

Prayer: Developing a Lifestyle of Communion with God

Intro

- The church has become crippled by anxiety.
- Very few Christians are living a victorious life in the fullness of God. Few Christians are walking in the unshakable peace that Jesus purchased.
- We've become ineffective in the advancement of God's kingdom on the earth because we are riddled with worry and anxiety.
- Hallelujah! We have been given everything we need to destroy the stronghold of anxiety and be productive for God on the earth today!

The Promise

- “And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:7
- “peace” - Greek (eirene) = to join with God, quietness, rest, to set at one again
- “guard” - Greek (phroureho) = to be a watcher, to mount a guard as a sentinel, to hem in, to protect with a garrison
- The heart is the central place of my being, out of which everything else flows.
- The mind is my intellect and the source of my thinking which dictates my actions.
- This amazing promise states that through the power of Christ, the very peace of God will actively guard and protect the deepest parts of my heart and the way I understand and think.
- This type of lifestyle pulls us out of the defeated cycles of mediocrity and fear. We can live like Jesus; walking in His peace, sharing His love, and demonstrating His power!

The Condition

- “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (The Promise) And the peace of God...will guard your hearts and minds” Philippians 4:6-7
- “anxious” - Greek (merimnao) - from the root (merizo) = to disunite, to divide, to distract
- To be anxious or worried is to be distracted and divided from the nearness of God (v.5) by earthly circumstance and/or the lies of satan.
- Life can be hard, full of trials and troubles. Jesus said it would be this way. (John 16:33)
- The desire of God is to use these troubles to draw us closer to Him, prune unhealthy parts of our lives, and produce victory for His glory.
- However, the scheme of satan is to use these trials to distract us and draw us away from God through fear, anxiety, worry, and stress.
- According to this passage, our task is to refuse to be worried and anxious, let’s learn how...

Anxiety Is A Choice

- “*Do not let your hearts be troubled. You trust in God, trust also in me.*” John 14:1
- “*Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you...Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*” John 14:27
- “*Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life,*” Matthew 6:25
- Anxiety, worry, and fear are a choice. When we choose to be anxious or worried, it is direct disobedience to Jesus and it is sin.
- The great news is that Jesus has defeated the power and authority of sin. We are no longer slaves to sin! (Romans 6:6)
- We are no longer enslaved by anxiety and worry, we have been set free by Jesus.
- Every circumstance that tries to draw us back into anxiety is temptation, and God has given us a way out - every time! (1 Cor 10:13)

- Jesus has empowered us to not to be anxious, we need to stop being spiritual sissies!

Pray Instead

- “Do not be anxious about anything, **but** in everything by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” Philippians 4:6
- When life’s circumstances present an opportunity to be anxious, we refuse to be a slave to worry. Instead, we choose to genuinely talk to God about that situation.
- **Anxiety produces nothing but death. Talking to God produces life, peace, and power!**
- “Do not be anxious about anything, **but** in everything by *prayer* and *petition*,”
- In this passage, “prayer” simply means a conversation with God. He is a loving Father. He enjoys conversation about what is happening in our lives. He wants us with Him!
- “Petition” means to make a request. After we’ve had a heart felt conversation with our Father about the situation, then present your request to Him - **IN SCRIPTURE** - **IN FAITH!**
- “Do not be anxious about anything, **but** in everything by prayer and petition, with *thanksgiving*, present your requests to God.”
- The Bible teaches that thanksgiving is a spiritual gateway into communion with God.
- Godless people and spiritual weaklings thank God when things are good and blame or ignore God when things are difficult.
- A warrior uses thanksgiving in every difficulty to strike fear in the mind of the enemy!
- This life in Christ is not a game! It is a war, and the way we live on this earth determines how we live in eternity, and where others will go.
- The days of being enslaved and trampled by fear, anxiety, and worry have come to an end.
- A thankful heart full of faith-filled prayer is a finely tuned and powerful weapon!

- May today be the day of life change! The day we take authority over anxiety in Jesus' Name. The day we choose fellowship over fear!