

God's Cure for an Anxious Heart

(Philippians 4:6-7)

- Introduction:
1. Occasionally, people will misunderstand a Bible passage, and through that misunderstanding, cause others great pain.
 - a. Job (Job 42:7).
 - b. Raising Children (Proverbs 22:6).
 2. Another passage I would add to this list is Philippians 4:6-7.
 3. The way some people have taught this passage has left many people feeling guilty.
 4. In this lesson, I would like for us to reexamine this passage, that was not intended to cause angst but was intended to give peace.

I. The Command in Question

- A. (Philippians 4:6) Be anxious in nothing.
- B. This passage has often been misused to make people feel unnecessarily guilty.
- C. There is a figure of speech called "Relative Negation" which is when something is stated in negative form, not to deny it absolutely, but to downgrade it in importance relative to something else.
 1. In other words, he is not forbidding anxiety, but is downgrading its importance relative to prayer.
 2. Consider (Matthew 16:19-20; Hosea 6:6; 1 Corinthians 1:17; John 6:27).
- D. The point of this passage is not forbidding us from being human and having human emotions, but to offer something better – prayer.

II. The Alternative

- A. (Philippians 4:6)
- B. Instead of being anxious, Paul offers an alternative.
 1. The Scope - "But in everything."
 - a. Nothing is too small to bring to God.
 - b. Is this not a comforting portrait of God?
 2. The Method – "by prayer, and supplication, with thanksgiving."
 - a. Supplication means to ask, or beg.
 - b. Note that this begging is to be joined with thanksgiving.
 3. Direction – "let your requests be made known to God."
 - a. We are instructed to pray to God (Matthew 6:9-13).
 - b. Why would we want to pray to a saint, or Mary, or anyone else?

III. The Results

- A. (Philippians 4:7) "the peace of God...will guard your hearts and minds."
- B. There is a real peace when we know that God is with us and he knows what we are going through.

- Conclusion:
1. Brethren, in our moments of anxiety, Paul tells us to pray, and when we do, we can find peace through Jesus Christ.
 2. Let us not overlook this power and blessing that is given to us, God's children.