

Introduction

A couple of months ago someone in our congregation asked me about how to handle difficult people. I told the person that we would be having a message in a few weeks about two strong women who were not getting along. These were not just any women. These women had ministered with Paul. He said that they had shared his struggle in the cause of the gospel. They were part of a powerful team of ministers that helped spread the gospel throughout the known world. Last week, Tony covered Paul's exhortation to Eudonia and Syntyche to live in harmony.

(Phil 4:3) Indeed, true companion (suzugos), I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

One of the things that I greatly appreciate about going through books of the Bible is the broad number of topics that are covered. When Paul addressed the Ephesian elders in Acts 20, he said that he preached the whole counsel or purpose of God.

(Acts 20:27) "For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.

In that passage, Paul asks these two women to become of one mind. Tony shared a little bit about the importance of listening in communication. Proverbs tells us that good understanding brings favor. Good understanding comes about by good communication.

(Pro 13:15 Good understanding produces favor, But the way of the treacherous is hard.)

Earlier in Philippians, Paul had plead with the Philippians to strive together for the faith of the gospel. He told them to be of one mind. He told them to be united in spirit, and intent on one purpose. Paul wanted to restore unity in the church. God still wants the same thing. He wants unity in the church.

(Phil 2:2) make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.

Paul shared with the Philippians how to live together in unity. They must be humble and have the same attitude of Christ, who came to serve rather than be served. Christ humbled Himself and took the form of a bond-servant. He did not grasp for position, but humbly served. Christ did not look out for His own interests, but for our interests. He did nothing from selfishness or empty conceit. When you and I put others before ourselves, and serve one another, it is much easier to get along with one another. When we humbly serve others, and are unselfish, it is much easier to get along with other people. There is a time that you must be firm with strong people. You have to know when to stand your ground. But, our lives must be characterized by humility, unselfishness, and a striving towards becoming one mind with others. When we do this, we have relational peace.

The passage that Tony preached last week is actually part of the passage today. Philippians 4:1-9 is all one passage about having the peace of God in our lives. I thought it good to devote one whole week to speak about relational issues, which is why I broke it up into two segments. Paul starts about how to live in harmony with one another. When there is relational strife, there is no peace.

13 Peace of God (Philippians 4:4-10)

In our text today, Paul is going to continue to talk about how to have the peace of God in our lives. He shares three keys to having the peace of God in our lives. First, we must be committed to harmonious relationships. Second, we must be committed to prayer. Third, we must be committed to living a transformed life. Let's read our passage for today.

(Phil 4:1-9) Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved. {2} I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord. {3} Indeed, true companion, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life. {4} Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! {5} Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. {6} Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. {7} And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. {8} Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. {9} The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

How can we experience the peace of God in our lives?

- I. Be committed to harmonious relationships.
- II. Be committed to having a good attitude.
- III. Be committed to living a transformed life.

I. Be committed to harmonious relationships.

A couple of weeks ago I mentioned that the last couple of months were difficult for me. We had a situation at work at our Houston Training Center where a person was not doing her job. She was absent a lot. She was tardy most of the time. She was way behind on her work. Her heart was not in her work. I had our Manager in Houston speak with her about these things. Then, while he was out of town, she decides to purchase plane tickets for herself and her mother to go to Mexico. The problem was that she used our company credit card, and did not have permission to do this. She also purchased other things on the company credit card. She committed a Class D Felony against our company. The result was that I had to terminate our employment agreement with her. She has two small children, and is going through a divorce. She needs the money and the job, but I had to act in the best interests of our company. I had some other situations to deal with at the same time. The end result was that I struggled with anxiety. I was lacking the peace of God. Why? Because when there is relational conflict, it is very difficult to experience the peace of God in your life. I had to apply the passage that we are going to study today.

Paul reiterates to Eudoia and Syntyche and the Philippians what he has told them in earlier about being of the same mind. The NASB says to be in harmony, but the actual Greek word is **phroneo**, **which means to be of the same mind**, which is how the KJV translates it. We discussed a few weeks ago a few different ways to come to the same mind. We saw that prayer helps people to have the same mind. Caring for one another and meeting each other's needs helps us to have one mind. Working through issues also helps us come to one mind. The early church prayed together, met one another's needs, and worked through difficult issues.

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(Phil 4:2) I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

He urged Eudoia and Syntyche to live in harmony, but he also urged the church to help these women. Sometimes, especially when conflicts have escalated, it requires a mediator. There are hurts, raw wounds, and weariness that surface in all conversation. The result is that meaningful communication does not happen. Things are taken out of context. Things are taken the wrong way. In these situations, outside help can be very helpful to facilitate good communication and coming to one mind.

When there is strife and conflict in a church, there is no peace. When there is strife and conflict in the home, there is no peace.

Solomon said it is better to live in a wilderness than with a contentious wife. When there is not peace in the home, being alone in the wilderness is better. Marriage between a man and woman is a wonderful part of God's plan for most people. However, without relational peace, it can be very painful. The Philippians were not going to experience God's peace when there was strife. Euodia and Syntyche, and the whole church, needed to work out their disagreements and come to harmony. These women needed to have the mind of the Lord.

(Pro 21:19) It is better to live in a desert land Than with a contentious and vexing woman.

Here is one final comment on relational strife. Paul encouraged the Philippians to stand firm in the Lord. When there is relational conflict, the tendency is to bolt. The tendency is to leave the church. All of us know people who are not in church today because of conflicts or church splits. Paul recognizes and acknowledges this, and encourages the church to stand firm in the Lord. **In the midst of conflict, stand firm in the Lord.** Our brothers and sisters who have not stood firm and are not part of a local body need to be reached out to. They need a helping hand to pull them up on their feet again. They need some healing, and they need an encouragement to stand firm in the Lord.

(Phil 4:1) Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.

II. Be committed to having a good attitude.

Next, Paul tells them to have a good attitude. He gives them several different parts of a good attitude. First, he tells them to have a joyful attitude. Second, he tells them to have a gentle spirit. Third, he tells them to have a prayerful attitude. Fourth, he tells them to have a grateful attitude.

(Phil 4:4-6) Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! {5} Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. {6} Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

A. Joyful Attitude

First, Paul tells the Philippians to rejoice in the Lord always. In fact, he says it twice. He says, "again I will say, rejoice!" How does joy and peace connect? What is the relationship between these two words?

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(Phil 4:4) Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.

When Paul taught about the fruit of the Spirit, he gave it in a particular order. He begins with love, then joy, and then peace. Notice that peace follows joy. Joy is a key component in having peace. If you recall chapter one, we talked about joy. I read you a definition from Kay Warren's book, "Choose Joy." In it she defined joy as "the settled assurance that God is in control of all the details of my life, the quiet confidence that ultimately everything is going to be alright, and the determined choice to praise God in every situation." When you have that confidence that God is in control, it brings peace in your life. Without the confidence that God is in control, it is easy to become discouraged.

(Gal 5:22-23) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, {23} gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Here are some things to consider in the face of adversity that will help you see things from God's perspective and rejoice.

1. God works all things together for my good.

Paul tells us in Romans that all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose. No matter what kind of tight spot that you are in, God will cause it to work together for good. That is His word; that is His promise to you and I.

(Rom 8:28) And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

When Joseph's brothers were worried about Joseph getting revenge, Joseph replied to them, "you meant it for evil, but God meant it for good." He had come to the place in his life that he had joy. He knew and was confident that God was in control and had been in control of every event in his life. Consequently, he had the peace of God in his life.

(Gen 50:19-21) But Joseph said to them, "Do not be afraid, for am I in God's place? {20} "As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive. {21} "So therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones." So he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

2. God will use this to mature me.

James tells us to consider it all joy when we encounter trials, knowing that the testing of our faith produces endurance. He continues by telling us to let endurance have its perfect result, so that we may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. God is trying to bring us to maturity. He uses these trials in our lives to give us wisdom about how to handle situations. He uses these trials to build endurance in our lives. He uses all these things to mature or perfect us. Therefore, we are told to rejoice in these trials.

(James 1:2-5) Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, {3} knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. {4} And let endurance have its perfect result,

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so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. {5} But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

When we begin to see these things from God's perspective, that He is using these things for our good, and to mature us, we can rejoice. The end result is that we will have the peace of God in our lives. There is a contrast in the way that the world thinks. The world tells us when all the dots connect and are lined up in order, we have peace. The Bible tells us that we can have the peace of God in the midst of our trials and troubles. We can have peace while God helps us get all the dots connected and lined up in order. His peace passes all comprehension and understanding. Paul rejoiced while in prison. It was not externally controlled. It was an inward joy that did not depend on circumstances. He rejoiced because the whole Praetorian Guard had heard the gospel. He saw God's purpose in the trials in his life.

3. **God is with us.**

In the midst of trials, know that God is with us and for us. He promises never to leave or forsake us; He is with us.

(Heb 13:5) Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,"

When God commissioned Joshua, He told him that He would be with him, just as He was with Moses. Joshua is young and now has the responsibility of leading the nation of Israel. Undoubtedly, he was anxious and nervous about this monumental task. But, God gives Joshua assurance and confidence. He tells him that He will never fail or forsake Joshua. A few verses later, God repeats the promise, only this time, He tells Joshua not to tremble or be dismayed, that the Lord is with him wherever he goes.

(Josh 1:5, 9) "No man will be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you...{9} "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous! Do not tremble or be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

That same promise is true for you and I. He is with us. He will never desert, fail, forsake, or leave us. He is with us and for us. God walks through the valleys of the shadows of death with us. He never forsakes us. He wants us to rejoice, because he is with us and in control at all times.

B. Gentle Attitude

Next, Paul tells them to let their gentle spirit be known to all men. Having a gentle, humble, or meek spirit is one of the most important keys in getting along with others. If our gentle spirit is going to be made known to all men, it must be a part of our everyday life. People at work, people in our neighborhood, people in our church, and our loved ones at home must all see our gentle spirit.

(Phil 4:5) Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near.

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Proverbs 15:1 tells us that a harsh word stirs up anger, but a gentle answer turns away wrath. A gentle spirit is able to diffuse potentially explosive situations. A gentle spirit is able to respond, instead of react. A gentle spirit is able to invite conversation and open doors of communication. A gentle spirit is approachable. In my opinion, a humble or gentle spirit is one of the most important qualities a person can have. In our disagreements with people, our gentle spirit must be made known.

(Pro 15:1) A gentle answer turns away wrath, But a harsh word stirs up anger.

C. Prayerful Attitude

In addition to being joyful and gentle, Paul says that we must maintain an attitude of prayer. We are to pray about everything. We are to pray at all times. We must live our lives with an attitude of prayer. We must be committed to prayer. There will be things that happen in all of our lives. How we respond to these things determines whether we will have peace or anxiety. Paul starts by commanding us not to be anxious. He says, “be anxious for nothing.” We are to refuse to be anxious about anything. When we are facing situations that could cause us to be anxious, we must stand firm and say, “I am not going to be anxious about this.”

(Phil 4:6-7) Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. {7} And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

When we are facing those situations, it is not enough to say you will not be anxious, you must have a plan of action. Paul gives us the plan of action. When we are facing anxious times, we must pray. This is the exact thing that Peter teaches us in 1 Peter 5:7. He tells us to cast our anxiety on Him, because He cares for us. We cast our anxieties on the Lord through prayer. Since Peter was a fisherman, I interpret this verse with that in mind. Casting a net required several strong men. There are times in our lives where we need to gather some strong brethren and let them help us cast our cares and anxieties on the Lord. We need to humble ourselves and ask for prayer support.

(1 Pet 5:7) casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

How do we do this? Is there a specific way that we are to pray? Yes. Paul tells us in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving to let our requests be made known to God. There are several keys in that verse. First, there is not a single situation that this does not apply. We are to pray about everything. God is interested in everything in our lives. In every situation that you and I find ourselves in, we are to pray about it and let our requests be made known to the Lord.

Second, Paul gives several different types of prayers. We are to offer prayers; we are to offer supplications, and we are to pray with thanksgiving. The first word is prayer. It is a more general word for prayer. The Greek word is proseuche, which means to pray earnestly.

Prayers: G4335. proseuche, pros-yoo-khay'; from G4336; prayer (worship); by impl. an oratory (chapel):--X pray earnestly, prayer. G4336. proseuchomai, pros-yoo'-khom-ahee; from G4314 and G2172; to pray to God, i.e. supplicate, worship:--pray (X earnestly, for), make prayer. G2172. euchomai, yoo'-khom-ahee; mid. of a prim. verb; to wish; by impl. to pray to God:--pray, will, wish.

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The second word is supplication, which means petitions or requests. The Greek word is deesis, which means to beg, as binding oneself. The root word is deo, which means to bind. The implication here is that we are in a desperate situation, and are making these urgent requests known.

Supplications: G1162. deesis, deh'-ay-sis; from G1189; a petition:--prayer, request, supplication. G1189. deomai, deh'-om-ahee; mid. of G1210; to beg (as binding oneself), i.e. petition:--beseech, pray (to), make request. Comp. G4441. G1210. deo, deh'-o; a prim. verb; to bind (in various applications, lit. or fig.):--bind, be in bonds, knit, tie, wind. See also G1163, G1189.

The third word used is thanksgiving. We are always to pray with thanksgiving. We are to enter into His gates with thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving: G2169. eucharistia, yoo-khar-is-tee'-ah; from G2170; gratitude; act. grateful language (to God, as an act of worship):--thankfulness, (giving of) thanks (-giving). G2170. eucharistos, yoo-khar'-is-tos; from G2095 and a der. of G5483; well favored, i.e. (by impl.) grateful:--thankful.

D. Grateful Attitude

The fourth attitude that Paul speaks about is being grateful. He tells us to pray with thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is not just an attitude in prayer, it is a way of life. We are to be a people who live with a grateful attitude. In 1 Thessalonians 5, Paul tells us to rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. It is God's will for you and I to live with a grateful attitude, giving thanks in everything. Notice that this passage in Thessalonians is almost identical to the passage in Philippians. Our lives are to be characterized by joy, gentleness, prayer, and thanksgiving.

(1 Thess 5:16-18) Rejoice always; {17} pray without ceasing; {18} in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

Our thanksgivings should not just happen in our prayers. We should be known for being grateful at all times. We should send thank you notes to people. We should express appreciation to people for things that we do.

One of the engineers that works for me left a job where he was making three times more than we are paying him. Why did he come to work for Murchison Drilling Schools? He came because he did not feel appreciated at his job. Corporate America sometimes pays people well, but appreciation is not primarily monetary. Appreciation comes from management taking time to express thanks and appreciation for the work that their people are doing.

I cannot tell you how many marriages have suffered or ended because of lack of appreciation. It is important for men to thank their wives for preparing meals, doing their laundry, clean the house, etc. It is important for women to thank their husbands for working hard, providing for them, protecting them, etc. Get in the habit of saying thank you to people. It is God's will for us to give thanks in everything, not just in our prayer times. God wants you and I to have a grateful attitude.

III. Be committed to living a transformed life.

Paul begins with relational peace. Without it, we will not have the peace of God in our lives. Second, he tells us that we must live with a good attitude, not just any attitude, but an attitude of joy, gentleness, prayer, and thanksgiving. In this final paragraph, Paul concludes that we must live a transformed life.

(Phil 4:9) Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.)

Why do I say a transformed life? Remember in chapter one where Paul prayed for discernment so that they could approve the things that are excellent. The word for approve is dokimazo.

(Phil 1:9-10) And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, {10} so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;

This was the same word used in Romans 12:2, where Paul instructs us not to be conformed to the world, but to be transformed by the renewing of our mind so that we can prove the will of God in our lives, that which is good, acceptable and perfect. We need discernment so that we can discern good from evil, the things that are excellent from the things that are not excellent. The goal is a transformed life. God wants us to prove His will in our lives.

(Rom 12:2) And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

How do we live a transformed life? **A transformed life begins with renewing our minds.** Our actions follow our thoughts. We must renew our minds if we want our actions to prove the will of God in our lives. In Romans 8, Paul says that those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. If we want to walk in the Spirit, we must set our mind on the things of the Spirit. He concludes that the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.

(Rom 8:5-6) For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. {6} For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,

Do you want peace in your life? You must set your mind on the things of the Spirit. A mind set on the Spirit will be a renewed mind. A mind set on the Spirit will live according to God's ways. A mind set on the Spirit will yield a transformed life. Notice in our text that Paul starts with things for us to dwell on. Next, he tells us to practice the things that we have learned, received, heard, and seen in him. Paul has taught them and role-modeled the ways of God. He wants them to think the right thoughts and then live according to the pattern that was given to them. That is a transformed life.

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(Phil 4:9) Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.)

When I memorized this passage about thirty years ago, I used the word THRIPL GREWP to help me. Paul tells them to think about whatever is TTrue, HHonorable, RRight, PPure, LLovely, of GGood RRepute, whatever is EExcellent, and whatever is WWorthy of PPraise. I have always been able to remember the order and the key words of the passage because of the acronym.

These eight things that Paul has said to think upon are check points. If a thought is not TTrue, it cannot pass this check point. If it is true, then the security guard allows this thought to proceed. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 10 to destroy speculations and every lofty thought. A speculation is not true. It has not been proven true. It is a possibility. We need to focus our attention on things that are true.

(2 Cor 10:5) We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,

At the second check point, the guard asks if this thought is HHonorable. Does this honor God? Does this thought honor my mother or father? Does it honor my spouse? Does it honor my neighbor? Does it cause others to think more or think less of someone else? If the thought is honorable, it is allowed to get past this security check point.

The third check point is if the thought is RRight. Is it right or wrong to think this thought? Is this the correct way to think about a matter? The Greek word is dikaios, which means correct, righteous, or innocent.

At the fourth check point, the guard asks if this thought is PPure. God does not want us to have impure thoughts. He wants us to have pure thoughts because He wants our lives to be pure. The Word of God is the best way to determine if something is pure. In Psalm 12, David says that the words of the Lord are pure words, as silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times. The purest things that you or I can think about is the word of God. Get in the habit of meditating on Scripture.

(Psa 12:6) The words of the LORD are pure words; As silver tried in a furnace on the earth, refined seven times.

In Psalms 119:9-11, we find that a young man can keep his way pure by keeping it according to God's word. When he treasures God's word in His heart, that is his mind, then he will not carry out the deeds of the flesh. He will not sin against God. A mind that treasures the word of God will carry out the word of God. The Word of God is the best way to discern what is pure and what is not pure. If the thought is pure, then it can proceed past the checkpoint.

(Psalm 119:9-11) How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your word. {10} With all my heart I have sought You; Do not let me wander from Your commandments. {11} Your word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You.

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The fifth check point is Lovely. Is the thought lovely or not. When I played professional golf, this was an easy check point. A shot that went in the water was not a lovely shot. A shot that went where I wanted on the fairway or green was lovely. In the face of anxiety, it is important to picture lovely shots. God promises us peace when we dwell on lovely thoughts, rather than ugly or terrible thoughts.

The sixth check point is Good Repute. We get the word reputation from repute. The Greek word is eufemos, which means well reported. Is this thought a good report or is this thought a bad report? How would this thought be categorized, of good repute or poor repute? We want to dwell on things that will bring good repute?

The seventh check point is Excellence. Is this thought excellent? If it is not excellent or of the highest quality that there is, we do not want to dwell on it. My daughter Laura grades the homework of students in our ten-day class. When they get 100 on the homework, she draws a smiley face on their paper beside the 100. Will this thought get a smiley face?

The eighth check point is Worthy of Praise. In a similar way to Excellence, this is something that is very honorable and worth praising. In golf, when I hit a great shot, people would applaud. In fact, a great shot might bring a loud roar from the crowd. Is this thought something that is worthy of applaud and praise.

These are checkpoints. Paul wrote to the Corinthians and told them to destroy every speculation and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. Anything that does not meet the criteria must not be allowed to go past that checkpoint. They must be stopped at the gate of our minds. They must be arrested and taken captive. They do not belong inside the gates.

(2 Cor 10:5) We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,

These eight criteria are not just check points, they are also our goals or objectives. These are the things that we want to dwell on. These are things that we will decide to dwell on in anxious times and at all other times.

Paul concludes by telling the Philippians to practice the things that they have learned, received, heard, and seen in him. **We must practice the things we have learned, received, heard, and seen.**

Paul exemplified the things he taught. Probably the best way to learn is by the example of others. Paul taught and role-modeled what he taught.

(Phil 4:9) The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

When I was fairly new as a believer, the Lord gave me a passage in Ezra 7:10 as a life passage. It says that Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord, and to practice it, and to teach it. That has been my life verse. I try to study God's word, apply His word in my life, and to teach it. Like Paul, I want to be able to tell people to practice the things that they have learned, received, heard, and seen

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in me. Sometimes I fall short. When I do, I repent, get back up, and keep on going. My goal is to prepare, practice, and preach.

(Ezra 7:10) For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the LORD and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel.

Conclusion

This morning, you may be anxious over finances or over a job. You may be anxious because of strife with a neighbor. Whatever place you are in, it is God's will to free you from that anxiety. He wants to give you peace. If you want some strong workers to help you cast that net of anxiety, come forward this morning. We want to help you. God wants to restore peace to you this morning.

If you have a situation with a neighbor, work it out so that you can live in harmony. Ask God for wisdom. If the Spirit convicts you of wrongdoing, go and repent. Proverbs tells us to humble ourselves and importune our neighbor. Go in humility and gentleness and ask for forgiveness.

(Pro 6:2-5) If you have been snared with the words of your mouth, Have been caught with the words of your mouth, {3} Do this then, my son, and deliver yourself; Since you have come into the hand of your neighbor, Go, humble yourself, and importune your neighbor. {4} Give no sleep to your eyes, Nor slumber to your eyelids; {5} Deliver yourself like a gazelle from the hunter's hand And like a bird from the hand of the fowler.

This morning, if you are lacking joy in your life, ask God to help you develop a joyful attitude. He wants to restore to you the joy of your salvation. He wants you to rejoice at all times. He wants our lives to be full of joy.

If you have been struggling with your thought life, begin memorizing some Scripture. That is the best way to think about good thoughts. In Psalms 94:19, it says that "when my anxious thoughts multiply within me, Your consolations delight my soul." Some of you need to arm yourself with His consolations, His word, so that they can delight your soul in times of anxiety. Learn to think about good thoughts, so that you prove the will of God in your life.

(Psa 94:19 When my anxious thoughts multiply within me, Your consolations delight my soul.)

This morning, if you have a need that you would like to have prayer about, we would welcome the opportunity to pray for you. If you need healing, physical or otherwise, we would welcome the opportunity to pray for you. If you need peace in your life, we want to pray with you and ask for peace. It is His will to give you peace. He is the God of all peace and He wants to guard our hearts and His minds with His peace, that surpasses all comprehension.

Let's pray.

Introduction (Phil 4:3, Acts 20:27, Pro 13:15, Phil 2:2, 4:1-9)

I. Be committed to harmonious relationships. (Phil 4:1-3, Pro 21:19)

- Phroneo means to be of the same _____ . (Phil 4:2)
- _____ can be very helpful to facilitate good communication and coming to one mind.
- In the midst of conflict, we need to _____ in the Lord. (Phil 4:1)

II. Be committed to having a good attitude. (Phil 4:4-6)

- A. _____ Attitude (Phil 4:4, Gal 5:22-23)
1. God works all things together for my _____. (Rom 8:28, Gen 50:19-21)
 2. God will use this to _____ me. (James 1:2-5)
 3. God is _____ us. (Heb 13:5, Josh 1:5, 9)
- B. _____ Attitude (Phil 4:5, Pro 15:1)
- C. _____ Attitude (Phil 4:6-7, 1 Pet 5:7)
- D. _____ Attitude (Phil 4:6, 1 Thess 5:16-18)

III. Be committed to a transformed life. (Phil 4:9, 1:9-10)

- A. A transformed life begins with _____ our minds. (Rom 12:2, Rom 8:5-6, Phil 4:9, 2 Cor 10:5, Psa 12:6, Psa 119:9-11)
- B. We must _____ the things we have learned, received, heard, and seen. (Phil 4:9, Ezra 7:10)

Conclusion (Pro 6:2-5, Psa 94:19)

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