

How to Live Free from Worry

Philippians 4:4-9

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Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus...

Philippians 4:4-9, cont.

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

Who worries?

- **We all do. We all have fear:**
- **Fear of being deprived of a positive**
- **Fear of being forced to accept a negative**
- **The future super-imposed over the present**
- **“Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow; it empties today of its strength.”
(Corrie Ten Boom)**

Common Phobias

- **Acrophobia: fear of heights**
- **Aerophobia: fear of flying**
- **Arachnophobia: fear of spiders**
- **Astraphobia: fear of thunder and lightning**
- **Autophobia: fear of being alone**
- **Claustrophobia: fear of confined or crowded spaces**
- **Hemophobia: fear of blood**
- **Hydrophobia: fear of water**
- **Ophidiophobia: fear of snakes**
- **Zoophobia: fear of animals**

Type A Personality

- **Intelligent perfectionist**
- **Driven to succeed, often first born**
- **The good: moral, obedient, neat and clean, organized, conscientious, punctual, focused, hard working, competitive.**
- **The bad: stubborn, worries, tense, insecure, hates criticism, hides uncertainty behind rules, avoids blame, focuses on appearance, stingy with money, time, and love.**

Christ-like Character:

- **A confident heart in God**
- **A caring heart for others**
- **A protected mind**
- **A purified mind**

1. A Confident Heart in God

- “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand” (Phil. 4:4-5).
- Jacob said: “Surely the Lord was in the place and I knew it not” (Gen. 28:16).
- “reasonableness” or “gentleness” or “moderation” – being fair, always ready to stand on the truth.

2. A Caring Heart for Others

- “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God” (Phil. 4:6).
- *Merimnao* – concerned for self-interest
- *Deesis* – supplication, from a deep inner need
- Thanksgiving – frees us from selfishness.

Being Pro-active

- **Fix what you can. “I can do all things through him who strengthens me” (Phil. 4:13)**
- **In prayer: Everything we worry about we can pray about.**
- **In prayer pray for the will of God to be done.**
- **This calls for wisdom.**

The Serenity Prayer

“God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.”

– Reinhold Niebuhr, American Theologian

Variations of the prayer

- **God grant me the serenity to accept the people I cannot change, the courage to change the one I can, and the wisdom to know it's me.**
- **Mother Goose (1695):**
For every ailment under the sun
There is a remedy, or there is none;
If there be one, try to find it;
If there be none, never mind it.

3. A Protected Mind

- **“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:7).**
- **Faith in God and concern for others is honored by God.**
- **God will empower you, encourage you, comfort you, and protect your heart.**

4. A Purified Mind

- **“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you” (Phil. 4:8-9).**

Your Mind

- **“As a man thinks in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7).**
- **“Take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” (2 Cor. 10:5)**
- **“For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace” (Rom. 8:6).**

What things to think about?

- True: *alethes*, unconcealed, truthful, “what cannot be hidden.”
- Noble: *semnos*, dignified, venerable, worthy, honorable
- Right: *dikaios*, righteous, just, upright, innocent
- Pure: *hagnos*, undefiled, clean from sin, sacred
- Lovely: *prosphiles*, friendly toward, agreeable, worthy of the personal affection of a child of God.
- Admirable: *euphemos*, good report, well-spoken of, reputable
- Excellent: *arête*, virtue, moral goodness
- Praiseworthy: *epainos*, worthy of praise, commendable

Who are your examples?

- **What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you” (Phil. 4:9).**
- **“Do not be deceived: ‘Bad company ruins good morals’” (1 Cor. 15:33).**

Jonah, the Grumpy Prophet

- Called and sent
- Did not go at first
- Did go later
- Did not go in love
- Waited for judgment
- Enjoyed a plant that gave him shade.



A Problem of the Heart

- He did not love what God loved.
- He did not love WHO God loved.
- And the Lord said, “You pity the plant, for which you did not labor, nor did you make it grow, which came into being in a night and perished in a night. And should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?” (Jonah 4:10-11)