

# NOTES: “Jesus Gives Peace” Php. 4:4-7

#SCB

## WELCOME

My name is Tim

Do consulting work w/ churches

Been coming up from PDX regularly for 1.5 years to help

Worked with music

Now helping w/ preaching support

Great to be with you all again

Pray?

## INTRO

### **we live in a world of anxiety...**

You've probably heard stats:

Anxiety disorders (diagnosed) = most common mental illnesses in US

40 mil adults - 19% + of population

General reporting of anxiety symptoms → 33% of adults

50% of young people 18-24 report anxiety and/or depression

Forbes Health analysis of '23 US Census data - top 10 states where people feel “nervous, anxious or on the edge at least several days a week”

#1 - Utah 56%

#2 - Oregon 54%

#3 - Colorado 53%

#4 - West Virginia 53%

#5 - Washington 52%

My home church preached this passage a few weeks ago  
Andrew joked: “do we really need the stats though???”

We see it all around us  
We see it in ourselves

## **I am an anxious person...**

Just want to state clearly from the get go  
To avoid any sense of hypocrisy

I STRUGGLE with anxiety  
OFTEN

Like “Anxiety anonymous”

I know many of you struggle as well

God in his irony gave me this passage to speak  
And this week was a DOOZY !!!

## **Where can we find peace?**

What are we supposed to do with:

- Racing thoughts?
- Worry that won't stop?
- Sleepless nights?
- paralyzing fear that we can't shake?

Well,  
That brings us to the best known passage on the subject  
One of the most popular passages in the Bible

Philippians 4:4-7

How many of you have part of this passage on a:

- bible cover?
- art?
- stuck to your mirror to remind you in the mornings?
- mug?
- merch?
- tattoo?

Let's look at this well known passage

What it says about anxiety & peace

Even a little connection to Advent

## PHILIPPIANS 4:4-7

A little context...

Letter to 1st church plant

Writing from Rome in prison

End of the letter

Giving final encouragement as he knows the end is near

Continue growth in knowing Jesus and becoming more like him

Sharing that message with others

Until we see Jesus face to face

Key way to understand Paul's writing is...

## Indicative & Imperative

Two different kinds of verbs:

Indicative = sign or indication of something - you already have

Imperative = authoritative command - you need to do

Grammar nerds will know

I use my bible software

This passage = 4 imperative commands & 1 indicative result

## Command #1: Rejoice

**4 Rejoice in the Lord** always; again I will say, **rejoice**.

**rejoice** - feeling, be glad - not necessarily happiness, wellbeing despite circumstances

Theme of Php - mentioned 11 times

Remember:

Paul is in prison

He won't be released

He will eventually be executed

How can he "rejoice" ???

KEY = what is he rejoicing in ???

THE LORD !!!

I suspect he would NOT have chosen prison

But he can still rejoice in THE LORD

What God has done for him in Jesus

To the point where it transforms his whole outlook

He "rejoices" in what God is doing through his circumstances

As he gets to share Jesus with his guards (ch. 1)

Fascinating factoid I found in the Greek

### related words in Greek:

- charis = grace
- chara = joy
- chairo = rejoice
- charisma = gift

- eucharisteo = thanks (how Greeks still say thanks)

Means God's grace is related to joy & rejoicing

**Joy** (chara) comes from **grace** (charis) and is a **gift** (charisma)

We rejoice in God's GRACE!

In all its forms

Regardless of circumstances

Become "grace detectives" in your life

First command in the fight against anxiety: REJOICE !!!

## Command #2: Gentle Forbearance

**5** Let your **reasonableness** be **known to everyone**.

Overall, we have great English bible translations

But there are some Gk words that just don't have a direct English counterpart

**reasonableness** = gentleness, kindness, tolerance, fairness, lenience, forbearance

- "gentleness" = NIV's
- "graciousness" = CSB
- Aristotle related it to equity or "reasonableness"
- opposite of "quarrelsome" in Paul's letters

But also a connection to "forbearance" → Refraining to exercising a legal right

Fee calls this Paul's equivalent of 1 Peter 2:23:

*"When he was reviled, **he did not revile in return**; when he suffered, **he did not threaten**, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly."* (1 Peter 2:23, ESV)

So let's call this - "gentle forbearance"

And we are to let this...

**be known to everyone**

This = what we should be known for  
Lived out in life  
Should be our reputation


I got really convicted this week  
Talking with my wife about this  
She said I've made progress in this area  
But I got convicted about a friend I work with  
He = point person on a church network we're starting  
I've been hurt and burned by so many leader/point guys  
Convicted that I've not given him this grace  
That I jump to conclusions too quickly about him  
Need to ask questions before judging  
Need to push back against my anxiety  
Rooted in self-protection  
To be gentle with him  
Overlook more

Is that what we're known for as Christians?  
With those whom we disagree with?  
In an election year?

Oof !!!

So...  
Our joy in God's grace  
Leads us to be people of gentle forbearance

Because...

 The Lord **is at hand**;

**at hand** = near

2 fold reality...

1 - God is near to us, in our anxiety & in our joy

2 - Jesus' return is near, so act accordingly

Meant to be both comfort and a bit of a challenge

And because God is near...

## Command #3: Do Not Be Anxious

| **6a** do not be **anxious** about **anything**,

**anxious** - worry, undue concern

Rooted in control → we want things our way - when we don't get it, we worry

Rooted in fear → reviewing all negative possibilities - worst case scenarios

Racing thoughts - especially alone at night

Loops of thoughts we can't get past

Fear and dread that overshadow joy & hope

Can take the form of "anxiety attack"

Short of breath

Racing heart

Sweating

Dread

Panic

Similar symptoms to heart attack

Anxiety is rooted in unbelief and distrust in God & others

We feel we have to protect ourselves

Figure things out

'Cause no one else will

Paul says we are not to be anxious **about anything**

Total prohibition

It sounds intense and insensitive

But he doesn't just say STOP IT !!! (Newhart joke if time)

He gives us tools to fight

## Command #4: Prayer & Thanksgiving

Don't be anxious about ANYTHING

| **6b** but in **EVERYTHING**

Sharp contrast

| by **prayer** and **supplication** with **thanksgiving**

3 related terms...

prayer = the umbrella term

AND 2 specific kinds of prayer:

supplication = requests

thanksgiving = Gk. eucharistia → thankfulness in response to God's grace

| let your requests **be made known** to God.

Don't let anxiety take hold in ANY AREA

Instead

Fight back by bring EVERYTHING you are concerned about to God

Anxiety is like weeds

If you pull them quick they come out easy

If you wait they root deeper

Break off

Sprout new weeds quickly

Prayer pulls the weeds

And ongoing prayer of thanks and joy = casoron (weed inhibitor)



Tell God EXACTLY what you are worried about  
EXACTLY what you need or want  
Proactively find things to be THANKFUL for  
Even about those you feel threatened by

4 commands:

- rejoice
- gentle forbearance
- do not be anxious about anything
- bring EVERYTHING to God w/ thanks

When you do this...

## The Result: Peace

| <sup>7</sup> And **the peace of God,**

NOT peace from you

NOT peace from your circumstances

The peace OF GOD

3 times in Php. Paul calls God “the God of peace”

Paul lists “peace” as a fruit of the Holy Spirit - HIS WORK not ours

Peace = from God

Part of his character

That he gives his people as a supernatural gift - “charisma” of grace

Which is why Pauls says this is a peace...

| **which surpasses all understanding,**

understanding - Gk. Means “mind”

Peace that goes beyond your mind  
You can't think your way into God's peace

Beyond human comprehension  
Deeper than if we had ALL the answers  
Beyond logic  
Beyond circumstance  
Irrational  
Illogical

This peace...

**| will guard**

Keep safe  
Stand watch over  
Like the soldiers standing watch over Paul under arrest in Rome

It will  
Protect  
Like a fortified wall of protection

**| your hearts**

Fee "Center of being from which all life flows"

**| and your minds**

Thoughts, purposes, intentions, understanding

This peace will stand guard over  
The very thoughts that led to fear and distress  
That make our hearts race  
That rob sleep and joy from our lives

But it is only for those who are...

**| in Christ Jesus.**

Who trust him as creator, savior

Only through trusting relationship with Him

Can we receive God's gift of supernatural peace

## JESUS, ANXIETY & PEACE

Humans were originally born into total peace (OT Heb. "shalom")

Peace w/ God, one another and all creation

But they weren't satisfied with the arrangement

They wanted more

On their own terms

For their own glory

This broke their relationship with everything and everyone

Ushering in an age of anxiety ever since

Sin brings anxiety

The more we live lives of unbelief in our Creator

The more we see the present as all there really is

The more our we take our life into our own hands in control and isolation

Then, the more fear, worry and anxiety grow in our minds and hearts

But...

**|** "...God shows his love for us in that **while we were still sinners**, Christ died for us." (Romans 5:8, ESV)

But if I may be allowed the liberty with this verse

While were still living in unbelief

While we still insisted on rigid, autonomous control

While we were still racked and wrecked by fear and anxiety

God himself entered our world of anxiety and control  
Experienced all that it meant to be human  
Lived as the only human truly free from anxiety

His life should have seemed like good news  
His people had been waiting for centuries  
Longing for his arrival  
But when he finally arrived  
Most realized they preferred their sense of control  
They would choose anxiety & self-protection  
Over the peace that he offered

Especially religious leaders  
Saw him as a threat to their power and control  
And IN THEIR ANXIETY began plotting his death  
from his very first sermon  
Eventually they succeeded  
Brought him unjustly before Roman authorities  
On false charges  
Turned over to be crucified

Even then  
At the most painful, humiliating, lonely moment of all human experience  
Jesus perfectly lived out Paul's commands to us from Php. 4

He had a kind of joy in the experience:

*"...looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who **for the joy that was set before** him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:2, ESV)*

Certainly not happiness  
Certainly not joy in his present circumstances  
But joy in what they were accomplishing for others  
In the bigger picture  
In obedience to his Father  
In Love for all who would believe

He also showed the ultimate act of gentle forbearance:

“And Jesus said, “Father, **forgive them, for they know not what they do.**” And they cast lots to divide his garments.” (Luke 23:34, ESV)

Offered grace and forgiveness

In the midst of GREAT injustice

And, even in those circumstances, he committed his life to the Father in prayer:

“Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, “**Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!**” And having said this he breathed his last.” (Luke 23:46, ESV)

Jesus died for all our control, selfishness, pride, unbelief and anxiety

He took it to the grave with him

Rose victorious over all of it

So we could live a different life in Him

Jesus shows the ultimate example of God’s peace in his death

And he offers that same peace to us

And he says to us today

The same thing he said to his closest friends the night he was betrayed

“**Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.**” (John 14:27, ESV)

This = the gospel of peace

The good news of Jesus in the midst of our anxiety

## CULTIVATING A RESPONSE

As I said earlier, this week was a doozy of anxiety for me

Generally...

The holidays are becoming a challenging time for me recently

Some serious brokenness in my family

Holidays remind me of that

Specifically...

I am involved in starting a new church network w/ some friends

The first "new ministry thing" I've been a part of in a LONG time

I carry a LOT of wounds, scars & pain from ministry leadership

At times I have almost vowed to stop joining "new things"

Yet God's leading towards this network has been CLEAR

But it has been TRIGGERING

Like an alcoholic starting a new bar

Like a parent who lost a kid starting a youth ministry

Incredible potential for redemption

But anxiety, fear and self protection at every turn

Friends were in town this week for meetings

Found myself w/ TONS of anxiety

Couldn't sleep most nights

While studying this passage during the day

I'll be honest

It was NOT easy to live this out

My experience was NOT

Just pray a prayer and anxiety evaporated

It was more like 2am

Racing thoughts

Racking my brain for something to rejoice in

Feeling so lame at how few things I could find to be thankful in

But I stuck with it as best I could

The clouds parted a bit

I slept eventually

The Spirit broke through

With conviction like I mentioned earlier about gentle forbearance

I confessed these things to my friends

We prayed for each other

We argued but pressed through to unity

It was hard and exhausting

Peace did not come quickly  
But IT DID COME  
And joy followed  
But it's a daily battle

And so I want to challenge you to consider...

## **How can you cultivate these things beginning this week?**

Cultivate = slowly tending a crop/plant  
Consistent effort and care  
That bring growth  
But almost imperceptibly  
At least in the day to day

How can you cultivate...

**Rejoicing** in how God has blessed you  
Practicing **gentle forbearance** to ALL  
Going to God more often in **prayer** - individually and in community  
Bring more **requests** to Him  
Looking for things to be **thankful** for  
Growing in **awareness of God's presence**  
Longing for his **return**

And this is where we can close with a connection to Advent...

**The Lord is at hand** = Advent

We remember the LONGING of God's people for a savior  
We remember Jesus' coming in the 1st advent - His birth  
We remember that He is still near to us through His Spirit  
And we LONG for His return - the 2nd advent

And until then...

We long for his peace in our lives

The peace that the angels announced at his birth:

“*Glory to God in the highest,  
and on earth **peace** among those with **whom he is pleased!**” (Luke 2:14, ESV)*

Just as those angels pierced the darkness of the night with that message

We long for the light of God’s peace in the darkness of our anxiety

I want to invite you now to respond

To thank God for his grace for us in Christ

To bring all our cares to him right now in prayer

To rejoice in him through song

If you do this for the 1st time it’s called “becoming a Christian”

If you do this for the umpteenth time it’s called “walking with Jesus”

Let’s pray

Jesus, thank you for coming into our anxious world

Thank you for your grace

Draw us closer to you right now

Free us from the power of anxiety

Convict us of the ways we empower anxiety w/ fear, control & self protection

Protect us from the condemnation of the enemy

Make us conduits of peace to all those around us

Especially in this season

## RESPONSE

### COMMUNION

Where we remember Jesus death for us

Bread = broken body

Wine = blood shed



Remember that communion is often called the “eucharist”

Gk. Eucharisteo = thanks

Related to joy, grace, gift

We thank God for his grace

We rejoice in forgiveness for our self-sufficiency

We receive all of this as a gift

And as we do

We chip away at the power of anxiety in our hearts & minds

## **SONG**

Naomi picked the perfect song

Written by a friend of mine - Bob Kauflin

Hadn't heard this one before

But consider the words

Instead of “O come all ye faithful...”

O come, all you UNfaithful

Come, weak and unstable

Come, know you are not alone

O come, barren and waiting ones

Weary of praying, come

See what your God has done

Christ is born, Christ is born

Christ is born FOR YOU

