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# Sermon Notes

November 18, 2018

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

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**With Thanksgiving**  
Philippians 4:5b-7

## Worry, Confusion, Anxiety

- ❖ Philippians 4:6-7 are good words to memorize and carry in your heart
  - *do not be anxious about anything* is an admonition that can bless every single one of us
  - anxiety is one of the most common problems in our world today
  - these are good verses with which to diffuse anxiety
  - God's cure for anxiety
- ❖ What's going on in Paul's life when he writes these words?
  - in prison, chained to a Roman guard
  - serious words from God about the serious business of bringing our lives before God
    - developing dependence on God
    - remembering and celebrating the past
    - confessing our needs, dedicating our gifts, committing ourselves for God's purposes and glory

## The Lord is At Hand

- ❖ Philippians 4:6-7 actually begins at the end of v. 5!
  - *the Lord is at hand*
  - the whole promise of 4:6-7 rests on the fact that *the Lord is at hand*
- ❖ Spiritual stability
  - comes from standing firm in the Lord (v. 1)
  - requires us to cultivate peace and the fellowship of love among us (vv. 2-3)
  - causes us to *Rejoice in the Lord always* (v. 4)
  - springs from a spirit of humility (v. 5)
  - rests on knowing that the Lord is near (v. 5)
- ❖ If you understand who God is and know that the Lord is always near, it will cut the legs off of your anxiety
  - God is sovereign, in control, loving, and working everything out for His eternal purposes, His glory and your good
  - armed with that faith, you can stand strong and experience spiritual stability in the most serious times
  - only when your confidence in yourself is shattered and your trust is totally in God will you stand strong in the Lord
  - if it all depends on you, you will be anxious about everything!

## With Thanksgiving

- ❖ Spiritual stability leads us to react to our problems with thankful prayer
  - the importance of prayer and the attitude with which we should make our prayer
  - cry out to God with thanksgiving
  - why? because He is the God who promises to be with us in temptation and to work all things together for the good of those who love Him
- ❖ In the midst of threatening circumstances and trying times, God calls us to bring thanksgiving to Him
- ❖ Thank God for His
  - providence
  - purpose in the midst of problems
  - power that is always there
  - promises that He will never violate
  - perfecting work
- ❖ Thank God that He is doing what He wants in your life in order to accomplish what He wants with your life
  - praying “with thanksgiving” releases you from prisons of fear and worry because it makes you focus on God and His purposes for you in the middle of whatever you go through
  - God knows what you are facing and He can deal with it

## Perfect Peace

- ❖ Living and praying with thanksgiving leads to a peace that outstrips our ability to understand it
  - whatever answer God sends, God will give you peace
  - Isaiah 26:3, *You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.*
- ❖ God’s peace guards our hearts AND our minds
  - protected head to toe by God’s peace!
  - guard is a military term
  - the peace of God guards you against anxiety, fear, doubt, distress

## Personal Reflection

1. Where are worry, confusion and/or anxiety showing up in your life?
  2. What comfort does knowing “the Lord is at hand” bring you as you cast your burdens on Him?
  3. As you review Philippians 4:1-5, what areas of spiritual stability seem most present in your life? Which ones do you sense are most in need of strengthening?
  4. What prayer and supplication will you offer to God **with thanksgiving** this week?
1. In what area of your life are you most in need of God’s peace to guard your heart and mind? Ask God for that peace and thank Him for it in advance!