

How do we find the Peace of God in the middle of crisis?

Philippians 4:1-9

March 22, 2020

Philippians 4 Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!

² I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³ Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. ¹

Please take some time to read the passage personally or with family members and consider how God uses this passage to speak into your life and how He might speak through you into the lives of others. The questions marked with crosses are ones I hope you will think on and provide some answers for. I hope to ask for some input for any who will be present on Sunday.

¹ *The New International Version*. (2011): Zondervan.

How do you define Peace?

- ✝ What has been your most peaceful moment in life?
- ✝ What made it that way?
- ✝ What did it change in your life?
- ✝ How do you find or make peace?

1. Practical Peace

Philippians 4:1-3

...my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life. Verse 3

A. Stand Firm

Philippians 4:1

Paul really cares for the people he serves

He is writing a letter because he is 'socially distant'

- ✝ Check Philippians 1:3-11; 1:24-26; 2:28 for other examples of his genuine love and concern for the people in the Philippian church.
- ✝ List some of the ways you demonstrate genuine love and concern people you are connected with in church and ministry.
- ✝ How can you show love for your church family in some very active ways as we hunker down in the present situation?

- ✝ Check some of the other encouragements in Philippians that Paul may be referring to: Philippians 1:27, 28; 2:5; 3:14-16; 3:1; 3:17

B. Agreement in the Lord

Philippians 4:2

Conflicts happen

Our eyes should look to Jesus rather than our selves

- ✝ How can a person find ways to be 'more agreeable' with out compromising important values?

C. Assistance not distance needed

Philippians 4:3

Paul always had folks around him helping him

✚ How in a social distancing climate can you 'contend for the cause of the gospel'?

D. Book of Life

Philippians 4:3

What is this book?

In the New Testament the book of life is the list of believers, (e.g. Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5; 22:19). At the last judgment everyone not listed in the book of life is consigned to the fiery lake (Revelation 20:12, 15); this is the Lamb's Book of Life (Revelation 13:8; 21:27), in which the names of the elect (chosen and pre-known by God) have been inscribed 'from the foundation of the world' (17:8). The same idea is expressed in Luke 10:20, 'your names are written in heaven'; Acts 13:48, 'as many as were ordained (i.e. inscribed) to eternal life believed'.²

✚ How do you know that you are on the 'list'?

2. Prayerful Peace

Philippians 4:4-7

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Verse 7

A. The Lord is Near

Philippians 4:4, 5

Faith in Jesus makes rejoicing possible

Jesus is never 'socially distant'

Both in his presence and future appearing

B. Present your Requests to God

Philippians 4:6

Trust and confidence in God

✚ Read Romans 8:28-39. Write down how this is a specific encouragement to you

Biblical Prayers often start with God (many Psalms are like this)
Then move to current issues

✚ What are your biggest requests?

²Adapted by PT from: *New Bible Dictionary*; InterVarsity Press, 1996, c1982, c1962, S. 145.

C. Protected by God's Peace

Philippians 4:7

Protection in your thinking

Not a deliverance from trouble but always through it

- ✚ Where do you most need God's peace in your life right now?

3. Practicing Peace

Philippians 4:8, 9

...put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. Verse 9

A. Careful Thinking

Philippians 4:8

Spending more time on this list than media coverage

- ✚ What changes might you need to engage in to align yourself more closely with God's work in your life?
- ✚ How could you focus on these positives from verse 8?
- ✚ Staying informed and being wise are important. Being 'over-informed' can be harmful to our hearts, souls and minds. How can you ensure you maintain a healthy diet of media consumption?

B. Careful Copying

Philippians 4:9

Paul as Role Model

Seeing admirable qualities in others

Listening to the wisdom of Godly people around us

- ✚ Identify a few people you know that have spiritual or character qualities that seem both Godly and admirable. How can they encourage you?

C. God's Peace

Philippians 4:9

What is excluded?

What is included?

Looking for and finding God's Peace

- Based in a growing experience of Faith in God
- Personal Interactions with Godly people (mentors)
- Prayer & Faith
- Practicing the discipline to train our thoughts and actions