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS. Romans 4:20-22

Worry is a matter of doubt in God’s involvement in our life.

Peace is a matter of faith in God’s involvement in our life.

If we truly trust Him we will talk to Him about what worries us.

If we truly trust His love for us, we will cast all our care on Him.

God makes it possible to experience peace in the major areas of life.

Peace with God

Peace within ourselves
Peace with people
Peace even in difficult times.