

# Joy in Overcoming Anxiety

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 29 November 2020

Preacher: Bill Story

[ 0 : 00 ] That is an amazingly earth-shattering idea.

Maybe we've sung that song too many times and for too many Christmases and gotten used to the idea, but God with us. Jesus changed everything.

So, how you doing? Good. Good. Glad you're here. I'm glad, you know, a couple here, a couple here, a couple here, a couple here.

That's good? Good. I did want to say, first of all, to our little log folks who are at home, or I look over here somewhere, I just want to encourage you to keep joining us.

Thank you. I would encourage you to join us, if you can, at the same morning time that we meet. I understand not everybody can do that, and we have the great flexibility with this live stream to view it later during the week, and that's great for folks who can't do it at the time.

[ 1 : 20 ] But I'm concerned about our unity, and though we can't physically be all together, I'm concerned that we be spiritually together.

And so I would just ask, just encourage you, not a law or anything, I would just encourage you to not lose that habit, not lose that sense of gathering together with us, even if you're at home.

Put it on live, and just wanted to say that. Just miss you all so much. I'm glad that we can keep gathering here, even though it's a smaller group.

It means a lot to see folks, and so I miss so many that can't gather with us. But we're glad that we can send this out.

The other thing I wanted to say is, is it Christmas season already? Because I'm still not ready for the time change, let alone Thanksgiving or...

[ 2 : 31 ] I mean, this year is odd. Everything seems off. My dear wife was not feeling well this whole week, and so we had Thanksgiving...

What did we do, Zach? O'Malley's. O'Malley's. After I traveled everywhere else. I mean, nothing was open. So we're not used to this, and so, you know, feel bad for us.

Oh, well, well. No, we're fine, but it's just been strange. Just everything's strange. But our God is faithful.

Our God is seated on His throne. He knows what He is doing. I don't, but He does. And I trust Him. So we come to Philippians chapter 4.

And I believe this is our next to last time in this book that we've been in for about three months.

[ 3 : 38 ] And so where do we go next? So next week, we finish up verses 6 through 9 today, and then I plan, Lord willing, to take the final section next week.

And so we'll be done with Philippians. So where do we go? What will we do? So as you know, our plan is to go back and forth between Old Testament and New Testament. We're going to go Old Testament. It's been a while since we've been in the Psalms.

So we're going to take a while in the Psalms. I've already picked out 10 that I really want to look at and I hope will be a blessing. Some of them for the depressed people.

Some of them not for the depressed people. A selection of Psalms that I hope will be a change of pace as well as good reflections on what we're going through today.

How we maintain a focus upon the Lord and trust Him through these times. So that's where we're going. After that, I do not know. Where do we come back in the New Testament?

[ 4 : 44 ] Things have been suggested like Revelation. Okay, that's a little scary. No, it's not scary. It would be different than you think. Or 2 Corinthians.

I don't know. Pray that God will lead us. Direct us where we need to go. That will be good for us. That will be encouraging for us and teach us and equip us.

It's all good, right? It's all good. But we try to switch it around a little bit. Okay. Philippians 4. Our next to last time as we look today.

We're going to look at verses 6 through 9. But I want to read from verse 1 through verse 9 before we begin today. So if you're able, please stand as I read from Philippians chapter 4.

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

[ 5 : 45 ] I entreat Iodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. 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.

Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone.

The Lord is at hand. Do not be anxious about anything. But in prayer, 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 understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

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's anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

[ 7 : 10 ] What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things. And the God of peace will be with you.

So reads his word. Let us pray. Father, we thank you for these tremendous words, these down-to-earth words, these words of promise and hope, these words of peace.

Father, we pray that you would not only help us to understand what they mean, but Father, help us to receive them into our hearts and apply them.

Help us to know what Paul wants us to practice, what he wants us to learn. We want to experience the peace of God and the God of peace.

So open our minds and especially pierce our hearts today that we might grab hold of these things. We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated.

[ 8 : 21 ] Worry. Worry, worry, worry, worry. Anybody do that? You guys don't do that. I do that. Everybody worries, right?

Everybody gets anxious. We have burdens and cares. Good night. I mean, the time we live in. How can we not? How can we not be anxious? There's nothing sinful about being anxious.

It's what we do with it. We feel anxious. We feel worried. We feel burdened. Jesus understood. Jesus felt those things.

In the garden, he felt troubled. He was anxious. It's what he did with it. Okay? So do not think that you are sinning simply because you worry.

You feel worried. You feel anxious. It's what we do with those feelings. So, yeah, I struggle with anxiety too.

[ 9 : 19 ] I had an incident. Maybe you remember this. A couple of months ago. It caused me some anxiety. I was working on my gazebo. Ah, yeah, now you remember.

Finishing the roof. And I was the last Sunday of my vacation time. I was getting ready to come to church that morning to hear Dr. Don and be with you folks.

And I was running. It was going to rain that day. It was the last Sunday in July. And I had put the roof on, but it didn't have shingles or tarp paper on there yet.

So it was going to rain, so I didn't want it to get all wet and have the wood wet. So I was quickly going to throw a tarp over. So I got to set the ladder up against the gazebo. And the eave of the gazebo is about eight feet high.

So I get up there, and I'm just going to throw the tarp over. And now it's about six feet higher is the peak of the roof. And it's sharp at the top.

[ 10 : 19 ] So you throw the tarp up, and it snags. So you got to really throw it over, right? So I do that. And the next thing I know, I'm falling.

Falling. Now, I'm convinced Delinda kicked the ladder out from under me. You said that on the recording. I know. But I, because the only other option is that I lost balance.

And I can't, I can't logically think that I lost balance. But it's possible. So just teasing, just teasing. Supreme athlete. She would never because she, yeah. Supreme athlete that I am, yes.

Thank you, at 61. So the next thing I remember is James is there. Rick is there.

It's like, what are you guys doing here? And where am I? And all that kind of thing. So anyway. So they rushed me off to the hospital. They take an MRI, or they take a CAT scan.

[ 11 : 21 ] Amazingly, I had not broken anything. Eight foot fall, had not broken anything. It was an extreme pain. For some reason. And I said, no, nothing.

You look fine. You look good. Go home. You know, take this pain med. And, you know, don't climb ladders. So a month later, I get a phone call from the doctor, my doctor's office, saying, yeah, we want you to see a neurologist.

We saw something on the CAT scan that looks like a brain tumor. So I'm like, brain tumor, brain tumor. Uh-oh, uh-oh, uh-oh. So, and so schedule with a neurologist, that'll be, oh, that's a couple weeks away or so.

Oh, okay. So I get to think about that all that time. So scared, worried, anxious, thinking, okay, God said you're done.

He has done that before to me, saying, I can pull your plug anytime I want, little boy. Okay. And so another reminder. Yeah, I'm in charge, not you. Didn't tell Delinda for a while because I didn't want her to be anxious about this.

[ 12 : 28 ] Maybe it's nothing. And so I went to the doctor. The doctor says, that's no big deal. It's kind of common. You've had this for a long time. We'll just keep an eye on it. No big deal. But I want you to get an MRI.

So an MRI two weeks later. Oh, yeah. So we're not worried about that one. But there's another thing going on in here, too. There's not a whole lot in your brain. But we see this blood thing going on.

And we think that's from the fall. I'm like, the fall? Oh, yeah. I had a fall. I don't remember hitting my head. Well, you hit your head because there's that.

And so that's, so I'll just take these meds and it'll clear up. No problem. We'll see you in a couple of months. So I've had a little reason to worry. I'm not concerned now.

But when I first heard what the nurse said and the doctor's like, she shouldn't have told you that. She should have just, you know. Anyway, said tumor, you know. Brain. And I'm like, okay. I'm over.

[ 13 : 28 ] I'm done. We hear the C word, you know. Oh, it's all done. Which the C word nowadays is COVID, right? So, or as we call it in our home, the COVID.

We were worried all week this week because Delinda was not feeling well. Oh, waiting on the test. And, oh, they're not calling. So, she got the negative thing, which I don't know if that means anything.

But, for the way testing goes. She's a little better. But she's not well today. So, she's watching, isn't she? So, I'm praying for her.

She's always watching. So, okay. So, worry. Worry, worry. That's what we're talking about. And anxiety. Yes, we have anxieties. Yes, we worry.

That's natural. And we have a lot to worry about today. Whether it's health, money, jobs. We worry about our children. Worry about our grandchildren.

[ 14 : 32 ] I don't have any, but I imagine if I did, we worried about them. Our futures, our jobs. You know, we watch the news. I don't know if there's a point to watching the news. Because it just sounds horrible.

Horrible. And I'm not convinced that we're supposed to know all that is on the news. We're meant to be society people who live in a small society.

Not worldwide conscious like we are today. We have too many things to worry about that we're not designed to be able to handle. That's just an aside.

But, so how do we deal with it? I mean, it's too much. How do we deal with it? How do we overcome it? Paul here in verses 6 through 9 gives us not only a remedy for anxiety.

But steps to not only overcome anxiety. But to retrain our thinking. To catch those thoughts earlier.

[ 15 : 37 ] Not only those thoughts, but other thoughts that lead to other things that cause us to fall. Cause us to fail. So it's a magnificent section.

I think I said that right. And there's enough here, obviously, for us to focus in just on verses 6 and 7 today. And not even look at 8 and 9.

But we're trying to take things in bigger chunks. And I do believe these two sections, verses 6 and 7, and verses 8 and 9, go together. They both mention peace as the process.

They both are talking about mind and thinking. And so I think they go together. That's how we're going to take them anyway. So, remember that our theme here in Philippians 4, verse 4, is rejoicing in the Lord.

Paul has brought up rejoicing. He's brought up joy over and over and over again in this little book. This little letter, rejoice in the Lord always. It's kind of his summary. Rejoice in the Lord always.

[ 16 : 54 ] That means, I think, all the time. In every situation. So, no matter what. Rejoice in the Lord. And we saw last week in verses 1 through 5 that he interweaves this thought of joy and relationships together.

He weaves them together. So, in verse 1, he talks about, you are my joy. My relationship with you, Philippians, brings me joy. You're my joy. And then he talks about verses 2 and 3, this problem between the two women who are not agreeing, who are in a conflict of some kind.

And so he's weaving joy, his joy with them, also with his concern for them to work out and resolve their conflict. And he tells them, in order to resolve your conflict, you need to agree in the Lord.

Find or refocus on your essential agreements in the Lord. I know you agree about those things. You agree on the majors. You agree about who the Lord is.

You agree about the gospel. Focus on those things. What you disagree on are minor things. Focus on your majors. And that will put your disagreement into perspective.

[ 18 : 10 ] So that's step one. And then verse 4 and 5, he talks about rejoicing in the Lord. Here he brings joy back into it. Rejoicing in the Lord. And then look at verse 5.

It's about let your reasonableness be known to everyone. Back to relationships again. So joy, relationship, joy, relationship. So maintain your joy in your relationships by being gentle with one another.

Let your reasonableness, let your gentleness be known. So find what you agree about in the Lord. That's where you start in resolving conflicts. And then secondly, your behavior toward one another.

Let your reasonableness be known. Let that fruit of the Spirit come out of you. Focus there. So we can have disagreements, yes.

But let's be reasonable and gentle. And focus on what really matters. And then we can kind of begin to sit down and understand what's going on.

[ 19 : 11 ] And sometimes we need a mediator, verse 3. So we need somebody to come in and help us focus. Because we can't do that. We're too in it. And so we need someone to come and help us listen to each other.

Really listen. And I don't think that's happening today. I said that last week. I think with all the disagreements going on today, everybody's talking and nobody's listening. You need to listen.

Really hear. Let people speak. Understand where that's coming from before we decide they're wrong or I disagree. Let's understand.

Get it. Okay. Okay. I see. Okay. That's what he's asking us to do. That's so key in resolving relationships in any relationship, but especially believers.

We have so much to agree about. So little that really doesn't matter as much. We can all live in heaven together.

[ 20 : 14 ] Right? We're going to agree about everything by then, right? Well, sin won't be there. So, yeah. We'll be fine.

So, now in verses 6 through 9, he turns the focus to the mind, to thinking. So we see it in verse 6, talking about anxiousness, what we think about, what we worry about.

He talks about verse 7, about how the peace of God will guard your hearts and your minds. So again, on the mind. Then verse 8, what we think about. He gives a list.

He gives a list. And at the end of verse 8, he says, think about these things. So he's now focusing on our thoughts, our thinking, our mind. So, we've been looking at overcoming conflicts with joy in verses 1 through 5.

Now in verses 6 through 9, joy now in the Lord leads us to peace. How we overcome anxiety with peace. How we overcome anxiety with peace. And notice in verse 7, he talks about the promise of peace.

[ 21 : 21 ] And then again at the end of verse 9, he talks about the promise of the God of peace. So in the first one, he's talking about the peace of God will guard your hearts and minds. And then in verse 9, how the God of peace.

So two different kinds of promises of peace. The peace of God and then the God of peace. So how we think relates to our peace. So how do we turn our worries and our burdens, our natural anxieties, into peace and joy?

How do we maintain our peace? Because as we worry about things, that robs our joy so easily. It robs our peace. So how do we maintain joy in the Lord always and find peace through these anxious times?

So I think he gives us two practices or two steps. I'm not into steps. You know, seven steps to happiness from this passage. But I actually, if there are steps, I think he comes close to steps here.

So step one, verses 6 and 7, turn your cares to prayers. Replace anxiety with prayer of faith.

[ 22 : 38 ] And then verses 8 and 9, step two, then take it another step to retrain your thinking. To feed your mind on worthy things.

And the result of both steps is God's peace. Either God's peace coming or God himself, the God of peace coming.

But I'll call them practices. I'm weary, leery of calling things steps. Because applying the scriptures, as I've learned, is a process.

It's not a quick fix thing. It's not a how-to manual. It's not a how-to in the sense we think today. But a how to live, how to resolve, how to learn to practice living our faith.

And rejoicing in the Lord always. So first of all, practice number one. Turn your cares to prayers. Now, the way I had it, that's actually a Spurgeon quote.

[ 23 : 43 ] Spurgeon had a nice, simple way of putting it. And I had a longer way of putting it. So I originally said, practice number one is, replace your anxiety with prayers of faith.

No, that's okay. And then I read Spurgeon's. Turn your cares to prayers. Ah, that's more memorable. That's easier to remember. Spurgeon's so smart, that guy. Okay, so I just want to let you know, I'm copying the master, or one of the masters.

Turn your prayers to cares. I like that. That's nice and simple. Turn your cares to prayers. Now, I want you to see three things. I want you to see the process. First of all, this is a process.

This is not a one-stop thing. It's in the present tense. It means, take your cares, take your anxiety, stop, learn to stop worrying and start praying.

Learn to transfer that, to replace it. He's not just saying, don't worry. I always think of that song from time ago, Don't Worry, Be Happy.

[ 24 : 46 ] I like that song. Don't worry, be happy. It's like, yeah, cool, okay, I'll just do that. I've seen a lot of people doing that today. Stop worrying by start praying.

So it gives us something to change the act with, to replace it with. It's not just simply stop worrying. How do we do that? Well, by replacing it. Scripture talks a lot about casting your burdens upon the Lord, pouring out your heart before Him.

That's what Jesus did in Gethsemane. Jesus came, He's facing the cross, He's overwhelmed, and He prays to the Father, right?

He's full of anxiety, He's full of, as the text says, He's troubled in His spirit. His soul is disturbed, and He comes and He prays. Father, let this cup pass.

Yeah, right? So He turns that anxiety into prayer. And He does it that night three times, so it's not a quick fix. And if for Him it takes a process, certainly it takes a process for us, and we shouldn't beat ourselves up for that.

[ 26 : 02 ] It just takes time. It's learning a new thing. We've got a natural habit of worrying and being anxious. Over however many years we've learned to do that, it takes a while to kind of learn to rethink.

So He mentions how we do that. He says, verse 6, Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything. So notice the contrast.

Not only change what you do, but how many times you do it. So in whatever you tend to worry about, in every one of those things, turn it to prayer.

In everything. By prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. So He mentions different kinds of prayer. He says by prayer, which is simply the more general term for talking with God.

Supplication. What's supplication? Well, you could hear the word in it, supply. I'm asking for supply. I'm asking for God to provide for my needs. Supplication. So I'm praying for my needs.

[ 27 : 05 ] And then requests is kind of like amping it up. Another one. My urgent needs. Right now I need this. Yeah, I have regular needs. And then there's an urgent need. So He brings that in.

So we're bringing all those things to the Lord. We've heard from Spurgeon today. I want you to hear him again. He's really quite marvelous on this section. And He just kind of puts it on the low shelf for us.

I mean, I got it. You know, reading. He says, cares or burdens are manifold. Therefore, let your prayers be as manifold. Turn into a prayer everything that is a care.

Let your cares be the raw material of your prayers. And as the alchemists hoped to turn dross into gold, so do you, by a holy alchemy, actually turn what naturally would have been a care into a spiritual treasure in the form of a prayer.

Baptize every anxiety into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. And so make it a blessing. Only Spurgeon can say it like that.

[ 28 : 16 ] Baptize every anxiety. Go then to your God with all your cares. If you have a large family, a slender income. I like the way he says that.

And much ado to make ends meet. How many jobs do you have? And to provide things honest in the sight of all men.

You have so many excuses for knocking on God's door. So many more reasons for being often found at the throne of grace.

I ask you, turn them to good account. I feel free to call upon a friend when I really have some business to do with him. And you may be bold to call upon God when necessities press upon you.

Instead of caring for anything with anxious care, turn it once into a reason for renewed prayerfulness. Say what you want, for this is true prayer.

[ 29 : 18 ] Get alone. Tell the Lord what you want. Pour out your heart before him. Do not imagine that God wants any fine language. No. You need not run upstairs for your prayer book.

Pray for what you want. Just as if you were telling your mother or your dearest friend what your need is. Go to God in that fashion.

That is real prayer. That is the kind of prayer that will drive your care away. I want you to notice.

Take another look at this verse. So do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known unto God. There's two words there that are absolutely crucial in this process.

What is it? Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving. Thanksgiving. He says, along with Thanksgiving. Now think about that. How do you give thanks when you are anxious?

[ 30 : 26 ] When you are burdened? When you are overwhelmed with worry? How do you give thanks for that? How can you be grateful when your mind is absorbed with, I don't know how I'm going to do this?

I believe this is the key. This is the secret, but it's not a secret. See, to give thanks in the midst of anxiety takes faith.

To trust that God will provide. To trust that God will take this anxiety away and bring me his peace. To be grateful in the time of need.

I dare say, Thanksgiving for what? For the trial. Can I give thanks for that which is making me anxious? Well, why would I do that?

Well, I would do that because I believe God intends this trial for good. Because he promises that. So I can say, thank you for this trial.

[ 31 : 36 ] I don't like the trial. I'm not saying thank you because I love it. But I thank you because I know you know what you're doing. I know this will be good. I know you will bring about good for this.

So I can thank him. I can thank him because he's sovereign. Because he's present. Though I don't feel him present. I can thank him that he is present. Because he promises he will always be with us.

I can acknowledge my dependence. I can be grateful for all the things. It can be a time of, okay, remember what's going on good.

What has God done in the past? What has God done for me? Especially as a believer, I have a long list to thank him for. If I am led to do that.

My goodness, he's saved me. That matters more than anything. He's adopted me. He's forgiven me. He's given me the Holy Spirit. He's given me a hope and a future. He hasn't promised a rose garden in this life.

[ 32 : 37 ] Because I follow his son. And his son did not have a rose garden. Well, yeah. Crown of thorns. So this is the key, I think.

Because then what does he promise in verse 7? Do this. Do not be anxious. But in everything, by prayer, supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And what?

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds. In Christ Jesus. What does that mean? It sounds really good. The peace of God.

It's the peace from God, first of all. Not the peace with God. We already have that as believers. We're always at peace with God. Because Christ has taken care of the hostility between us and God.

He's removed the law. He's removed our debt. He's removed our sins. We have peace with him. But now he's talking about the peace of God. The peace that comes from God. The peace with God, we don't necessarily feel that.

[ 33 : 39 ] We believe that. We know that's true. We don't always feel that. Here he's talking about something we experience. The peace of God will do what?

Will guard your hearts and your minds. Oh. And what kind of peace? Well, it's the peace that, how should I describe it, Paul said? It surpasses understanding.



In other words, it will not make sense in the time you experience it. Because you're in a time of anxiety. You're in a time of worry. You're in a time of trouble. And yet, as you pour and cast this onto the Lord, and you're able to genuinely do that, not simply tick off, okay, I prayed about it.

I said thank you for this and this. You know, when you genuinely am grateful for what he has given you. And you're able to do that by faith. His peace will come.

He will experience something that does not make sense normally, naturally. He will experience a peace. It will guard your hearts and your minds. So this guard, the word guard, he uses actually a military term that talks about a garrison that surrounds a city.

[ 34 : 53 ] So in other words, he will guard, he will surround your heart, and he will surround your mind with a guard. It doesn't make any sense, but your heart.

Now, what's he mean by heart and mind? What's the heart? Well, the heart, Scripture tells us, is about your thoughts and intention. Now, we think of heart differently in our culture.

But biblically, the heart was the place of particularly thoughts, thinking. Not necessarily organized thinking, but thoughts. That's like where our anxious thoughts are. They're just all over.

What am I thinking? And my intention, so my will. My thoughts and intention. And then my mind, well, what is that? Remember, Jesus added in, love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.

Jesus added that to the Old Testament. Remember, it was just heart, soul, and strength. And Jesus taught it as heart, soul, and mind. Because he wanted to bring in this Greek idea.

[ 35 : 55 ] I almost said geek idea. A Greek idea of mind being the organized thought, the planning. So whereas heart is thoughts, kind of disorganized thoughts, straight thoughts, the mind is where the spiritual battle happens.

The mind is the planning center, the deliberate, organized thinking. So when I'm anxious, that's where I go.

Now, my heart's going all over the place. My mind is starting to plan, okay, this is how I'm going to resolve this. And then I get more worried because, you know, when I make plans how to handle something, it usually goes not as well as I want it.

But so he says, so both your heart, where your heart's all over, and then your mind, your planning, and your plotting, he's going to guard that too.

Wow. Have you experienced this? Have you experienced this peace? I mean, it's not explainable, is it? It's beyond comprehension.

[ 36 : 59 ] It's like, whoa. Now, remember, in Gethsemane, Jesus had to pray three times. So he got that, went to check on his disciples, got disturbed again, prayed again, right?

He did it three times. So it's not a permanent thing, see? I wish it was. I wish I could promise you that. But the Lord wants us constantly dependent, doesn't he?

And that's how life is. But we can turn our cares to prayers. And then notice, I want you to see the basis of the promise. He says, the peace of God, which surpasses understanding, will guard your hearts and minds where?

Is that a promise to anybody? What does it say? End of verse seven. In Christ Jesus. Well, guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

In other words, this is for believers. This is a promise for believers. This incomparable, incomprehensible peace comes to those who are in Christ Jesus.

[ 38 : 18 ] Those who already have peace with God. Can now experience peace from God. How do we have that peace with God?

Remember, Ephesians 2 talks about how Christ made peace for us. How he brought us and reconciled us to God by going to the cross. He paid in blood for our hostility against God.

He broke down the wall of the barrier. He broke down the wall of the barrier. He broke down the... He canceled out the hostility, which he defined as the law.

In other words, he fulfilled the law for us. And paid the price for our sins. And by this cross made peace. See, I like how the cross goes this way.

For all. And then he comes down to earth and yet reconciles us with heaven and makes peace. So we have peace with God.

[ 39 : 25 ] That is done by Christ. And we trust in that. Now we can experience peace from God, even in the middle of difficulty. Difficulty. Now Jesus taught us about handling anxiety too.

Back in Matthew 6, he said it's a matter of faith. This faith element is important. By the way, did you notice the outline? I wanted you to notice that because I got a kick out of this.

I do alliteration. So it's process, then faith, then promise. So faith isn't misspelled. It's just rearranged so that it alliterates with process, and promises.

So just so you know, that is not a misspelling. That is the word faith there. So Jesus taught us about handling anxiety as a matter of faith. Remember what he said? Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on.

Is not life more than food? And the body more than clothing? He gives some examples. Look at the birds of the air. They neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them.

[ 40 : 41 ] Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to the span of his life? And why are you anxious about clothing?

Another example. Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was never arrayed like one of these.

But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, what?

O you of little faith. What's little faith, by the way? Most people think it's about the size of faith. Little faith's not about the size of faith.

If you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can move a mountain, right? So it's not about the size of your faith. The faith preachers that talk about that are totally off.

[ 41 : 43 ] It's not about the size of your faith. It's about the length of your faith. It should say short faith. O you of short faith. Peter did what?

And was said, remember he walked on water. And then he began to see the wind and the waves and began to sink. And Jesus said, O you of little faith, short faith.

So please understand that when he says little faith, he means short. It didn't last very long. You had faith to step out of the boat. That's pretty good faith.

But it was short. It's not about the size. You don't have to have a whole lot. We don't have to stir up a lot of faith. We just need to keep faith. So when Jesus prayed for Peter, remember Satan demands to sift you like wheat, but I prayed for you that your faith will not fail.

That you fall and your faith's still intact. Okay? So Jesus says, you of little faith.

[ 43 : 02 ] So I trust, oh yeah, I trust that God will provide for my needs for right now and then an hour later, maybe not.

So, so, therefore do not be anxious saying what shall we eat or what shall we drink or what shall we wear for the Gentiles seek after all these things and your heavenly father knows.

Notice that Jesus keeps calling God our father and he talks about your. Your heavenly father feeds the birds. Your heavenly father clothes the grass. Your heavenly father knows that you need all these things.

He knows. He takes care of the birds. He takes care of the grass. He's going to take care of you because you're worth more. He cares about you even more.

But seek first these things or seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added to you. So, why not worry? Because your father knows your needs.

[ 44 : 06 ] He cares for the birds. Just look, look at the birds. Have you ever done some bird watching? Jesus was into bird watching. Look at the birds. Look at how they thrive.

They don't go to a job. God takes care of it. Well, I guess they have a job, right? They're looking for the worm. But God provides for them. Look at the lilies of the field. In Colorado, we have a wonderful fall time where we see and springtime where we see some incredible colors.

I've never seen colors like this when I grew up in California. I love being here. I love seeing the colors. I love color. And it's just stunning sometimes. Just stunning.

If you want to hear nature, go to Illinois and hear the thunder there. It's really, for some reason, it's closer. It's louder. I like it here.

Okay. So, so if we seek his kingdom and his righteousness, if we seek him first, he'll take care of our needs. Turn your cares to prayers.

[ 45 : 14 ] But then he goes on. He's still going to talk about what we think about, our mind. So, not only turn your cares to prayers, but now, verse 8, he's going to give us a list of things to think about, he says.

And, and then he's going to say at the end of verse 9, also, not only think about, but practice these things. So he gives us a second practice. And let me summarize it this way. Feed your mind with matters worthy of praise.

So where do our, where does our anxiety come from? It comes from things we think about. It comes from our heart's thoughts. It comes from our mind thoughts. So, can I cut off anxiety, not only anxiety, but other issues that lead me to sin, can I cut those off by retraining my thinking?

By retraining my mind? Because the spiritual battle lies with the mind. The mind. Remember when we looked at loving God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, all your strength.

Where do we start? Because our soul, right, our soul is where we're affected and that's our feelings and that's, you know, why are you disturbed on my soul?

[ 46 : 28 ] My soul gets disturbed easily. So I can't start with my soul. I gotta talk to my soul. I've gotta get control. I can't start with my heart either. We would think, oh, start with your heart because your heart, well, yeah, but your heart is deceptive.

We deceive ourselves. Right? Our heart gets led astray. So we start with our mind. That's why, that's why Paul in Romans 12 talks about be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

That's where it starts. Ephesians 4, that's where Paul talks about when we put off the old and we put on the new, we renew the spirit of our minds. our minds is where the battle is.

The Old Testament talks about as a man thinks, so he is. So our thinking, how we think.

So our mind is able then to correct our heart and to get a handle on my soul. that's what's our mind.

[ 47 : 37 ] So feed our mind with matters worthy of praise. There's an old term that computer guys used to talk about. G-I-G-O. Anybody remember that?

Garbage in, garbage out. Whatever you put in, so what you get out of your computer is what you put into it. Right? So same thing with the mind. What you put into your mind, that's what you're going to get out of it.

So what are you feeding? Right? The men's group sometimes would talk about which dog are you feeding? You know, we've got a spiritual battle going on, right? So which dog are you feeding? Which one's healthier?

Which one's stronger? Which one gets the, you know? So feed your mind with matters worthy of praise. If we want to walk more worthy of the Lord, we start with our mind, which will then feed to our heart and eventually affect our soul.

So he gives us, first of all, a list. Paul likes lists. He likes to list lots of things. And it's not comprehensive, I don't think.

[ 48 : 42 ] I think he's just kind of giving us a summary list that gives us an idea of what he's talking about. He lists six virtues. True, honorable, just, pure, lovely, and commendable.

And then sets apart two other things that maybe are summaries of those things that, in other words, if there's anything of excellence, if there's anything praiseworthy. Okay?

So six virtues that are summarized with what's excellent, what's praiseworthy. So that's why I say feed your mind with things worthy of praise. That kind of summarizes maybe what he's talking about here.

So dwell on things that are true, not false. Honorable, not dishonorable. Right, not, not unrighteous or unjust or unfair.

Pure versus impure. Lovely versus ugly. Reputable versus despicable.

[ 49 : 41 ] So, he gives us Liz. So it causes us to ask, then what do I dwell on? What fills my mind? And here's a gauge to look at what I dwell on, what I occupy my mind with, is it worthy?

So I think that's where we start. What do we think on? So when I'm driving to work or driving home to work, from work, unless I'm thinking about work, that's different, but when I have time to think, what do I think about?

What do I set my mind on? What comes to my mind? And do I analyze that? Do I evaluate it? So here's a gauge. So is it true? Okay, maybe it's true. Is it honorable?

That might be different. Is it right? Just? Fair? Is it commendable? Is it lovely? Oh. So it gives me a gauge to kind of evaluate my own thinking.

But it goes beyond that. Because now he talks about logic. The word we have at the end of verse 8 is think about it. But it's actually, when I saw the Greek word, I thought, oh, that's not the word I expected.

[ 50 : 54 ] It's the Greek word logidzomai. We hear our word logic in it. Logidzomai. Logic.

It's a word about thinking about things logically to reason through, to calculate. It's a word Paul uses back in Romans when he's talking about, when he's kind of if-then-ing and kind of reasoning through what we have.

It's unexpected here. He has other Greek words he could use if he just wanted to say think about it. He uses the words for mind and thinking a lot in Scripture or in Philippians where he talked, actually, he talked in verse 2 to the two women.

Think the same. Agree. Think about the same things. Think the same things. Could have just used that word. But he used the word logic. Why?

Think about logic. Reason through. Evaluate your thoughts with this. Well, so in other words, take your thoughts and begin to analyze them. Begin to say, okay, is that true?

[ 52 : 01 ] Is it honorable? Et cetera. Is that thought what I'm dwelling on? What is that? How am I thinking about that? Why am I thinking about that?

And that may be a thought that leads me to anxiety or fear. Might also be a thought that leads me to lust.

Oh. Maybe a thought that leads me to anger. See, in other words, these thoughts can eventually become desires that become sin.

Right? James talks about the bait that the evil one puts out there and then it's our own desires that grab hold of the bait and then conceive and become sin.

So, it's not the desire itself. It's not the anxiety itself. It's what I do with it. Okay? So, he's talking about finding the trigger of that sin earlier. So, if you can trace and analyze your thoughts.

[ 53 : 02 ] I learned this about lust. It's kind of like, I didn't intend to do that and then there it is. How did it get there? And I began to think about, okay, wait a minute, what was I thinking on that day?

What happened earlier? Or even the night before, was I watching something that, oh, now I remember that image stuck. So, I learned to evaluate, okay, reason through what happened.

So, I have to fail in order to find out. So, that's profitable. I turned my failure into a learning experience. I think God intends for us to do that.

He intended Peter to fail, to figure out, okay, I'm not as loyal to Jesus as I thought I was. Okay? So, so, whether it's anxiety that I struggle with, which we all do, anger, or lust, or, gossip, whatever it is, there's thoughts involved.

Wrangle them in. And it's a process. It's a process. He talks about practice these things. What you've learned from me, verse 9, what you've learned and received and heard and seen in me.

[ 54 : 18 ] What is that? Well, it's the same things that he's asking you to think about. These things I want you to think about, which are the same things that you've seen and heard and found in me, and which are the same things I want you to practice.

The same kind of categories of stuff. So, feed your mind. Well, how do I, if I have not learned to do that before, and if I've had a lifetime of thinking about other things that are not healthy, I get it.

Okay, I see. Yeah, I've learned to think, or I've learned to watch things, or I've learned to read things, or I've learned to see things that probably aren't healthy for my thought life. So, how do I retrain that?

How do I change that? Where do I find good thoughts? I never learned of that. I didn't grow up with that. I didn't see that with my friends. I don't see that at work. So, where do I learn that?

Well, we have something called the Word that's full of things that are true, and honorable, and right, pure, lovely, commendable. We can focus on Christ, who is, I'm the way, I'm the truth, and He's lovely, and He's commendable.

[ 55 : 35 ] So, we have some places we can go. I would especially recommend G.I.G.O. Good in, good in, good in, good in, good in, feed it.

Understand, you have a thought life that's like a glass of cloudy chocolate, not chocolate, let's call it oil. Butterscotch, I don't know, something you don't, anyway, you want to get rid of it.

So, how do I get rid of it? Well, I can't just dump it out because it's all in there. I can't just, you know, I can't just take the top off my head and empty it out, right, like in the cartoons. So, how do I do that? So, I'm going to start putting other things in there to dilute it.

I get a and eventually it starts to get a little clear. See? It's not as full of what we had.

And then why is this important? Notice, again, he has a promise. In verse nine, practice these things and the God of peace will be with you.

[ 56 : 45 ] The God of peace will be, that's different than verse seven. There was the peace of God, the gift of peace of God that comes to you and you experience. Here, it's the God of peace.

It's switched around. It's not the peace of God, it's the God of peace. So, it's not just peace, in other words, that you get. It's God. And what does he mean? It's not just peace, it's God, the God of peace will accompany!

You. This word with, with you, means he God alongside you. It's not just the presence of God, because we always have the presence of God.

Okay? Jesus said, I will never leave you or forsake you. I will be with you always. I'm giving you the Holy Spirit. He will be in you. He'll be with you. He'll be on you. He'll be around you.

He will be with you forever. So, we misunderstand verses like Matthew 18 where it says, where two or three gather together, there I am amidst them.

[ 57 : 49 ] He's not promising presence there, because he's always with us. I don't have to be with two or three other believers to know that God is with me. That text is talking about something else, where two or three of you are gathered together and you're making a decision about discipline in the church.

I'm behind you. Got it? That kind of presence. Here it's like that. It's not just that he's with you. He's with me in a special way. I am behind you.

Joshua 1 starts out, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you, Joshua. What did he mean? Well, what was Joshua's job?

What did God call Joshua to do? He's taken over for Moses. Moses brought him to the law, brought him to the well, no, he didn't bring him to the promised land, did he? Came up short.

Joshua, it's your job to take him into the promised land. It's your job to clean it up. It's your job to get everybody focused where I fulfill! trusting in me and going by my rules.

[ 59 : 07 ] Not by my rules, but what I tell you to do. So with you, as you think on these things, as you learn to practice these things, God of peace is with you.

He is there to bless you, to sustain you, to deliver you from those other thoughts, to help you learn to process new thoughts.

Why is he with you? Because that's what he wants you to become. And please know, this is not a figured it out today, I'm good, it's a process, isn't it?

We have learned to think a certain way, and man, it's really hard to change the way of thinking. But God says, I'm with you. As you learn to do this, as you learn to do this, I'm with you.

I'm going to bring success to you. I'm going to help you. And there's going to be times where you're going to say, are you helping me? Because it doesn't feel...

[ 60 : 19 ] Okay, yeah, I'm not, all right. I know you are, it's just, my goal isn't the same as yours, got it? Okay. Because there's certain things I really want him to work on in my life and he's working on this over here.

He knows what he's doing. I know what would be easier for me. He doesn't seem to go with that. So, okay, so how do you think about these things logically?

He says, think on these things. What does he mean by thinking logically? How do I reason through truth and rightness and all that? Well, I want to give you an example from Romans it.

He takes the word right. What is right? What is righteous? What is just? And he begins to reason through it because he uses the same word in Romans 6. Consider, think about with reason, logically think through.

So, listen to how he does this. He's going to reason it out. He's going to talk about if and then. He's going to think about what has God done and how does that affect me? How then should I live?

[ 61 : 24 ] In other words, if God has done this, then this is true and this is how I live. Okay? So, here's how he does it. Romans 6. 11. So, you also must consider, there's our word, consider, logically think through yourselves dead to sin and alive to God.

That's something you reason out. Okay? You think that through. Grasp this truth. dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

So, he's talking about in a certain sphere in Christ Jesus. This is true. Therefore, let not sin reign in your mortal body. Okay, just don't sin, right?

Is that what he said? No? Watch how he says it. Do not let it reign. You have an option. As a believer, you have a new ability to say no.

To not let it reign. To make you obey its passions. Do not present your members to sin as members of unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life and your members to God as instruments for righteousness.

[ 62 : 44 ] There's that right word. Why? So, think through this. For sin will have no dominion over you. How is that true?

Since you are not under law but under grace. It's not about law, not about following rules. Well, what then? Oh, if God forgives all our sin and we're under grace, then are we to just sin because we're not under law but under grace?

By no means. That's the wrong way to think about it. Do you not know, again, reasoning,! Think this, do you not one to whom you obey, either to sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to rightness, righteousness.

But thanks be to God that you who once were slaves of sin have become obedient, process, have become obedient from the heart, from the heart, internal, to the standard of teaching to which you were committed.

Not to a set of rules, but to a standard of teaching, to truths that Jesus taught, to which you were committed, and having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.

[ 64 : 10 ] See, Paul is logically thinking through how we are different. Why are Christians different? Why do we think different? Because God has changed us.

Something truly has happened to the believer. He's been changed. He was dead and now he's alive. Something about him was dead and now is alive.

He's been raised with Christ, not physically, but spiritually he has. He's got a new life. He's been born again. He has something new. He's been transformed with a new ability.

He's been given a new heart. A new desire. A new affection. Things he did not have before. Now he's a hunger for God where once he had a hunger for sin.

Not that the sin has been removed yet. So this new ability is to practice, to begin offering himself to God for righteousness and to begin to say, no, I will not let sin reign.

[ 65 : 15 ] Because I begin to feed my mind with what is worthy. And when that temptation comes, I turn my cares to prayers. Having been set free from sin, I begin to practice righteousness.

I learn to start doing that. I obey from the heart. It's not about checking off the rules. I'm obeying from the heart. I want to please him.

And how do I do that? It's the same way that I got saved. I don't do it by me changing me. I do it by, okay, you change me. I trust you to change.

Give me the strength to begin to practice this. Lord, show me. Lord, empower me. I can't do it.

So he's thinking logically, if I'm set free, why would I still obey sin in its passions? If I'm free, why would I still be a slave of sin?

[ 66 : 22 ] Just thinking. That doesn't make sense. Why would I do that? Now, I know why I do it because I, you know, I'm feeding the other dog. I've still got the other garbage in.

Or I'm not thinking at all. But I want to learn to undo that. I want to learn to begin to walk with him. I want to learn to be a little bit more right, in the right.

So, overcome anxiety with peace by turning your cares to prayers and feeding your mind with worthy things. Let your joy in the Lord lead to peace, the peace of God.

Let us pray. Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for these really transforming thoughts. There's a lot for us to grab onto here, Lord.

So, help each of us sift through what we need for today. Bring back whatever we need from this text to encourage us this week.

[ 67 : 37 ] Help us, Lord, to turn our cares to prayers. prayers. It makes sense when we're sitting here, but in the middle of Monday, help us remember that.

And, Lord, help us take steps to begin to practice or to continue to practice how we think. That, Lord, we might experience you accompanying us in our walk.

This we pray in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.