

When We are Anxious

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Date: 25 February 2018

[0 : 00] Many of you may not know the name John Patton. John Patton was a missionary to the place called the New Hebrides.

! And the New Hebrides is located just off of Australia. Now what's significant is that New Hebrides when John Patton the missionary went there, the place was full of cannibals.

The gospel had not been preached and the last missionaries that had visited had been eaten by the natives and by the residents. And so John Patton was compelled to go to the New Hebrides and he settled there.

And while he was there, he was in constant mortal danger from the residents and the inhabitants of the land. And he recounts in his autobiography an occasion when he arrived to his friend's village that he saw the people panicking.

And they had great anxiety. They had great fear and they were crying out and rushing about in despair because of the approaching armed savages.

[1 : 13] And so Patton urged them to make preparations to defend themselves. And as they began to make preparations, the inhabitants in the village looked up and they began to notice that the armed soldiers were approaching the shore.

And there was a horde of them. And so panic and anxiety overtook them and gripped them. And so they began to cry out to John Patton and said, we will all be killed and eaten today.

And mothers snatched up their children and fled to the bush. Others took refuge in the waters. And they just had their head above the waters since they could not swim, many of them.

And the chief of the village said to Patton, you must pray to God that he might deliver us. Otherwise, we all will die.

And the chief said, they will kill us all on your account. And that quickly. Pray. And Patton prayed.

[2 : 27] And as one only can pray when they are in the jaws of death and on the brink of eternity. God heard Patton's prayer and gave him peace so that he could say in the very midst of this armed group of people, that he felt God was near and omnipotent to do what seemed best in his sight.

And they looked up and they noticed that these armed savages were still. And then they looked again and they noticed that they were retreating.

And they fled and left suddenly. And so, John Patton, along with the inhabitants of the village, praised God and thanked him that he was pleased to deliver them from the jaws of death.

Now, many of you, I suppose, have not and probably will not be in some mortal danger similar to that. But many of you, however, will experience some form of anxiety.

And that anxiety may stem from whether it's financial, it may be also relational, or it may be health, or maybe some other means.

[3 : 45] But you and I will encounter some measure of anxiety. And the question is, when those situations occur, how will you respond?

What will you do when the temptation to be anxious or to worry confronts you? And so, most of us, if we are honest, we, when confronted with anxiety, we will probably not submit to the command of God to not fear.

If we are honest, most of us, when confronted also with anxiety or fear, will probably not seek the provision of God to pray.

And then finally, if we are also honest, most of us, when we even pray, are probably not trusting in the promise of God, in which he gives us and promises us peace.

And so, when fear or anxiety approaches and draws near, we should not only submit to the command and provision of God, but trust also in his promise.

[4 : 57] That we should trust in his promise. And in chapter 4 of the book of Philippians, we see here the apostle Paul, who is in prison.

And he writes to the church of Philippi there, and about the year of 62 AD. And he writes to them, seeking to encourage them, and specifically in the context in chapter 4, we will read verses 1 through 9.

The apostle Paul here gives them various exhortations. Reading Philippians chapter 4, beginning in verse 1. Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

I entreat you, dear, and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women who have labored side by side with me in the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand.

[6 : 13] In the verses we'll focus on. 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. 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. So read God's word. Let us ask God to help us now as we seek to receive benefit and blessing from his word.

Let's pray. Grant, almighty God, since you have been pleased to give to us now all that we need for life and godliness, in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, that we would truly submit our whole hearts and entire lives to your eternal word.

Lord, deliver us now from the enemy and from the temptations of distracting thoughts. Fix our minds upon the hope that is revealed in the scriptures and enable us by your spirit now to truly hear your word and then to do it.

[7 : 55] God is from being simply hear us of your word this morning and not do us of it. And may you also enable us by the spirit to put aside all malice and envy, jealousy and anger.

And instead, we would long and crave for the pure milk of your word so that we might be able to be built up in the holy faith and that we might also grow in respect to your salvation.

Lord, teach us now and grant to me especially that I would be faithful to your word and that the spirit would come and grant wisdom to apply this word. And that your people here, whether they are weak, might be strengthened, whether they are rejoicing, would rejoice even more.

And that those who are struggling would find help. And those who are outside of Christ would see the light of the gospel shining in the face of Jesus Christ. We ask these things now for the glory of God, for the good of our soul and for the advancement of your kingdom.

In the name of Jesus Christ, our risen Savior and Lord. Amen. In verses 6 and 7, we have here simply that when we are anxious, we are not only to submit to the command and provision of God, but we also should trust in the promise of God.

[9 : 20] Now, in verses 6, we are reminded that Paul is speaking to the church of Philippi. In verses 4 and 5, you see there that he has given to the church already some exhortation that they are to rejoice in the Lord and that they are to rejoice, he says.

And then in verse 5, he also reminds them that they are to let their reasonableness or let their patience be known to all men. And he points out that the Lord is near.

And then he goes on in verses 6 and 7, and he utters this command of God to anxious believers.

And so the apostle Paul, speaking with the full authority of God, under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, utters the command of God to anxious believers.

And he says this in verse 6, do not be anxious. Now, he simply means that he wants that the believers in Philippi at that time, that they should not be concerned or worried about whatever is taking place.

That they should be recognizing that it is not simply the word of Paul, but it is an injunction. It is Paul enjoining the believers there, not only then, but also to us now, that we are to submit to the command of God.

[10 : 37] Now, the command of God here is very plain, it's clear, and we don't need to belabor on it. It simply is that they are to submit to that command. Now, the question is, why did Paul himself issue such a command?

Paul is speaking to the church of Philippi, and the question is, why does Paul issue such a command to these believers? Now, he doesn't tell us clearly why it is, but in reading throughout the book, we can gather perhaps some reasons why Paul is issuing this command to the believers. And the first reason is that Paul is in prison. We see that in chapter 1. If you turn back to chapter 1, Paul is addressing the church, and he is in prison there.

We see there in verses 7, he speaks of, first of all, he says there in verse 7, that it is right for me to feel this way about you all. It is right for me.

Behold, I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. So he speaks there of the imprisonment.

[11 : 44] And then verse 13 and 14, he goes on and talks about how he wants them to know, in verse 12, what has happened to him. And that because he has been imprisoned there in the imperial guard, that all, he says there in verse 13, and to all the rest that are in prison for Christ, and that most of the brothers have become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, and are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

And so the Apostle Paul is in prison. And you have to think that here is the spiritual mentor. Here is their spiritual father who has been in prison, one who they certainly would look up to and have a heart and care for.

This was a precious and dear church to the Apostle Paul. He speaks with much passion, where he speaks of having this affection for this, love for them. And so here you would expect that those who are recipients of his love would have a tender concern for the Apostle while he's in prison.

Now, I think it's helpful for us to have some idea of what the prison actually was like in the first century. The prisons in the first century had poor ventilation, which could lead to suffocating heat and dehydration.

The prisons were often overcrowded so that there was horrific filth and the spread of disease and lice. And the Roman prisons were usually chained or manacled during the day.

[13 : 10] And at nighttime, they are fastened in their legs. And so that they were cramped and sometimes so trampled with one another that there was very little movement.

One historian noted that the iron from these chains would chafe and corrode the skin over time because of the chaining. And as far as food and drink, there was very little that they would have had.

In prison, there was enough food and drink just to give them survival. It was not for their health. Unless the individual in prison had the means themselves from outside or the help of friends, the food they ate was very sparse.

And so the daily rationing of food in prison was intended for bare survival. And so therefore, it was no surprise for the prisoners then to become seriously ill or to even die, or for many of them, who would wish to die.

And so you have to think now, if you were in the first century in Philippi and you knew the circumstance of what prison life was like, and here is your beloved mentor, here is your beloved spiritual father in prison, and you know that you have a concern for him.

[14 : 20] And so perhaps the church in Philippi had become anxious for the certain conditions and circumstances of the apostle Paul. But the Philippians not only probably were anxious due to Paul's imprisonment, but they were probably anxious because of one of their own beloved named Epaphroditus.

We see that in chapter 2 in verse 27 through 30. Epaphroditus was the one who actually brought the gift from the church of Philippi to Paul while he was in prison.

And while he was there, and on the way, it says in verse 27, you look there with me in chapter 2. In verse 27, it says there that, Indeed, he was ill.

Verse 25 first, sorry. I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need.

Now notice in verse 26, For he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. Indeed, he was ill near to death, but God had mercy, and not only on him, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

[15 : 36] And so the other reality is that here is the church who had sent out Epaphroditus, and he had become ill, and apparently he had become very ill, and word somehow had gotten back to the church that here is their beloved brother who had become very ill through these circumstances.

And you must remember that in the first century, they did not have the medical advancements that we would have, so that when we hear someone gets ill generally, we normally think of someone taking a pill or going to see a doctor or having some advantage of the medical advancement. But here in the first century, when someone got ill, it was pretty much dire often. You knew the reality that this person probably and perhaps could die. And so here the church perhaps also had concern for their brother Epaphroditus, and by this time, they would not have known of the circumstances of the apostle, of their beloved brother Epaphroditus.

But besides the imprisonment of Paul and the illness of Epaphroditus, the church probably also had concern themselves with suffering. We see that in chapter 1. In chapter 1 and verse 27, Paul writes to the church, and he speaks of how he says, Let their manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind, striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.

Now notice, And not frightened in anything by your opponents, that this is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation and that from God. For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ, you should not only believe in him, but also suffer for his sake.

[17:15] And so suffering was a reality for the church in Philippi. And so here you now have Paul writing to the church and saying to them that they should not be anxious, and perhaps because of his imprisonment, because of hearing of Epaphroditus, and also the reality of suffering.

Just imagine that you are in the first century, and you're sitting there, and you know the reality of suffering that takes place, and you know that Paul already is in prison, and you know the circumstances of prison, and so you can imagine now that here you are suffering for the sake of one who had been crucified in the first century, and you have believed upon this one.

And so now you have a situation where it would not be surprising that the believers there were actually concerned and even worried. And so the Apostle Paul tells them, do not be anxious, do not worry.

Now, if we recognize the command of God is that we are not to be anxious, the question is, some may ask, is why should we submit to the command of God?

Why submit to the command of God? Well, the obvious answer is that it is the word of the Sovereign Lord who is what? Commanding you and I to submit to him.

[18:28] It is none other than our Heavenly Father who cares for us and loves us, who has said, submit and obey to my command to not be anxious. Now, this command that God has uttered is just as authoritative as the command that you and I are not to worship any other false god.

just as authoritative as if when God says that you are not to have proud thoughts. It's just as authoritative as if he had said, you are not to murder.

It's just as authoritative as if God said that you are, what, not to be unbelieving. Now, it is true that the command that we are not to be anxious is not as serious and as grave as the command not to murder.

Yet, yet, the command still is serious in the sight of God. It is a command in which when God speaks, he says that all sin is serious and all sin deserves the consequence of sin, which is eternal punishment.

And so, when we think about the command itself, we must not just think that this is a light command, but we must recognize that you and I are to submit to this command that God has uttered.

[19:50] And so, just as you can imagine, if you were to observe a child who rebels against the plain, direct, and good command of a parent, you and I probably would frown upon such actions.

If you saw the plain, direct, and clear, and good command of a parent saying to a child you are not to do this, and you saw the child raise up and say no, you would frown.

How much more then when we think about our Heavenly Father who gives us a clear, plain, direct, and good command for us that we should not be worried, we should not be anxious about anything.

Now, the command itself is, as you see, is that we are not to be anxious about anything. And that obviously is extensive, it's broad, it's comprehensive. And you and I, when we look at our hearts and we are honest, we know that we are often tempted to be anxious about many things.

All of us, all of us are prone and tempted to anxiety. None of us can escape such reality. And so therefore, it is helpful that each one of us would begin to ask and recognize the peculiar temptations that you and I have with anxiety.

[21 : 14] You know that you are tempted a bit more in certain circumstances, in certain situations, to be anxious and to begin to be worried. For some of you, it may be your health concerns.

Secretly, you worry about your next visit to the doctor or you worry about the next medical test. Some may worry about their spouse or their child's present medical condition. For others, it may be financial concerns.

You worry about whether you have sufficient money to pay your bills, whether it's utilities, whether it's your mortgage, whether it's your rent. Whatever it is, some of us have anxiety about whether we have sufficient means just to live week to week or month to month.

or you may be worried about whether you have sufficient funds to support your child who wants to go to college or how you will fund their education. For others, it may be relationships.

You're anxious about strained relationships with family members or loved ones. You may find that your anxiety even moves to depression and discouragement. And so, you may be worried about a child and their future.

[22 : 20] You may be worried about the world and the direction it is going right now. Some of you look on the news and you worry about the world that we're living in and you find yourself growing in great anxiety about what's going to happen in the future.

Therefore, you and I should recognize then the types of circumstances that tend to make us worry and take hold of the command, asking God by the Spirit to enable us to actually submit wholeheartedly to His command and that when we find ourselves tempted that the Spirit of grace would guard our hearts and give us grace to submit to the command of God.

And so, let our Heavenly Father know how weak you are, how tempted you are to anxiety and that if you cannot submit to His command, you will not bring honor to His name.

Reason with God that if you do not submit to His command, that you will not bring honor to His name. Well, having seen first the command of God, which is that we are not to worry, we are not to be anxious about anything, let us now turn and give our attention to the provision of God to anxious believers.

The provision of God to anxious believers. And here we see that the Apostle Paul does three things in verses 6. He says, we should pray about everything, we should pray to God, and that we should pray with thanksgiving.

[23 : 50] We should pray about everything, we should pray to God, and that we should pray with thanksgiving. Let's first look at we should pray about everything. The provision of God to anxious believers, to you and to I and to the church in Philippi, is that we should pray about everything.

Nothing that troubles your heart, my heart, should be left to our own strength, but should be poured out before the Lord. Nothing that troubles our hearts and minds should not be brought before God in prayer.

In other words, there is nothing too great and there is nothing too small that we should not pray and let the Lord know what troubles and concerns us. So whatever is troubling your soul, whatever it is, the Lord says, bring it to me.

Your heavenly Father who cares for you and loves you says, bring your concern, whatever it is, to me. Now you notice that in verse 6 there are three words that are used.

You see the word prayer and supplication that your quest be made. Now some have tried to suggest that the Apostle Paul is making some distinction but really I'm not convinced that he is.

[25 : 00] He's really, I think, using synonyms to emphasize the importance of prayer. Essentially that if you are anxious, pray. If that your heart is worried, pray.

That's the, I think, the focus of the Apostle Paul. Some of you may know the name Joseph Scriven. He was an Irishman who was born in a well-to-do family.

Joseph Scriven graduated from Trinity College in London and shortly afterwards he became a teacher and after he became a teacher he fell in love and got engaged to a young woman and on the night before he was to get married his fiance drowned in an accident.

Heartbroken, filled with sorrow and despairing, he immigrated to Canada and there he began to give himself to work and he fell in love again with a young lady by the name of Eliza and as they were preparing for marriage Eliza also passed away before they got married.

And while this young man was heartbroken he received also news that his mother in Ireland was very sick and he actually did not have the money to go and comfort her.

[26 : 29] he wrote a little poem which I trust many of you would recognize. What a friend we have in Jesus. All our sins and grief to bear.

What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer. Oh, what peace we often forfeit. Oh, what needless pain we bear.

All because we do not carry everything to God in prayer. This man Joseph Scriven had been broken but he brought his prayer to God.

He brought everything to God in prayer. And so God invites us to bring everything to him in prayer. Whatever the anxiety whatever the worry whatever the concern take it to the Lord in prayer.

Well now you see that not only has God given us provision that we should pray about everything. He says now in verse 6 look back you see there he says that we should pray to God.

[27 : 35] Now while unbelievers seek comfort in the world and they seek many ways for comfort in the midst of their distress and anxiety some of them seek it by drugs some of them seek it by alcohol some seek it by pleasure some seek it by entertainment the unbeliever seeks all kinds of means for them to comfort their disturbed anxious mind but here the apostle Paul saying to the church in Philippi the means by which you should go is that you should bring it to the Lord in prayer bring it to God because he is the only present help in time of trouble he is the believer's rock and foundation the world may for a time go to see a therapist and may get help for a moment but that is only temporary that is only temporary help because when the real flood comes and when the real challenge comes and the anxious heart begins to tremble and to waver and to fret it is that moment that the believer has a solid rock upon which they can land and they can say that I have a God in whom I can trust and will hold my soul in the midst of this but the unbeliever does not have that the unbeliever does not have that and that is why for some of them despair and even take their own life in the midst of their own difficulties and so the apostle Paul here is saying that we should pray to God we should come to our father our heavenly father who knows everything about us and who cares for us and invites us to pray to him and so he encourages us to tell him our heart's concern just as if you would come to a friend and you would unbosom yourself and you would speak plainly and freely and you would tell him all of your concerns our father is saying come to me and tell me all that is concerning you and let me know freely pour out your soul but not only does the apostle Paul say to the church and to us that we should pray about everything we should pray to God then he says we should pray notice again with thanksgiving in verse 6 do not be anxious about anything but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving now this may surprise you in the midst of anxiety that you should give thanksgiving you may think what is there to give thanks for there's always something to give thanks for in the midst of your anxiety for example if you are under a difficult trial that is creating anxiety for you then in the midst of that trial you can give thanks to God that if he's given you strength to resist it that you can give thanks to God in the midst of that that Lord

I thank you that in the midst of this anxiety that you are strengthening me to resist that particular temptation to anxiety and that he's teaching you to depend upon him more and more if you have succumbed to anxiety and sin give thanks to God that he has made you more aware of your weakness and that he has not cast you away for this sin think about that the one sin that you commit the one sin that you and I have committed for anxiety is sufficient that God would be just to exercise judgment on you and I and so we should give thanks that God has not given us over to his judgment and again if you grow in anxiety because of the direction of the nation give thanks that in our land right now as many of you are worried and anxious about for various reasons that we are not the nation that we used to be give thanks that we still have the light of the gospel give thanks that we have freedom to worship and give thanks that you also have the possibility that God may be pleased to reverse the tide and send a revival in our land give thanks to the Lord whatever the circumstance is we always have reasons to give thanks no matter what the circumstance is and so give thanks to him that you still even this day still have ears to hear eyes to see and a mouth that can open to sing his praise and the truth is that when things are going well you and I can easily give thanks but it is when the difficulty comes when the trial comes that is when the Christian shines most clear that they can give thanks in the midst of it and it is the mark of the spirit of God that you can genuinely give thanks in whatever trial or difficulty you're in that is an evidence of the spirit of grace working in your soul that you can honestly in the midst of the most heartbreaking circumstance you can say Lord I thank you for this or for that and if you have difficulties giving thanks just think about all the spiritual blessings that you have your justification by

the blood of Christ your adoption in Christ your inheritance the hope of a resurrected body communion and fellowship with God all these spiritual blessings that you can give thanks for if you struggle with thankfulness and now if anyone had the temptation to grumble and complain in the midst of difficulty it must have been the apostle Paul the apostle Paul is in prison he has to deal with a church in which two of the believers are what in disputation and he has to also deal about whether or not these believers perhaps will remain faithful under suffering and so if anyone actually could say that they were not thankful is the apostle

Paul perhaps but notice how the apostle Paul in chapter one begins his letter notice how he begins he says in verse three in chapter one I thank my God in all my remembrance of you he's giving thanks even though he's in prison he's writing a letter telling them about how Yodi and Syntyche should what come in unity he's also concerned about whether or not the suffering that's taken place and yet the apostle Paul can begin I thank my God in all my remembrance of you always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now and so Paul the apostle is a model of what it's like to give thankfulness in the midst of whatever difficulty now for many of us we need to cultivate a spirit first of all of prayer itself to God in everything I trust that there's not one of you here not one among us who believes that they pray enough and much less praise in everything and so

I believe that all of us can cultivate more and more a disposition to pray to God more and more and so our heavenly father has removed all hindrances for you and I to come to in prayer he has justified us so that the guilt has been removed he has given to us a spirit to enable us to approach him and he's given to us the assurance that the blood of Christ cleanses us from all sin that whoever we are in Christ that you and I can approach God in prayer and so therefore let us cultivate a disposition to pray to God for everything now particularly when you're overcome with anxiety perhaps as some of us are more than others memorize text Matthew 6 verses 25 through 34 turn with me to Matthew chapter 6 many of you know this on the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew chapter 6 the Lord Jesus is uttering the Sermon on the Mount so memorize

[35 : 12] Matthew chapter 6 verses 25 through 34 here in verses 25 our Lord says therefore I tell you do not be anxious about your life what you will eat or what you will drink nor about your body what you will put on is not life more than food the body more than clothing look at the birds of the air they neither sow nor reap nor gather into bonds and yet your heavenly father feeds them are you not of more value than they memorize I won't read the rest memorize the key passages he says reason within your own soul that when you find yourself anxious take the text of Matthew 6 25 to 34 whether it's food and look at a bird next time go outside look at the bird of the air and bring the text back to your mind and say my heavenly father provides for these birds of the air and yet how much more valuable am I than they and he will provide for my need memorize also the text in 1st Peter 5 verse 7 where the

Lord tells us what we should be casting all our anxieties on him why because he cares for us he cares for us memorize it so that when the temptation comes that you take the text of scripture like the Lord Jesus when Satan came and tempted him what did the Lord Jesus do he took the word the sword of the word and produced it so that Satan may be defeated and so the same place you take the word of God casting all your anxieties on him because he cares for you and remind yourself that Lord I don't have strength help me by the spirit of God to enable me to take hold of your word and to say to the enemy that here God commands us not to be anxious but instead to pray and begin to pray then ask God for grace to believe and trust his providential will for your life some of some of us have more and some of us have less some of us have more anxieties because of situations and some of us have less whatever the situation whatever the anxiety is ask God to give the spirit to enable you to entrust in his infinite wisdom goodness and mercy so that you would believe in his loving care for you by truly casting all your anxieties on him because he cares for you and if you struggle ask the

Lord to help ask him for your help and if you're struggling you find yourself really struggling with anxiety reach out to a brother reach out to a sister and let them know say to the brother and sister I want you to pray for me because I am struggling with anxiety and so one serious prayer offered to a merciful God can make all the difference in your situation now we see in first of all the command of God to anxious believers and then we look which is we should not worry then we look at the provision of God to anxious believers which is that we should not we should pray well now let's look at the promise of God to anxious believers and the promise of God is that God will guard our hearts

with peace the promise of God to anxious believers is that God will guard our hearts with peace and that's in verse 7 turn back to Philippians chapter 4 in verse 7 we see it there and the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus and so we see here the apostle Paul says God promises peace first of all beyond our understanding God grants peace beyond our understanding or surpasses our understanding you see that right there in verse 7 now this peace is a unique peace it is a superlative peace it is a heavenly peace it's one that the world cannot even begin to comprehend much less enjoy it's the kind of peace that when you are in the midst of whatever difficult situation you're in you find yourself in the midst of that circumstance having an unusual measure of peace which you cannot begin to explain and so the apostle Paul assures the church in Philippi then and still today that we may experience a peace that transcends the merely human and natural thinking peace it is the kind of peace that you think about that when the apostle Paul is in prison he himself had experienced and so this peace is not a natural for a person under such circumstances but not only does God promise us peace beyond our understanding

God promises peace that guards our hearts you see there again and the peace of God will guard your hearts and your minds here you have the sovereign Lord bestows peace beyond our understanding and this peace guards our hearts and minds it will protect you and I from anxiety and from fear and by the heart it is when it says the heart he is referring to essentially the core of one's being it's referring to who the person is and so here the apostle Paul is saying that essentially that when God promises he's making a promise that as you are praying to him in faith that God himself his peace will protect will garrison will be like a military outpost to guard your heart in the midst of whatever trouble and difficulty that you are experiencing the same word that is God there is used in 2nd Corinthians chapter 11 verse 32 when Paul himself is in Damascus and the governor of Damascus ordered the gates of the city to be closed in order that he may try to arrest

[40 : 56] Paul and so the idea is that you think of the word God it is a military term you think of what security that is that it is God himself who is what promising that you will have the peace from him for your own heart and mind in the midst of that anxiety peace and God God promises not only peace that guards our heart he then says that God grants peace that is in Christ that's important notice there again in verse 7 that in the peace of God will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus in Christ Jesus now this peace that he's referring to in the context peace it's more of a subjective peace it's a peace in which the believer only the believers because in Christ is referring only to believers this is not a peace that the world can enjoy and they cannot experience and it's important to recognize that the subjective peace that the apostle

Paul is referring to in verse 6 and 7 is grounded and founded upon the objective peace with God in other words joys in the midst of the anxiety unless that peace had been first grounded with peace with God you remember the text in Romans chapter 5 in verse 1 it says what therefore having been justified by faith we have peace with God that is we have peace with God therefore having been justified by faith we have peace with God faith in Christ and so for anyone to experience and to enjoy the peace that the apostle Paul is referring to here must remember that that peace is grounded upon the reality of Christ atoning work it is the objective work upon which Christ died and was resurrected and so the gospel itself is called the gospel of peace and the prophet Isaiah spoke and addressed the Messiah to come would be called what the prince of peace and so it's important for us therefore that we never forget that when you and I begin to enjoy this peace that the apostle Paul here is speaking about that we remember that it came at a high cost none other than the blood of Christ and so the unbeliever himself may desire and may even yearn for such peace but they cannot enjoy such sweet promise of peace in Christ peace unless he or she is first reconciled to God through the gospel of peace by the prince of peace the unbeliever may be drawn and attempt whatever they may do all kinds of means to trade to what to mollify and to appease their own mind but unless they first come to be reconciled in Christ they cannot enjoy the peace that the apostle Paul is speaking here and so as you know scripture says that there is no peace for the wicked and that is first there is no peace because they are not reconciled to God and they cannot then enjoy peace of conscience and of mind later on in the midst of anxiety unless they trust in the atoning work of Christ but we've seen now that first the command of God to anxious believers we've seen also the provision of God to anxious believers and then finally we've seen the promise of God to anxious believers and perhaps for many of us and for many of you the area that you are probably most anxious and that probably grips more people than anything

is death when you are to cross over as they would say the Jordan river to enter into Canaan's land that is when many people find themselves most anxious and the believer has this unique privilege they have the word of God they have the promise of God that the peace of God in the midst of their own anxiety even in the moment of death that they can have peace and many many believers in the midst of that occasion who have been anxious have found peace in that very moment as they entered into Canaan's land and enjoyed the blessing of being with Christ for him amen let's pray Thank you.