

# "Pathways of Peace" Philippians 4:4–9

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[ 0 : 00 ] Before we open God's word together, let's just take a moment to ask the Lord's blessing. Lord, we come to you as people who are not perfect, people who are prone to worry, people who are prone to worry, people who are prone to worry, people who are prone to worry, people that can be anxious, people that can borrow trouble.

Lord, we recognize our frailty. And more importantly, Lord, you recognize it even greater than we do. And Lord, you have not, in response to that, scolded us or shamed us.

But rather, you have provided a way that we could have peace, a pathway to peace, that we could be less anxious people.

We can be a blessing to others and point people towards your son who is the Prince of Peace. So Lord, as we open your word today, help us to be firstly real about who we are and our hangups, our struggles, our propensities towards worry and fear.

But more importantly, let us dwell on and meditate upon and think about you. That you are the God of peace and the God who gives peace.

[ 1 : 24 ] You are the Prince of Peace. So Lord, we pray a blessing. We ask that you bless us this morning. We pray that we would grow in our trust in you, in prayer and in piety.

And Lord, we ask for your help. We pray this in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. We're in our last section of Philippians. This is in the last section.

Reverend George Sinclair was here last week and he wrapped up the text, preaching right to the end of verse 23 of chapter 4.

But we have not touched on verses 4 to 9. And that's what we will be looking at this week. And this is what we'll wrap up our series in Philippians. I had myself a Wednesday this week.

Okay? I had myself a Wednesday. What do I mean? Prayed about anxiety. We're going to be reading about anxiety. We had a day of anxiety. We were trying to sort out.

[ 2 : 26 ] It's been taking us a while to sign some stuff with our bank for our house. And I just had like a moment of like focus and energy, like a get stuff done kind of window.

And I hammered it down. And then there was like an error on the computer. And I had to phone a call center. And after like 30 minutes, this lady's like, yeah, you're going to have to go to a teller.

And I was not kind. I was rather rude. And I'm not justifying that at all. I think it was a horrible thing. And Christine, it was funny. She was sitting behind me.

And after like I like thumped my chest and told this person what's up, I turned around expecting her to be like, that's my man. And like her head was down.

And she was embarrassed. And I was like, that wasn't a good move on my part. Later on in the day, our sink or something with our powder room started leaking.

[ 3 : 28 ] And the fire alarm went off because we had like a drip into our bathroom ceiling. Anyways, I said it was a Wednesday. It was a Wednesday, right? It was an anxious day. Okay. In the grand scheme of things, it's small potatoes, okay?

Like it's like 25 bucks or 30 bucks to rent a fan to dry up our ceiling. A quick fix. We go to the teller at Scotiabank. Whatever. It's fine. It's okay, right?

But sometimes life isn't just full of anxiety and it's small potatoes. Sometimes it's real and heavy and difficult. A number of people this week, so this is all kind of, I just described my Wednesday, but a number of people that I'm connected to, none that go to this church, had themselves a week.

Two different marriages I learned this week were facing very serious struggle. And potentially were on the road to a separation, maybe even a divorce.

If you guys have read the news, last day of school in Almont was not a very great day for that small town in Almont. It was a horrendous day. I have family as well that have slept max two hours straight because sirens are going off because missiles are coming in.

[ 4 : 53 ] And it might land next to them, it might land on them. There's other real sources of anxiety in the world. Nevertheless, whether they're small or large, we face anxieties.

Difficult parts of life happen and there's no way around it. So whether it is a leaky ceiling or marriage trouble, we react the way we react.

And we suffer from worry and anxiety and fear. Paul is about to finish his letter. Again, this isn't the last section. It's the second to the last section.

And he is writing to this Philippian church, a church that he loves, a church that he has told a number of times, listen, have joy in the Lord.

Be united to each other in Christ. Follow Christ's imitation. Live as Christians. He has emphasized the importance constantly of choosing joy.

[ 6 : 05 ] And now we get to a section where he speaks about anxiety. And he doesn't let off the gas in his message of joy, but rather he puts the foot even farther down on the pedal.

Remember, one of these important details in Philipians is that Paul is in a very anxiety-inducing state himself.

He is in a Roman prison. He's been there about three years, give or take. He has heavy iron shackles on his wrists and his ankles. He is pretty lonely.

He has a bunch of close friends that have not visited him, although he has had some visitors. He is relying completely on the charity of others. He is in a very anxiety-inducing situation.

And Paul is going to share with the Philippian church and to us this morning the pathway to peace. And this pathway to peace is deeply connected to joy.

[ 7 : 11 ] And it might just very well be a section of scripture that could potentially change your life. There's such wisdom in these six short and punchy verses.

It's well worth our investigation. And really, we could break this up into multiple sermons because we could double-click on a lot of these words and do almost a word study and do a bit of a deep dive.

But for this morning, we're going to tackle these six verses together. And Paul will show us that the pathway for peace comes through two ways, primarily.

The first is through persistent prayer. We'll see that in verses four to seven. Really five to seven. And then the second pathway to peace is through a posture of piety.

Trying for alliteration, memorability, persistent prayer, a posture of piety. We'll jump right into it this morning. Point one. Look with me at verse four.

[ 8 : 12 ] I think we still have a few more of these. They are the scripture journals. You can grab one. It's our gift to you. Verse four, chapter four is on page 16. And this is what it says. Rejoice in the Lord always.

Again, I will say rejoice. Once again, we see joy, right? This is the letter of joy in the New Testament. We read again about joy.

And in this case, it's a double call to rejoice in the Lord. And I think this is not, again, a nice thing that Paul is saying. But in fact, it's crucial for us to understand everything that follows from verse four.

Everything from verse five to nine. And really, the entirety of the letter. And maybe even possibly the entirety of the Christian faith. It's about rejoicing in the Lord. And it's significant for us this morning because for some of us who are more prone to anxiety, I put myself in that camp, who are burdened by fear and worry.

It reminds us that the Christian life is not primarily one of despair or lack or self-punishment, but joy. This is what the Christian life's about.

[ 9 : 26 ] It's about joy. But this can also be a bit of a tough thing for us to swallow who might be a bit on the pessimistic side.

For when you hear something like, listen, you need to be happy. And maybe you're not hearing that, but maybe you are hearing that. Rejoice in the Lord. Have joy. Be happy. It can be another weight thrust upon your shoulders.

Because one of the hardest things for you to maintain is happiness. Maybe anxiety. Maybe fear. Maybe difficulty. Maybe worry.

That's your default. And for somebody to say, hey, listen, you need to be happy. It's kind of like, well, maybe you should scram. Like, don't tell me what to do. I'm not a happy person. I can't manufacture that.

And by the way, when we see a fake happiness, it's just, it reeks of inauthenticity. We don't like that. If people are happy, if I'm happy, it's because I want to be happy.

[ 10 : 26 ] I don't want to put on a face. Still, Paul, double command here. Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I say rejoice. And I will say that this command to rejoice in the Lord, it's just, it's deeply important in the pursuit of peace, in everything that follows.

So what does it mean? Rejoicing in the Lord means to grow in our contentment, knowing that in Christ God has redeemed mankind from evil, and that he has done so not begrudgingly because he is a God of mercy and love, and that it is his delight, it is his delight to rescue and redeem.

It means to grow in our contentment in the reality that God is sovereign over all creation, that he has created everything, and that when it is bent and broken and disfigured because of, in the Christian faith we call it sin, living not up to God's standards, missing the mark, engaging in a culture of evil and death rather than goodness and life, that he is not okay with that as the sovereign creator of all.

So what does he do? He doesn't hit the reset button. Instead, he looks to redeem and restore. So we grow in our contentment of the sovereignty of God over his creation.

We grow in the contentment that he knows our frame. The things we aspire to, the things we fail at, the things that we are ashamed of, the things that we like keeping buried in the closet, the hurt that we have endured, and also the hurt that we have caused.

[ 12 : 14 ] With such knowledge of us, even deeper than our own knowledge of ourselves, he still chooses to ransom and redeem.

And to rejoice in the Lord is to be content with that and to grow in our contentment. In short, to rejoice in the Lord is to think about and dwell upon and praise God for who he is and what he has done.

It is less of an emotion, although our emotions will inevitably follow suit if we are truly engaged in rejoicing the Lord. But it is less of an emotion and more of a choice that we are going to pursue joy in who God is, that he is unchanging and he is good.

So in light of that, let's continue on in verse 5. Again, we're still on page 16. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone.

The Lord is at hand. If you recall from a few weeks ago, we read about an ongoing, I mean I briefly mentioned this, an ongoing conflict between Judea and Syntyche.

[ 13 : 26 ] It's chapter 4, verses 1 to 3. It's a section just immediately before our section this morning. We have no idea what the issue is, what the conflict is.

These are two fellow workers in the faith, leaders in the church in Philippians, in Philippi rather. And there's some kind of issue at hand. And it's remarkable then that Paul, two verses later, he will speak of a reasonableness to be known amongst Christians.

And a reasonableness is very important. It would be important for Judea and Syntyche and it would be important for us as well. Listen, we are part of communities, workplaces, families, neighborhoods, streets.

And oftentimes these relationships will break down because offense is taken. We do not consider the feelings and thoughts or desires of others. We want peace, but we don't know where to find it.

And rather, rather pursuing peace, we end up participating in a type of war. We ignore the reality that there is a pathway to peace that involves humility, but instead we are so centered on our own experience and frustrations that we can't take a step back and consider the other side.

[ 15 : 01 ] We have a hard time with perspective. We aren't as charitable as we ought to be. At the core of our conflicts, we see people as very large threats.

And if we are Christians, oftentimes if we see people as threats or big problems as giant threats, we see God as tiny. We don't see him as mighty.

We don't see him as sovereign. We don't see him as able or capable of helping us in our time of need. We see him as small. People big, God small. The reality is, and this is a key part of being reasonable, it's to see reality in a real way.

It's about using the reason God has given us, the intellect God has given us, to embrace truth, and truth according to God's word.

And at the core of that, it's the opposite. It's actually God. He is the big one. And people are small. They are small. And I don't mean people are small as in like we disregard them.

[ 16 : 07 ] But what can somebody do to you? And I mean, the answer is quite a lot. But eternally. God is the creator of all things. We are creation.

And this is the ongoing problem with human evil and human frailty is we want to elevate ourselves into the place of creator.

Whatever happens to God, I mean, whether he gets bumped off the throne or we kind of ignore him, it's besides the point. We want to be creator.

We want to be elevated. We want to be on the throne. But thinking reasonably means to embrace truth. And the truth is that there is a creator and we are his creation.

And that as I talked about in terms of rejoicing in the Lord, this creator desires to redeem and to help and to restore. Reasonableness is therefore crucial for relationships and communities to flourish.

[ 17 : 09 ] And it is only heightened when we rejoice in the Lord. And this next part, right, in verse 5, the second part of it, the Lord is at hand. It is to say that the Lord is near. That there is a big God.

He is a creator of all things. But he is not some giant, huge deity, but eons away, inaccessible. But he is close. He is near.

God's posture is always to come towards us as his children. To extend love towards us. To do what he has always claimed to do.

To be amongst his people. To have his people come into his presence. It is the opening scene in Genesis chapter 1.

It is the closing scene at the end of Revelation that God is near. And he desires to be with his people. The Lord is near.

[ 18 : 13 ] He is close. So the reasonableness Paul refers to recognizes that God is big. And problems and people are small. And that help is available to us.

This means we have a divine, supernatural strength to avoid slander. And harshness.

And to fight against selfishness. To fight against thoughts and acts of violence and revenge. To engage in stalemates and cold wars.

Instead, we embrace a posture of peace, loving, justice, mercy, thoughtfulness, and the pursuit of understanding others. Putting ourselves in other people's shoes.

It requires us to think well and to act well. And Paul is saying that we are to be known by this as God's people. Yet, yet, we are still mortals.

[ 19 : 19 ] And although this reality is ours in Christ Jesus, we are people who tend to forget. Again, forgetting that God is big and people and situations are small.

So therefore, anxieties come and wash over us. And they stay with us. They make a home with us. And peace is not easily found.

So what comes next in verses 6 and 7 isn't a set of just practical fixes for anxiety causing problems. But it is God's pathway to peace that goes beyond the reasons for our worries entirely.

Let me read verses 6 and 7. 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. Paul is not referring to some kind of call to a Zen-like calm where we empty our minds, suspend our reason.

[ 20 : 34 ] It's very clear here and elsewhere in the Bible that God has given us minds and reason, and we ought to use them. They are not an impediment, but a gift.

Our reason and intellect are valuable qualities to be embraced. He also does not suggest that the church should never have concerns or worries full stop.

Earlier in Philippians, in chapter 2, verse 20, Paul uses the same word that he uses here for anxiety to express his concern for the Philippian church.

So it's not that we ought not to ever have concerns or worries, again, full stop. Instead, it refers to an unnecessary worry that can leave us crippled and paralyzed.

Involves letting fear take hold and living with a sense of impending doom. In our house, we call it borrowing trouble.

[ 21 : 38 ] I found... You will have your own example. This is an example from my life of how I borrow trouble.

If you're anything like me, and maybe you have... Sometimes you're afraid that people won't like you. Maybe it's low self-esteem. Maybe it's being people-pleasing.

Maybe it's all wrapped up into that. What you can often do is hold people at arm's length because you're assuming that soon, today, next week, later on, you will be rejected in some kind of way.

So you hold somebody at arm's length, but you hold somebody at arm's length long enough, they're your friend or you're connected to them, they're going to have an adverse reaction to that and might very well act in a way that makes you feel like you're rejected.

And all of a sudden, there's a bit of a self-fulfilling prophecy where my worry has... is extended out into my relationships that has caused more worry and more anxiety that will inevitably spill over and all of a sudden, I'm spiraling.

[ 22 : 56 ] This is the worry that Paul is pointing to. A worry and a concern that is not rooted in care, but it is rooted in fear that it is not full of faith that causes us to be crippled and paralyzed in our relationships.

The reality is, for many of us, anxiety is just a part of life. We deal with it as best we can, but at best, we deal with symptoms.

We soothe the pain, but never deal with the problem. And oftentimes, the ways in which we deal with the symptoms can be even more destructive.

In my case, the example I used, keeping people at arm's length, not trusting people in the way that maybe I should, not being as vulnerable as I need to be, or just being afraid of rejection.

Right? I deal with it in an adverse way that has never solved my problem and has always perpetuated it. This text encourages us to consider trying another solution.

[ 24 : 20 ] It encourages me to try another solution, and here's what it is. God's peace is a better source of help in the face of anxiety compared to anything we can develop or use.

So when it says, the peace that passes understanding, it is not to say that it's this kind of mysterious peace that falls upon us. We wake up, and all of a sudden, the gray clouds are gone, and the sun is shining, but rather, it speaks to a type of peace that is brought about with a pattern of life and a way forward that far exceeds anything that we could figure out on our own.

It promises a transcendence of circumstances, and a deep rest from our worries, but never promises to eliminate our worries completely, the source of our worries.

Nowhere does Paul promise that the immediate source of anxiety will cease to exist. I mean, it may very well stop. For Paul, church history tells us that it did stop. He was freed, but two years later, he is put back in a Roman prison, and then eventually, he will be beheaded.

So the problems may very well stop, but they might not. Instead, this peace addresses not just anxiety-inducing situations, but an anxiety-ridden heart and mind.

[ 25 : 50 ] In God's peace, what does it do? It transforms our hearts. It gives us a godly, divine perspective. If you remember back in chapter 3, Paul is talking about false teachers to avoid, and he says of them that their god is their belly, that they have their minds set on earthly things, and then immediately after, he says, but we are citizens of heaven.

The peace that God gives us helps us to live as citizens of heaven with a culture of heaven while we are still mortals here on earth. God's peace transforms our hearts.

We learn to converse with him, to praise him, to enjoy his goodness and love, and when anxieties come, we don't say, how do I figure this out myself, or how do I retreat back to Fort Daniel and set up all sorts of defense mechanisms?

Rather, I go to the Lord, and I don't give him the solution that I want, we cast our cares upon him. We thank him for who he is and what he has done.

We rejoice in the Lord again. We rejoice. God's peace acts as a powerful sentry, then, guarding us from spiritual collapse.

[ 27 : 12 ] And then all of a sudden, we can face things that we never thought we could face before. Today on the Christian calendar, we are recognizing and remembering the martyrs throughout church history.

A couple weeks ago in the Sunday follow-up, I included a link to just a summary of Polycarp. Polycarp was the disciple of John, the apostle. He was a bishop of Smyrna, and in his old age, a persecution hit the church, and he was convinced just to go to the countryside and pray.

News of his presence in the countryside came to the Roman authorities, and a garrison of Roman troops were sent out to take him back so that he could either recant or be martyred.

And he went with them. There's a few absolutely dynamite details in there, but for the sake of time, he is brought back to Smyrna.

He stands before the prefect or the governor or the pro-council, whoever it was, and this officer implored him to just deny Christ, to deny being an atheist.

[ 28 : 33 ] An atheist was somebody who was against the gods, not an atheist as we know them. To reject atheism and embrace the gods. And he says, after much prayer, this is what he was doing in the countryside, he says to this pro-council, Christ has been faithful my entire life.

I will not be unfaithful to him now. He would face a burning at the stake, and he says, my body will burn for an hour.

To those that were lighting up the pyre, he said, but where you are going, the flames will rage for eternity. I'm not suggesting saying that, by the way, to people that are giving you a hard time.

But just to say that the bravery of a man in his 80s, that bravery in the face of difficulty and very anxiety-inducing situation that he was facing, it did not come from himself.

It wasn't that he dug deep and just found that he could muster up the strength to die a faithful witness of Christ. No. But through prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, he made his request known to God.

[ 29 : 50 ] And what happened? The peace of God that passes all understanding, it guarded his heart and his mind in Christ Jesus. His body was killed.

He was a martyr. But this is the strength that's available for us. And by the way, this is a very freeing thing because it means that we don't have to worry about tomorrow, but when tomorrow comes, we give it to God and he will supply us with what we need in the time of need.

It's an absolutely wonderful testimony of God's strength through prayer. So this is what Paul means when he talks about peace that surpasses all understanding.

It is a peace that is designed by God and given to us by his spirit. It's a pathway to peace that will completely dwarf our very best efforts.

God is near. So pray to him and worship him and rejoice in him and expect that he will give you peace that far surpasses any peace that you think you can get.

[ 31 : 00 ] It will be a gift to you from God himself. This peace will begin to help us to think and act in a pious way. It will transform our lives because it will transform our minds and our thinkings.

It will guide us to imitate Christ and to live these reasonable, peaceable lives. And this is what we see in the second section, verses 8 and 9. A peace that comes through a posture of piety.

Read with me verses 8. Just 8 for now. We'll get to 9 shortly. Verse 8. Finally, brothers and sisters, 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.

You know, the term piety can oftentimes have a negative reputation, this idea of a false religiosity or a holier-than-thou attitude.

You see this in terms like puritanical, when somebody's being puritanical. It's not exactly a compliment. I will say, the writings of the Puritan, this is an aside, a little freebie, the writings of the Puritans, it's worth getting a copy of something.

[ 32 : 19 ] A bruised read is an excellent short read if you want to jump into some Puritan writings. It's a giant side note. However, I use the term piety intentionally.

When I say piety, it is an embracing of the things that God has called good. And as we think well, we will act well. And all of this, again, in light of God's strength and God's goodness and God who is giving us peace.

This section has seven or eight, however you look at it, whatever's to think about and to dwell upon and to meditate upon. But just in case you think there's something missing, what does Paul say here?

If there is anything worthy of praise, a bit of a catch-all there, think about these things. Paul here will really, God, through the Holy Spirit, is giving us a grid by which we can determine which values and goals are worth pursuing.

It encourages us to celebrate good and true and beautiful things wherever we find them. Since all goodness, truth, and beauty, it points towards and finds its genesis in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

[ 33 : 44 ] And this is just an excellent list to think about. And again, when I said we could double-click on parts of the sermon, this is the section, you can double-click on all these words, do a bit of a deep dive yourself.

But the embrace of these virtues, it serves as an incredible antidote to jealousy and corruption and slander.

And it helps us to not fear things that are not truly worth our concern or worry. It helps us to have disciplined thinking. And disciplined thinking is an antidote to anxious thoughts and behaviors.

Again, this isn't an overnight thing, right? This is something we grow into. We learn a disciple is somebody who is on the way, right? It is a process.

But we begin this process. We continue with this process. We grow in this process. This is how our values and virtues start to be transformed.

[ 34 : 44 ] And also our actions, for our actions are always downstream from our thinking and our values. Easier said than done, though, is it not? We need help and instruction.

And again, the wisdom of this passage for growing in peace and joy, it is rooted in the life of the church. I mean, how God uses the church, but what it is not rooted in is a by-myself, lone-wolf type of Christianity, which isn't really a biblical Christianity at all.

Read with me verse 9, and this is the last section. It says this, what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, that is the Apostle Paul, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

Once again, Paul is highlighting the significance of the body of Christ. We come to church to learn and to receive and to hear and to see. We have mentors.



We have people that we look to imitate. I mean, one of the beautiful things about considering the stories of the martyrs is that we have this wonderful example of men and women who have lived not a perfect life, but a life of faithfulness to the end that we can imitate.

[ 36 : 02 ] Why? Because they're special. No, because they're imitating Christ. Week after week, month after month, year after year, decade after decade, this reality washes over you and your values and the virtues that you cling to, they begin to transform and you let go of things that don't really matter or are selfish or slanderous or not peace loving and not giving of life and do not bring hope and joy and true including of the other.

And instead, it turns all that around. This is the body of Christ at work, the church. We observe the example throughout the body through time and through space and it is a model to follow but only in that the church seeks to imitate Christ.

I think I mentioned this a few weeks back but it's worth mentioning again. You will imitate something. You will. You are not as original as you think. You're just not.

And that's not a put down. It's just the reality of it. If you're being honest with yourself, you're not as original as you think. You will imitate something. You'll have this ideal in your mind, online, whatever, and you want to slowly or maybe not slowly curate your life and your fashion and kind of the way you live to imitate what you value.

Are you copying those who are experiencing the peace of God? Are you looking to imitate others that are embracing joy in Christ?

[ 37 : 56 ] Are you feeling more peace in the things that you seek to imitate or more anxiety? What are you choosing to embrace, church? What are you embracing?

We'll wrap up with this. These verses could possibly change your life and I think they will. They're worth memorizing, worth recalling, worth thinking about often.

Like I mentioned, verse 8 to 9 can become a wonderful and helpful and life-giving grid by which you discern life through. They serve, these verses serve as an antidote for many of our negative reactions to real and perceived anxieties of life.

They are an expression of the Lord's deep care and love for us, for those He loves, those who are called by Him and those for whom Jesus Christ has died.

However, there is a condition with this section. A condition attached to this joy and this pathway for peace. And we see it at the very end of verse 7 and it's implied also at the very end of verse 9.

[ 39 : 13 ] Verse 7 at the end, we'll read the full section. And the peace of God which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. verse 9, what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things and the God of peace will be with you.

Throughout Philippians, Paul talks about union with Christ, which is a reality for those who respond to His call. So when Christ saves us by grace and we respond by faith, we are united to Him.

He is the head, the church is the body, we are united to Christ so that we are His body. It's not a nice little wonderful thing that kind of comes up as something that makes us feel good.

It's a reality that describes a mystical union that God initiates that we simply receive where we become united to Him. It's remarkable so that where Christ goes, we too will go with Him.

So if you are in Christ, it means that there will never be a time from now until eternity when God is not with you.

[ 40 : 32 ] And He has done this because on the cross of Calvary He bore the very root of what causes our anxieties, our pains, our guilts, our hatreds, our regret, anything that may cause us worry or concern.

So really an important question to ask is, are you in Christ? Have you responded to Him by faith? If you have not, it is a wonderful gift and it is the beginning of a life of joy, not ease, okay, not ease, but joy and peace and love and hope.

And it is for you today. If you are hearing God's Word, you can respond right now and He will help you to respond. And if you are somebody who has confessed faith in Christ, if you are united to Christ, but you have forgotten what it means to embrace this Prince of Peace who we call Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, if you have forgotten what this is or if you are overcome with anxieties, if you are riddled with doubt, if you have borrowed trouble, then friends, remember afresh the command to rejoice in the Lord.

Again, Paul says to rejoice and to pray to Him and to seek His face and to give Him your worries and your anxieties and trust that in His timing, in His way, the peace of God from the God of peace will be yours in Christ Jesus.

It's yours. And this is why this section can transform your life. It can transform your life. It can be the start of remembering that you are in Christ and you can live as a citizen of heaven while you're still here on earth.

[ 42 : 34 ] Friends, let us rejoice in this truth. Let us take joy that Christ has made a pathway for peace for us and let us rejoice in Him all the living days of our life.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for the truth of your word. Lord, we thank you for the promise of peace and we thank you that the invitation to receive it is very simple, to respond to what Christ has done on the cross of Calvary.

Lord, help us by your spirit to be people that embrace joy and are given peace and know what it means to live in union with Christ Jesus from now to eternity.

And Lord, as we will inevitably face anxious days ahead, remind us that you are near and that you love to listen and that you desire to redeem and to rescue and to fix and to give peace in our time of need.

Pray this in Christ Jesus. Amen. Amen.