

Paul's Prescription for Peace

Philippians 4:4-13

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Verse 7 contains the **The Spiritual, Emotional & Mental Health We All Need!!** (The Peace That Passes Understanding) Verses 4- 6 & 8 -13 tell us how we can **obtain** and **maintain** this perfect peace. Let's go to the "pharmacy" of God's Word, where we see Paul's prescription for peace has several ingredients.

Dear friends in California treated us to a day of touring in San Francisco in 2002—during our first few months on the road. One of our many stops was Chinatown. We had been to lower Manhattan to Chinatown many times during our 12 years in New York City, but I had never been into a Chinese pharmacy before. It looked nothing like a Walgreens, CVS or Wal-Mart pharmacy. Ginseng roots filled large glass jars along with many other oriental, unique herbs. We watched as they pulled ingredients from many glass jars and placed them on a large table. After putting the right portion of each ingredient together, we watched as they wrapped them up together and handed them to the customer. The peace of God is obtained by several ingredients that are mixed together as we practice biblical living.



Verse 4 *Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice. Peace Comes When...*

1. There Is An Anthem Of Rejoicing (I Thess. 5:16)

The focal point of our rejoicing is the Lord. We can't rejoice in circumstances, current events, the actions of politicians, or the economy. But, we can always rejoice **in the Lord!**

Nehemiah 8:10- *the joy of the Lord is your strength;*

Habakkuk 3:17 & 18- *Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.*

Luke 10:20- *rejoice that your names are written heaven;*

One of the 9 fruit of the Spirit is JOY.

Proverbs 15:13 tells us, *A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.* Here's a saying of mine for you from this verse—**If you've been saved by grace, please inform your face!**

Verse 5 *Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Peace Comes When...*

2. There Is An Anticipation Of His Coming (Titus 2:13)

Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

“Looking” is an eager expectancy. His “appearing” should make us pure. (1 John 2:28; *And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. 3:2, 3 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.*



His anticipated appearing should also comfort us (1 Thess. 4:18) and give us abiding peace. The imminence of the rapture should cause us to wait with anticipation.

These next 3 ingredients, I call – “The Tranquil Trio”

Verse 6a *Be careful for nothing;... Peace Comes When...*

3. There Is An Absence Of Worrying (Matt. 6:25-34)

Several times in this Sermon on the Mount passage, Jesus says, “Take no thought.” Many times we obsess over problems, and clutter our mind with “what if’s” and “if only’s.” **Worry is doubting the provision of God—distrusting the promises of God—denying the power of God—and demeaning to the Person of God. (Phil. 4:19- He always supplies! Yet, we so consistently worry.)** Faith heals anxiety attacks.



Google Images has become a great source for Power Point and finding great graphics for my message handouts. This is an actual photograph of a street sign. Not sure where this is (though the Royal Palm at the top may indicate Florida or California), but that certainly would be a great address! Seriously, why worry when you can pray?!

Verse 6b & d ... but in every thing by prayer and supplication/ with thanksgiving/ let your requests be made known unto God.

Peace Comes When...

4. There Is An Abundance Of Praying (I Thess. 5:17)

Paul tells us to worry about nothing—pray about everything. The verse referenced here in 1st Thessalonians 5:17 commands us to “*Pray without ceasing.*” We certainly can’t have our eyes closed and our heads bowed during all the activities of our day, but there is not a time or activity that should crowd out or shut out silent prayers that God can hear.

Sweet Hour of Prayer

William Walford Written 1845

1. Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!
 That calls me from a world of care,
 And bids me at my Father’s throne
 Make all my wants and wishes known.
 In seasons of distress and grief,
 My soul has often found relief,
 And oft escaped the tempter’s snare,
 By thy return, sweet hour of prayer!

2. Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!
 The joys I feel, the bliss I share,
 Of those whose anxious spirits burn
 With strong desires for thy return!
 With such I hasten to the place
 Where God my Savior shows His face,
 And gladly take my station there,
 And wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer!

3. Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer!
 Thy wings shall my petition bear
 To Him whose truth and faithfulness
 Engage the waiting soul to bless.
 And since He bids me seek His face,
 Believe His Word and trust His grace,
 I’ll cast on Him my every care,
 And wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer!

What great lyrics and how pertinent they are in this twenty-first century. Cares can weigh you down. 1st Peter 5:7 must have been a source text for William Walford: *Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. God is Almighty—let Him carry your burdens.*

Verse 6cwith thanksgiving...
Peace Comes When...

5. There Is An Attitude Of Thanksgiving (I Thess. 5:18)

Gratitude is a submissive attitude that says, “God, you are in charge! Therefore, I’m going to thank you for **everything** you bring into my life.” Paul makes this very clear in 1st Thessalonians 5:18: *In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.* Romans 8:28 sheds light on why we should be thankful for everything God sends our way-- *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

Jude makes it crystal clear that murmuring and complaining (the opposite of thankfulness) is ungodly. ¹⁵ *To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.* ¹⁶ *These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men’s persons in admiration because of advantage.*

Numbers 1- 5 tell us how to obtain the peace of God, and
Numbers 6- 9 tell us how to maintain the peace of God!

Verse 8 *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, **think on these things.***

Peace Comes When...

6. There Is An Adjustment In Our Thinking (Romans 12:2)

“You are what you eat” is true nutritionally, and “you are what you think” is also true spiritually. Verse 8 gives us 8 categories to dwell on that will cause the peace of God to keep our minds healthy! Bring wrong thoughts into the captivity of Christ- 2 Corinthians 10:4 and 5.

(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;



Just as we see a prison guard locking this cell door, so we should picture a thought prison. Don't let your thoughts run wild. We are told to control our thoughts and bring them into **captivity!** Our soul has 3 major components: Mind, Will and Emotions. Exercise your will and lock up wrong thinking in your thought prison!

THOUGHT PRISON Be transformed by the renewing of your mind!

Verse 9 *Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.*

Peace Comes When...

7. There Is An Authenticity In Our Living (James 1:22-25; 4:17)

Our behavior should match our belief; our deportment should compliment our doctrine. True, Biblical doctrine is always according to godliness. (I Tim. 6:3) To not live what we say believe is to wear a mask and is a mockery of Biblical Christianity. Many times the Christian is robbed of the peace of God because of a troubled conscience. Are we artificial or authentic? Are we pretentious, or "Pauline"? Paul didn't say, "Do as I say—not as I do!" Rather, he could say, "Do as I say and as I do!"

Verses 10-12 *But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity.*

Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

Peace Comes When...

8. There Is An Advancement In Our Learning (2 Peter 3:18)

Paul is writing Philippians from prison, and from that environment he speaks of his contentment! **We all have so much to learn.** Growing in grace is a life-time quest. (2 Peter 1:3-9) We must always be climbing and pressing toward the mark. (Philippians 3:13 & 14) Way too many Christians have their spiritual transmission in neutral and are content with mediocrity! Sometimes we think of the Apostle Paul as someone who "had it all together" and didn't need to grow! No, he had to learn contentment. Paul would not have learned what he did without hardship, persecution, wrongful

imprisonment, and the long list of afflictions listed in 2 Corinthians 11:23-28. 1st Peter tells us that many of life's lessons are learned in the University of Hard Knocks. My mother's grandfather was a Church of the Brethren pastor. I have several books from his library. One that I especially treasure has the title—The University of Hard Knocks.



Verse 13 *I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*
Peace Comes When...

9. There Is An Acknowledgment Of Our Depending (John 15:5)

How we need Him every hour, and every minute of every hour!! A good companion verse to Philippians 4:13 is Philippians 1:6! *Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:* We are living in a totally self-sufficient culture. Acknowledging our dependence on God is going to run cross-grain! We must abide in the Vine, and always realize that we are only branches.

Ingredients to Obtain the Peace of God

**An Anthem of Rejoicing; An Anticipation of His Coming;
An Absence of Worrying; An Abundance of Praying; and
An Attitude of Thanksgiving**

Ingredients to Maintain the Peace of God

**An Adjustment in our Thinking; An Authenticity in our Living;
An Advancement in our Learning; and An Acknowledgement of our Depending**

In these stress-filled, stormy, perilous days, may we be grounded and settled. As the peace of God that passes all understanding keeps our hearts and minds, those around us will desire the same peace that is only found in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 5:1

*Therefore being justified by faith, we have **peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ:*

My friend, you will never know the peace of God spoken of in Philippians 4:7 until you experience peace with God found only when you are justified by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.