

Paul's Three Point Plan for Personal Peace

Introduction:

a. Paul's statement in **Philippians 4:6**

6

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

Be anxious for nothing

b. Just consider some things mentioned in this letter:

1. Paul was writing while imprisoned

Philippians 1: 7

7

Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.

2. there were men teaching from envy and strife just to add afflictions to his chains

Philippians 1: 15,16

15

Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

16

The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

3. he knew he might be executed

Philippians 1:20

20

According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.

4. He knew his friends were going to suffer

Philippians 1:28-30

28

And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.

29

For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

30

Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

c. Within Philippians 4:6-9, Paul presents a three-point plan for personal peace

6

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

7

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

9

Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

I. Pray – Trust God

Philippians 4:6:

6

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

A. On the surface, we could easily just say that Paul's advice is to pray. We could talk about how to make requests and offer thanks. But that is really just the surface.

The deeper issue that Paul is really bringing out is to trust God. No matter what stresses are weighing down on you, trust that God is there and will take care of you.

B. When you consider this trust note four areas in which you must trust God:

1. Trust God that He will not abandon you

Hebrews 13:5,6

5

Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

6

So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

Romans 8:35-39

35

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36

As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

4

andonthisrock.com

38

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39

Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2. Trust God that He knows what we need, even before we ask Him

Matthew 6:8

8

Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

32

(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

3. Trust God that He cares about our needs and concerns

I Peter 5:6,7

6

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

7

Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

4. Trust God that He is able to take care of us. Paul demonstrated that in **Philippians 4:6**, when he pointed out that our requests should be made with thanksgiving. God has already demonstrated His ability to take care of us. That is why we owe Him our thanks already.

C. Paul makes an amazingly subtle, yet profound, point in **Philippians 4:7**. He demonstrates that the peace we will receive from God comes through Jesus Christ

5

andonthisrock.com

7

And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Romans 5:6-11

6

For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

7

For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

8

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9

Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

10

For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

11

And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

D. We can trust God to take care of us and provide what is best and most needed for us. So, when we face anxieties and stresses, pray. Make your requests known to God, giving thanks. And know that even when, in your stress and anxiety, you do not know exactly how or what to pray, the Spirit knows and intercedes for us

Romans 8:26

26

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

II. Think good thoughts

Philippians 4:8:

8

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

A. In *Philippians 4:8*, Paul gives a list of things upon which we should meditate

8

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

B. Here is a man in prison telling us in very strong terms to look on the bright side. Do not get bogged down in thinking about all the bad things. Do not count up in your mind all the false, irreverent, unfair, sinful, disgusting and terrible things that are happening to or around you. Count the good things. The song we sing, "Count Your Many Blessings" fits here. It may surprise you what the Lord has already done for you.

C. Look at Paul's example just in the first chapter of *Philippians*:

1. *Philippians 1:12*

12

But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;

2. *Philippians 1:14*

14

And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

3. *Philippians 1:15-18*

7

andonthisrock.com

15

Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

16

The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

17

But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.

18

What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

D. One of the great battles of our time is the battle of the mind, but Paul said in **II Corinthians 10:3-6**, that we must wage that warfare and bring our thoughts into captivity. A friend of mine once said, "We may not be able to stop the birds from flying over our heads, but we can keep them from making nests in our hair." In like manner, we may never stop fleeting thoughts from coursing through our minds. But we can control our meditations. Meditate on the good things.

III. No matter how you feel, do what you know is right

Philippians 4:9

9

Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

A. Specifically, to the Philippians he said that they should do what he taught them.

B. Paul was one of the human penmen, BUT IT came from the Holy Spirit

II Peter 1:20,21

20

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

21

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

II Timothy 3:16,17

16

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17

That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

C. Notice some areas in which the scripture provides instruction:

1. For how we should live as members of the church

I Timothy 3:15

15

But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

2. It talks about how to live within a family

Ephesians 5:22

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

23

For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

24

Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

25

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

26

That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

27

That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

28

So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

29

For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

30

For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

31

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

32

This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

33

Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

Ephesians 6:1

Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

2

Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise;

10

andonthisrock.com

3

That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

4

And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

3. It tells us about personal day to day living regarding speech, actions and even emotions

Ephesians 4:25-32

25

Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

26

Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

27

Neither give place to the devil.

28

Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

29

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

30

And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

31

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

11

andonthisrock.com

32

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

4. It talks about conflict resolution

Matthew 5:21-26

21

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

22

But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

23

Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

24

Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

25

Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

26

Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

D. That means we do not follow our feelings. We do not follow the crowd. We do not follow our peer group or our family. We follow God, according to His word. Then we will have peace, because only then can we rest assured that we have done what is right.

Conclusion:

- a. Certainly we know that as to think that we can go home tonight, go through this three step process and never have again have stress
- b. However as one grows in Christ spending time doing these three things – trusting God in prayer, thinking good thoughts and doing what you know is right – the God of peace will be with you and you, through God’s grace, will overcome the stresses and anxieties of life.