Philippians 4:4-9 "The Good News and Anxiety"

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Date: 15 June 2025

Preacher: Rev. George Sinclair

[0:00] Hi, my name is George Sinclair. I'm the lead pastor of Church of the Messiah.

! It is wonderful that you would like to check out some of the sermons done by Church of the Messiah, either by myself or some of the others. Listen, just a couple of things. First of all, would you pray for us that we will open God's Word well to His glory and for the good of people like yourself?
The second thing is, if you aren't connected to a church and if you are a Christian, we really, I would really like to encourage you to find a good local church where they believe the Bible, they preach the gospel, and if you have some trouble finding that, send us an email. We will do what we can to help connect you with a good local church wherever you are. And if you're a non-Christian, checking us out, we're really, really, really glad you're doing that. Don't hesitate to send us questions. It helps me actually to know, as I'm preaching, how to deal with the types of things that you're really struggling with. So God bless.
Bow our heads in prayer. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three persons, one God, you are a great mystery. We ask, Father, that your Holy Spirit would launch each of us on a quest to abide and meditate and contemplate who you are, to learn how to adore you. And now, Father, as part of that, as we come to your Word, which aims to help us adore you, we ask that your Holy Spirit would lead us and guide us soon to all truth. And we ask this in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Saviour. Amen.
Please be seated. So, not many of you might know this, but about 40 plus years ago, a group of people in England started something called Proclamation Trust, which was designed to help ministers learn how to preach and teach the Bible better. And Jonathan Griffith, who's the lead pastor at the Met, he actually was on staff with them for a while. And after he'd been here in Canada for a while, one of his great prayers was that something like that would get started in Canada. And I am worthy as I am. I was asked to be part of that original board. I am still on the board of that organization in Canada. In Canada, it's called the Timothy Trust. Now, I mention this not so I can boast, far from it. It's because the main way that they teach people how to preach the Bible is different than what I'm going to do this morning. In other words, if instructors from that organization were here, afterwards they'd want to put their arms around me and say, hey brother, you didn't do that quite the way you're supposed to.
[3:00] So, in other words, I'm breaking the way that they teach you to teach and preach the Bible. And I'm doing it not to be rebellious. It's just that I'm sort of really stuck this morning.

And the reason I'm stuck is this. Last week, because we're going through the book of Philippians, and close to the end of what we were talking about last week, I pointed out that the Bible put, in a sense, two ways to live. One way is the way of death. The other way is the way of life. And the way of life is the way of undeserved kindness and mercy from God. And so, there's the choice, and we are to try as much as possible. Well, first of all, if you give your life to Christ, you are on the way of life, the way of undeserved kindness from God. And so, we should try to live, not out of the old way, but out of this new way. And so, the text that we're looking at today, it's Paul's letters coming to an end. And what he does is he gives some quick bullet point commands in terms of how you live if you are on the way, if your quest is to be on the way of life, of undeserved kindness. And so, I could probably preach seven sermons on these next few verses, because there's these bullet points. This, this, this, this, this, this, this. And I want to at least cover most of them. And so, it means I'm going to, we're just going to go through it. We're going to read the Bible together, which is really good. So, open your Bible. And we're going to be looking at
Philippians chapter 4, verses 4 through 9. And just so you know, as we go into it, the Bible here, Paul is giving very profound and wise advice about how to deal with several profound human

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issues. The first one is anxiety and worry. Like, if I was to ask who here has not had any worries or anxiety over the last month, and if one person put your hand up, the rest of you wouldn't believe them. We all deal with this as a common thing. And then the other, another one of the issues is self-preoccupation. And if we don't think we deal with that, we should just ask your wife or your husband or your best friend. And they'd say, yeah, yeah, no, that's an issue for them too.
They have some issues with self-preoccupation. And with it all, as a little bit about how you talk to yourself, I have a problem of not only talking to myself inside my head, but outside my head.
But that's for marriage counseling because it confuses my wife. But it's talking about some very important topics and gives some very wise advice. So, let's have a look at it. As I said, it's Philippians chapter 4, beginning with verse 4, which I looked at very briefly last week. But it begins this, it's sort of a, verse 4 is both bringing the last bit to an end and looking forward to the final bit. So, we need to read it again. And here's how it goes. Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say, rejoice. And it's a command. And just as I mentioned last week, the Bible's not foolish.
[6:08] Like, even from a human point of view, people should ask themselves, why have people still been reading this book for almost 2,000 years? And you say, well, that's not really a good thing to say, George, because look at the Koran. Well, nobody reads the Koran. Like, virtually no Muslim that you meet actually reads the Koran. But Christians read the Bible, or should. And so, why is it that people still read the Bible? Well, it's not because it's really foolish. So, the Bible isn't saying, commanding you to have a particular emotion, excuse me, because we all know that commanding an emotion doesn't work. And it's not saying that when it says, rejoice in the Lord always, again, I will say rejoice. It's not saying that that's the only emotion you should ever have.

The emotion connected with being, with rejoicing. The Bible's not saying it's a sin to be sad, or to be unhappy. It's not saying that at all. It's saying something far more profound. It's, and the other thing about this is, and this is really important. Somebody at a coffee shop was asking me what I was, I actually gave them, you know, one of those little booklets that you can mark in. I gave them one of those, because they were, you know, curious about what I preach on. And I said, just before you read it, you need to know that Paul wrote this while he was in prison, potentially on, to be killed. And he's there unjustly, and there are people who want to kill him.
And he goes, and they go, oh wow. Like, so this isn't just, this isn't just, Paul's not writing this as like a rich trust fund kid, who grew up with a silver spoon in his mouth and has lots of servants just pleasing him. He's writing this from jail. And so what is it that he says, what does it mean when he says, rejoice in the Lord always? Again, I will say, rejoice. What is the command?
Well, the command is all around what you put your trust in and how you evaluate situations. That's a bit of an addition that I didn't talk about last week, which I'd like to add.
So if you were to, if people were to listen in to your own internal conversation as you're assessing situations, or if they were to hear you talking out loud to your best friend or whatever, and if they were to hear, how do you think what's going to happen to you next? Is it going to, are you going to fail or are you going to succeed? Well, some of us in certain situations, we say, you know, I'm going to fail. I lose all the time. I'm just a failure. Things always go wrong for me.
[8:53] Things never work out for me. I never get picked. I never, like that's the self-conversation for some people. Actually, for some people, that's what their conversation is all the time about everything.

But for most of us, it's how we talk about certain things. And then if we talk about some other things that we think we're going to succeed in, and we talk about it, and it will reveal why we think we will succeed, why we think we will triumph. And that's what this word, rejoice in the Lord always, again, I will say rejoice. It's addressing to you. It's not telling you to change your emotions.
It's telling you, inviting you to re-center and re-understand how to assess a situation and why it is possible that you will succeed. I'll give you a very clear example. Actually, from this work this week, I was really struggling over the fact that I couldn't sort of do a classic sermon like this in terms of having one primary point and having it all structured and all of this type of stuff. And then it sort of, it's really funny. I think maybe it's one of the big lessons that God wanted to teach me this week. Because here I am going to tell you about this, but I wasn't actually practicing it. And it came to me, George, you actually think your success in a sermon is by following some type of rhetorical device? Like that's a pretty foolish thing to base your confidence in. Like your confidence should be that this is God's word. Your confidence should be that God speaks. Your confidence should be that the Holy Spirit works through his word.

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That's what your confidence should be, not your rhetorical ability. And it's like that, you know, for all sorts of things. So we might not know whether we're going to get accepted into a graduate school or whether this will happen or that will happen. But the Bible wants us to begin to rehearse to ourselves, both out loud and internally, remembering who God is and how great and powerful he is, and that that should be the basis of our confidence of being able to move forward. And that's in terms of where we want to succeed. But if we are captured by constant putting ourselves down, then we even more need to hear this command.
We need to say, I mean, it's not a matter of changing how you feel, but saying, there is a great, I have a Father in heaven who loves me. And I live in his world.
[11:27] And he has sent me a Savior. And he will bring me to glory. And he will never leave me or abandon me. And even if this is the worst of all possible situations, and I am about to enter into the valley of the shadow of death, I have a good shepherd who has gone before me, not only into the valley of the shadow of death, but into death itself. And he will walk with me in this hard time. And it could go on.

Now that doesn't necessarily make you feel better, although it will actually. And if you get moments of joy, it comes sideways. Because the command is all about keeping, in a sense, taking your eyes off yourself for a moment, and putting your eyes and your affections all on the great God who loves you, and the Savior who died for you.
Now, I'd love to do a whole sermon on this next point. And for some Canadians, I think they'd find it quite shocking. But it's a really important aspect of the whole Christian walk. Look at verse 5.
Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. God wants you to be reasonable. He wants you to use your reason to the best of your ability.
Some of you have maybe a sub-100 IQ. Some of you, I don't know, have a 100-squared IQ. Whatever it is, your ability to think, He wants you to use it to the best of your absolute ability.
[13:15] And reasonableness is not just that. It's a matter of being kind and patient and considerate as you are looking for the reasons and considering the reasons. But here's the big thing. And then we'll move on to the bigger points. It is not unusual for gurus to have either to say this specifically out loud. And if it's not out loud, it's implied. And that is, leave your shoes... You know, you're going to come into their presence to get the wisdom from the guru. Leave your shoes and your mind at the door.

And Jesus never says to you, leave your shoes and your mind at the door. He says, come to me with your mind. Come to me with your thinking. I want to teach you the wonders of learning how to be reasonable.
Now, you'll notice this thing here in verse 5 that sounds a little bit like a hallmark type moment. Verse 5 again, let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand. And that just sounds a little bit like a hallmark type of moment. The Lord is at hand. But actually, it's...
In some ways, if I was to have tried to group this all around a particular theme, I probably would have begun with the Lord is at hand and then made the sub points from it. Because it's one of those things that we just skip over. But it's very, very, very important. And it's really important to help us to deal with anxiety. It's important for us to deal with self-preoccupation. It's not mere religious sentiment. The other day... So I'm hard of hearing. I have next to no hearing out of my right ear. And so the other day, my wife said something to me and I heard a murmur that I knew was her, but I hadn't the vaguest idea in the world what she was saying. And I asked her to repeat herself.
[15:13] And I couldn't hear her over the other noises in the kitchen. So I went right up to her so I could hear her. Now, she would tell you and I would agree that I should do that more, listen to her more.

And that's true. But once again, that's a marriage sermon, not a sermon like this for us today. But I go... I'm at hand. Because I want to hear what she has to say. And I want to be able to respond to what she has to say. So I go right up close. And that's on one hand, the idea which has been communicated here, is that the Lord is close. He's right. For us as Christians, He is in our midst. But who is in our midst? The one we sang about earlier. The one who is in our midst. The one who is at hand. The one who comes close so that He can hear. And God doesn't need to come close to hear. He comes close so that you know that He's close to hear. Be able to hear us. He is the almighty. He is the creator of all things.

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He is the sustainer of all things. He is the one who raises nations up and puts nations down. He is the one who can perform miracles. He is the one who will bring all things to their proper end.
A lot of our anxiety has to do with getting certain types of relationships all confused and mixed up. A big part of our analogy of our worries is that we think that people are big and we are small.
[16:47] And so we live under lots of anxiety. Our mom is big, our husband, our ex-husband, our kids, our boss, the creditor, the professor, our neighbor. They're really, really big. And we're just small. And we're tiny. And we have nothing we can do about it. And that creates lots of anxiety within us. And so it's really important to understand that the Lord is at hand, especially, and I'm going to build to a bit about why that's exactly really important good news for everybody.

That's one of the many reasons why, if you're not a Christian, you should give your life to Christ. And another source of constant anxiety for people is when we see ourselves as really big and everybody else is small. And while this might not seem as if it would cause anxiety, in fact, it actually seems sort of like what all of the self-help gurus are trying to teach us as to how we should make ourselves really big and all. But, you know, the problem with us being big and other people small is that even that very, very idea is it's highly competitive. It's almost, even though we can have, you know, nice ways to talk about it and euphemisms and all of that type of stuff, it really just sort of means that life is like a greasy pole and you've got to climb the greasy pole and you can't climb the greasy pole above others unless you're stepping on them to get higher up the pole. And that causes an unrecognized anxiety anxiety and even a recognized anxiety because the excellencies and promotions of other people cause us worry and anxiety because we're addicted to seeing ourselves as big and other people as small.
So partly when the Lord is at hand is here, the message is that we need to understand that God is big and people are small and understand that I am small in context to the fact that God is really big. But that's actually really scary too. Now, I'm not a really huge guy, but I am big enough that when I get into, go into an airplane, and if you've been in an airplane for a little while, I mean, I know it's probably just that I've been getting bigger and bigger as I get older, but it really seems as if the seats are getting smaller and smaller and smaller. And I can well imagine that if I'm coming down the aisle to get on a plane and there's two people and there's a middle seat, they're thinking, I sure hope he doesn't sit here. I sure hope. I'm looking for somebody who's five foot tall, 95 pounds to come and sit between me. I don't want somebody like George, you know? And so the idea that God is big and we're small or that God is big and other people are small, that's actually not very, very helpful to a lot of people because the image that automatically comes to us is that the bigness of God will crush us. It will invade our space. It will make us feel unbelievably cramped.
They'll be mean to us. I was telling somebody in a coffee shop the other day that, and then we got interrupted, we couldn't go any further in it. I told them that I don't believe in the God that most Canadians believe in, which surprised them. I said, I don't believe the God that most Canadians believe in.
[20:19] And then they said, well, I said, one of the things is that most Canadians, the way they understand God, is really how they should understand a demon. Because demons want to present themselves as being very, very big, but they're only big to control you, to dominate you, to rule you, to take you over.

At that point in time, other people came in and I couldn't finish the conversation with them. But you see, this is where the gospel is so unbelievably important.
It is a source of reasonableness. It is the source, it is one of the keys to beginning to have anxiety have a less role in your life. It's one of the keys to beginning to understand that even though you're small, you can still accomplish some things. Even though you're weak, God can still use you.
That you have all the weakness you need already for God to do very mighty and wonderful things in you. That's a profound counterintuitive promise. You have all the weakness you need for God to work through you. You need to understand, I need to understand, I need to rehearse, I need to rejoice, I need to rehearse in my own mind. I need times like Sunday morning where we sing the hymns that John O. has picked and we remember the Lord's Supper and we hear the Bible being read to understand and once again that God is big and I am small and that is very, very good. And God did not, does not use his bigness to crush me. He could do it like that. He does not use his bigness to crush me. He used his almighty bigness to save me. The almighty God became Emmanuel, God with us, God amongst us, God with me in my mess and in my angularity and in my particularity. Almighty God came amongst us and almighty God loved me so much.

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Seeing my mess, seeing the mess I've done and made and he loved me so much that his God in the person of his son died on the cross for me.
[22:30] Who better to think of than one who knows you perfectly and still was willing to die for you because he loved you?

Who is it that would be better to think about than that God who is almighty? Who better to pour out your heart to? To bring your anxieties and your worries to? To bring those situations, to come to him and say, God, please help me. I need to see you as really, I need to see you as big. I confess, I see my husband as big or I see my kids as big or my friend or my neighbor or my mom or whatever it is. I see them as really, really big, but Father, I need to know that you are big.
Make that more real to my heart, Father, that I might start to see other people in their right size. So here it is when it says, rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say rejoice. Verse 4, verse 5, let you be reasonable, be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand. That is who is at Lord. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty, which we sang earlier.
Think of that hymn. That's the one who's at hand, who loves you. Now, the Lord is at hand leads you into the discussion of anxiety. Remember, this is a, every time I come across this verse, it's a very profound verse to me personally.
I've shared with you maybe more than once, but not for quite a long time. When I was in my mid-30s, I was having a whole range of heart problems. And, um, and, uh, it didn't help that I was in rural Canada, and when I went to the doctor about it, he, he thought that I had a, uh, uh, both that my valves were broken and that I had a profound heart disease.
[24:33] And he actually told me I should try to do absolutely no, nothing at all of any exertion for a period of time. And, um, my family doctor, uh, because he knew me quite well, was skeptical about it.

And I ended up being able, at the time I, I was running probably 60 miles a week and doing other exercises. I was very fit. And, um, um, um, he sent me to the Heart Institute in Ottawa.
I actually was able to get in very quickly because I ran so many miles and there was a doctor at the time who specialized in people like me who were long distance runners who had heart trouble. And there's not many of us. So he took me in right away, uh, because he was curious to do all his tests. And it turned out, I can't remember the name of it, but I had a, I have, not had, I have a heart condition where if I have too much accumulated stress and worry and anxiety, if I accumulate too much of that, I will develop a range of heart symptoms.
He, uh, he told me that if it happens to me again, it means I have to tell my wife and my church that I need to go fishing for a month. And just sort of chill out.
[25:49] Uh, but here's the thing. If somebody had asked me, are you an anxious person? I would have said no. Do you worry? I would have said no. I mean, I, I know I'm very thick, but here's the thing about anxiety.

Well, actually let's read the text. Verse five is the last part of verse five. 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.
A lot of us don't experience our worry and anxiety directly.
It's one of the things that, that makes it so hard for us is that it's sort of, um, we can be very profoundly unconscious about it, even though other people, uh, could see it in us.
Um, so that, that's a, a very, very big problem. And if you don't think you're anxious and worried, it's going to be hard to deal with it. And the other thing is, and this makes it always relevant to everybody, is that a lot of times what we do, apart from being in denial about worry, is that we try to numb the worry.
[27:22] And how do you numb worry? You numb worry, uh, with, um, with porn, with alcohol, with drugs, with risky behavior, with shopping, with, well, you can begin to fill in some of the other blanks of what people do to numb their worry and their anxiety.

And if any of you have ever been in any of those situations, these ways of numbing worry and anxiety are profoundly destructive, and they're completely counterintuitive, they're completely counterproductive.
Because what happens is you, you numb your, your worry and your anxiety, uh, let's say with porn, or with, uh, with gambling, or with shopping. And then it, it numbs it for a moment, but afterwards

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you're actually filled with, filled with shame.
And you're actually filled with more worry. Because you not only didn't deal with the issue at hand, you've done something else which was wrong. And that makes you worry more.
And, and so the devil has a great time with you. He can, he can just, he can play with you. And so, so this, this advice isn't saying here that if you experience anxiety, you're not Christian.
[28:39] What it's telling you is this. If I'm driving, when I drive my car and I see the low fuel indicator light come on, I know that it means I know I need to go get some gas.

And when you feel anxiety in your life, it's God telling you, friend, child, it's time to pray. It's time to pray.
And he's also probably telling you, and George, it's time to rejoice. I want you to think a little bit about my greatness and my goodness. I want you to think a little bit about my son who died on the cross for you.
And that's what it's saying. The Lord is at hand. Verse six, do not be anxious about anything. In other words, it's saying don't double down on your anxiety. Don't ignore it. Nothing like that.
You're anxious. What do you need to do? Pray. With supplication, prayer, thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.
[29:45] And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. And what does that mean? And how is it, is it saying that, like some of you might be thinking, George, I've tried to pray this verse all the time and I don't experience peace.

And George, isn't this even like an attempt of emotional manipulation that I, you know, I'm feeling stressed and anxious so I'm going to pray. Because praying is better than looking at porn or better than gambling or better than going on a shopping binge.
You know, by the way, yeah, you know, like if you're really, really struggling with worry, don't go on your computer to look at Amazon or anything like that. It's not going to help you. Like you're just going to spend money that you, especially if you use a credit card, right?
It's just going to make it all worse. So, but George, I don't feel the prayer and I've prayed about things and God never seems to say yes. Just the other day I was talking to somebody, I'm not always very good at catching on this, and they just say, well, I pray all the time and nothing happens.
And when people say that to me, it's like a mic drop moment for them. They think they've just clenched the argument. And, well, here's what's going on. A couple of things as I'm going to be wrapping this sermon up, you know, with this and just a final comment about something else.
[31:05] Most of us think of prayer a little bit like the fellow who came into the coffee shop late Friday afternoon. So I'm in Centretown. I'm in a coffee shop and a person comes in and the owners tell him to not come in and he ignores them.

And he immediately comes up to me and asks for money. And then he goes up to another person for money and another person for money and another person for money. And when the store owner tried to get him to leave, he yelled at the owner, cursed him out, and then went ahead and kept asking different clients for money.
And one person actually gave him some money, which was a mistake on her part. But here's the thing. A lot of us think of prayer.
Obviously, we don't think of ourselves as a street person with an anger problem, going around asking strangers for whom we have absolutely no interest in a relationship with for money.
But that's functionally how most of us pray. Send out little requests to God. I want this. I need this. I need that. Stop this. Give me this.
[32:13] And we don't really want to have a relationship with God. You see, God hears the prayers of people who are outside the Christian faith. He hears the prayers. He listens to every prayer.

It doesn't matter if you're a Muslim or a Hindu or a Buddhist or an atheist. An atheist pray. He hears all their prayers. But in their heart, they're just sending out little requests. We're really like, and Christians do it too, like just asking for money.
But we have no desire for relationship. And here's the thing about this, how this thing works here, where it says, 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.

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See, Jesus died on the cross that we might have peace with God. Peace with God is a gift that comes from God because we couldn't make peace with God.
[33:15] We couldn't be in harmony with God. God had to do what only he could do and we could never do, to do what was required for us to be in harmony, in balance, in a right relationship with God.

God had to do what we could do and we could never do. And that's who God is and that's what he's done for us in his son. And we need to understand that prayer is the great conversation.
That's what prayer is. It's the great conversation. When we see this here, this is yet again God's reminder. He said to me, George, I want you to be part of the great conversation, which is me talking to you and you talking to me for the rest of your life.
That's the great conversation. My conversations with my wife change me. My conversations with you change me. My conversations at the coffee shop change me.
They might change other people as well, but they change me because it's a conversation. It's a conversation in the context of a relationship. And that's why we begin to get changed by the great conversation.
[34:26] And here's what the peace of God means. The peace of God is not an emotion. The peace of God is not an emotion. It's something way better.

Remember I said that if you go down and look, what is it here again? It says it in verse 6, verse 7, and the peace of God, which surpasses all, understand, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.
And if you look down to verse 9, it says, what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. It's the peace of God from the God of peace.
And he makes our relationship right with him by what his son has done for us on the cross, and we receive that by grace. And peace with God means we begin, we're in a right relationship with him, and that we live and grow out of that.
And it's within this context that we embark on the great conversation of pouring our heart out to God about everything. Everything from we need a parking spot, to, you know, we forgot our money and we really need a coffee, to really, really, really big things like what's going on between Iran and Israel right now.
[35:39] God is saying here, you can talk to me about anything. Let's have a conversation about it. It's the quest of your life to have an ongoing conversation with me about the biggest and the smallest things in your life.

And the peace of God, which comes into this, is more like, don't think of an emotion, think of a mobile. mobile. But not like a mobile that you see over a baby's cradle, you know, which everything is, they're nice little cute, I don't know, unicorns or, I don't know, angels or something like that, or teddy bears.
No, no. What your life is like is not like that. What your life is, is you and I are made up of big things and small things, huge, angular, pointy things and tiny, tiny little things.
And you just need to imagine that it's like, our life is like a mobile made out of steel girders. And on those steel girders, some of the things are just the tiniest piece of thread, which holds some tiny thing.
And other things are huge, big, thick chains, which hold huge things, like Chevy Silverados or something like that. And all of that is kept in some type of a balance.
[36:46] And what God does is as you pour out your heart to him, as you rejoice in him and realize how great and good he is, and as you talk to him and as you're reading your word as part of the way that he speaks back to you, that he's bringing this chaotic and crazy whole jumble of things, of tiny, tiny little things and huge, hulking big things, and he's bringing all of them into the balance like a mobile.

He's doing that deep, structural work within you in this great conversation. When my body is in pain, all I can think of and feel is the pain.
When my body is healthy, isn't it interesting to think about your body? When your body is healthy, you don't feel it. When your body is in pain, all you can feel is the pain.
When your body is healthy, you can feel hunger, you can feel thirst, you can feel full, you can feel joy, you can feel prayerful, you can feel happy.

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And so the peace of God isn't a type of a valium that descends upon you to drug you. it's a restructuring and a restructuring of who you are and a reforming and a rebuilding of who you are so there is a balance that's maintained by God and given to you by a gift.
[38:13] And as that happens, you feel lots of different stuff because that's the way he made you.

Invite you to stand. Stand. This is what's, you know, so beautiful about gathering with God's people and his children and we come into the very presence of God.
God is literally present and listening to us. He is at hand. He is near. And we get to read his word. We get to sing his praises and rejoice in him and rehearse his greatness and his goodness.
And we get to gather around the table and remember that Jesus died to create a new relationship with each of us as individuals and also to be part of his people.
people. And so we rehearse these things. We remember these things. And because we don't just do it by ourselves but together on Sunday mornings, God's intention, that's the whole thing about verse 9 about hear and seeing and all that is that we're part of a people together that can walk with each other and pray for each other and support each other and pray that we will learn how to rejoice or rejoice with us.
[39:37] It's all part of God's great goodness to us. It's why the Lord's supper and his word and singing his praises are the standard fundamental pieces of Christian worship and we need to gather about.

But let's pray. Father, thank you so much that your son loved us so much that he died for us. Thank you, Father, that you are an almighty God but not almighty in a way that crushes us, that we should dread seeing you come towards us to be at hand, but that you are a God who is almighty to save and almighty to speak and almighty to rescue and almighty to be present and almighty to walk with us and almighty to help us to face the challenges of our lives and almighty to hear our prayers about our smallest and even our deepest anxieties.
Father, this is the God you are and we know that this is the God you are because we know Jesus and his death upon the cross that he was almighty to save and is almighty to save and we ask, Father, that you bring home to us in a deep way how almighty you are and how almighty your goodness and love and kindness and grace and gentleness and mercy is towards those who become your children by adoption and grace.
Father, bring these truths home deep to us and help them to help each other, help us to help ourselves and each other to rehearse and grow and live out of these things and we ask these things in Jesus' name.
Amen.

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