

Philippians 4

Sunday 4/28/2024

If you have your Bibles, turn to Philippians chapter 4. I apologize for my voice. Most of you know I have been battling tuberculosis or something for the last couple of weeks. Anybody that had the pleasure of listening to me try to sing last Saturday can tell that the voice is not that much better today than it was then. I prepared about a 20-minute message to be mixed in with about 40 minutes of coughing, so we are still going to get you out of here at a normal time. We will have a little bit of fun. But I do apologize for my voice. We will see if we can get through this.

I. The Pervasive Problem of Worry

Philippians chapter 4. I do want to talk to you guys about this morning. It is interesting because I think it actually does tie in with what we have been dealing with, because it is only natural when you start having basements flooding and just different things go wrong. I think there is one thing in life that we can all agree that we probably all struggle with, and certainly some of us more than others. But I think this is an issue that we all have to deal with. What I would like to give you today is a biblical approach to be able to do that. That is worry.

Worry is something that can absolutely cripple us in life. As Christians, and hopefully what we will see today, worry is really something that has no business being a part of our everyday lives. But we do. We worry about everything. We worry about money. We worry about our job. We worry about our school. We worry about exams. We worry about our family. We worry about our health. We worry about what people think about us. We worry about what we hear people say about us. We worry about things and possessions that we have in our lives. We worry about possessions that we do not have, that we wish we had. We worry about things happening to us, bad things happening to us. We worry about accidents and tragedies and just difficulties that might come our way in life. We worry about losing the things that we do have. The list goes on and on, and I could talk forever about all the different things that we worry about.

The truth of the matter is that we worry too much. We do not need to have that burden in our lives that we place on ourselves. We worry about not having enough time to do the things that we need to do or the things that we want to do. Yet we never give any thought to how much time we actually waste worrying about the things in our lives.

The English word for worry originally came from a word that meant "strangle," which I find pretty interesting. That is exactly what worry does to us. If it is uncontrolled, if we do not find a way to get on top of it in our lives, it absolutely strangles us. It strangles us spiritually; it strangles us emotionally. I read somewhere once that a dense fog that covers a seven-city block area, a hundred feet deep, is composed of less than one glass of water. That is divided into 60 billion microscopic little drops of water. When you think about that, that is not much. A glass of water, less than this bottle of water right here, can create enough fog to cripple a seven or eight block city area and shut things down so you cannot see your hand in front of your face. Just that one little glass of water. That is what worry is like. That is what worry does to us.

I read a quote that said, "Worry is faith in the negative, trust in the unpleasant, assurance of disaster, and belief in defeat. Worry is wasting today's time to clutter up tomorrow's opportunities with yesterday's troubles."

What we have here in Philippians chapter 4, as we go through, is Paul giving us a fourfold, a four-step remedy for worry in our lives.

Heavenly Father, we thank You and we praise You for the Lord Jesus. We thank You, Father, for everybody that is here this morning. I thank You, Lord, for anybody that may be listening in online. I just pray today, Lord, that Your Holy Spirit will speak through me. That the message that You have given me to preach will be what everybody in this room needs to hear today, Lord. I know it is certainly something that I need to hear. I just pray Your Spirit will give me the words to say, Lord, give me clarity of thought. Allow me to say what You would have me to say, Lord, with no apologies. Just let it be a blessing for all of us today. I pray, Lord, that we will walk out of here today with some tools in our tool belt that will help us to deal with something that really cripples us so many times in our lives and in our daily walk with You. We will be careful to give You the honor and glory for all of it, Lord. We love You. We ask this all in Jesus' name. Amen.

II. God's Presence

In Philippians chapter 4, the first thing that we see that God gives us to be able to deal with our worry, the first thing that we have to acknowledge and we have to understand, is that we have God's presence.

Philippians 4:5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.

A lot of times when we see that phrase, "the Lord is at hand," we think about the coming of the Lord being at hand. Certainly, I think in the day and age that we live in, the coming of the Lord is at hand, and it is something that we should think about on a daily basis. But that is not what Paul is talking about here. He is simply saying the Lord is at hand. If you are a Christian today and you have trusted Christ as your own Lord and Savior, God Almighty is living inside of you. He is present with you every minute of the day, every step of the way, every trouble you go through, every difficulty that you face, everything that happens in your life. God is at hand, and you have God's presence right there. He is always near to help you. He is always near to get you out of any kind of trouble that you might be in. It is like as Christians that we forget that sometimes. Maybe we forget that a lot of times, that we have God's presence, that we have God continually with us.

1 John 4:4 Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

He is telling us, "Why are you afraid of the attacks that the devil levies at you? Why are you afraid of the people in this world? Why are you afraid of the troubles and the scary things that are out there, the things that are happening around us every day?" When He says, "greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." When you are going into a battle and you know that you have that battle won before you ever even get to it, what is there to really worry about? What is there to really be concerned about?

If you go back in the book of Daniel chapter 2 and chapter 3, you have the story of the three Hebrew children that Nebuchadnezzar was going to toss into the fiery furnace. I am not going to go through the whole thing, but I want to talk about it at the very end when they got confronted with what they had done, and the fact that they were not willing to worship the idol that was set up, they were not willing to worship Nebuchadnezzar. They were brought before him, and they knew what they were facing. They knew they were facing being thrown into the fiery furnace. Their answer to him, when he asked them about what had happened or not happened, they said, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter."

Now that phrase, "we are not careful," means a different thing than the way we use it today. When we say "be careful" about something, we are saying, "I tell my girls all the time, anytime they leave the house, they are going to work, they are going to school, they are going out with their friends, they are driving to church, I say, 'Be careful, be careful,' right?" I want them to watch their surroundings and be careful where they are driving, everything that they do. It is being aware of the things around you. This phrase here in the Bible, when they say, "we are not careful to answer thee," means "we are not careful" in the sense of "we are not full of care." In other words, "we are not worried about it." "I am not scared to give you the answer that is the right answer. I am not afraid of what you might do to us. I am not afraid of what might come." Because they go on to say, "Look, it is what it is. This is what happened, and if you are going to throw us in the fiery furnace, so be it."

In fact, they did say, "If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace." See, those boys had a tremendous amount of faith in God, and that allowed them to not be worried about what they were facing with Nebuchadnezzar. It allowed them to not be worried about the fact that they were maybe getting ready to get thrown in the fire, because they knew that the God that they serve was able to deliver them. But they go on to say, "He might deliver us." No, they did not say that. "Maybe," they said, "He may deliver us." No. They said, "We think He will deliver us." Or, "He should deliver us." No, that is not what He said. They said, "He is able to deliver us." And they said, "and he will deliver us out of thine hand." See, they had an unmovable faith in what God had told them and what God had done for them. They knew that God was going to deliver them. So they were not afraid to answer. They were not worried about anything. That is the key for us. We have to understand that God is with us.

If you know the rest of the story, they did get thrown into the fiery furnace. What happened when Nebuchadnezzar looked down into the fire? They bound them up. They tied them up. They wrapped them up. They threw them into the fire. They got the fire so hot, in fact, that the men that walked them up to the top to throw them into the fire got killed by the fire just from being that close to it. That is how hot it was. Nebuchadnezzar looks down in there, and he kind of freaks out because he is like, "Wait a minute. We threw three men down in there bound. And I see four men loose walking around. And the fourth is like unto the Son of God," because it was the Son of God. They knew that even if they were going to get thrown into the fire, that God Himself would be present with them. We have God's presence. We have God inside of us. We have God living in our hearts every day. So it does not matter what fiery furnace that we could possibly get thrown into, we know that God is going to be there with us.

Understanding God's presence in practice is seeing Him in every situation of our lives and letting Him work out His perfect will, whatever that might be. But we have got to see that God is there in everything, everything that is going on, everything that we worry about, everything that we have fears about. So that is number one, we have God's presence.

III. God's Peace

The second thing that God wants to give us to help us with this worry is His peace.

Philippians 4:6-9 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. 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. 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.

So the second thing after God's presence is we have God's peace in our lives. You guys have had this defined for you many times, but in case there is somebody here today that has not, or maybe somebody listening, we need to quickly define the difference between peace with God and the peace of God.

Peace with God is the result of you putting your faith in Christ Jesus for your salvation. When you accept Christ as your personal Savior and the Holy Spirit comes in and Christ applies His blood to your sin debt and cleanses you of your sins, and the Holy Spirit comes in and takes permanent residence in you, you make peace with God at that moment. The Bible tells us that we have a sin debt that has to be reconciled and has to be dealt with. God gives us a simple choice. He says you can either pay that debt yourself or you can accept the free gift of the payment that I have made for you. But that debt must be paid. We do not have peace with God when we are initially born into this world and when we are living our lives as sinners separated from God, a part of the devil's family, we do not have peace with God. That is why an unsaved person does not have the ability to truly understand. He can understand the words that I am saying, but he will never experience anything that I am talking about of what peace in his life really is. Because until you have made peace with God, you can never have the peace of God.

Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

But the peace of God comes when the believer practices these three very simple things that are laid out for us in verses 6 through 9 here of Philippians chapter 4. You want to get the peace of God in your life. You need three things that Paul lays out here.

- Right Praying
- Right Thinking
- Right Living

Let us take a look at this. Read verses 6 and 7 again, and we are going to see the right praying that we need to have.

Philippians 4:6-7 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

So it is not about just praying, but it is about the right kind of praying. You have to pray to God in the right way. How do you do that? The Bible tells us to pray without ceasing. So you can do that. You can pray to God all day long. You can take your prayers and your supplications to Him. You can ask Him for everything in the world that you ever want to. But if you are not praying the right way, you are not going to get God's peace.

What do I mean when I say praying the right way? Notice in verse 6 where He says, "In everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." That is the key phrase, those two words, "with thanksgiving." That is the part that we are missing so many times in our lives, but in our prayer life. We are missing the thanksgiving. Oh, we have no problem going to God with our laundry list of requests that we have. "God, please do this for me. God, please do that for me. God, please give me a new job. God, please help me get a raise. God, please let me get on this team. Please let me get this. Please let me get that." Everything that we want, "Please take this problem out of my life." We go to God with our requests all day long. "I need this. I need this. I need this." But how about going to God with thanksgiving in our hearts for what we have as we approach Him about the things that we need? Because that is the key, that simple phrase, "with thanksgiving." It is not about just praying to God. It is about the right kind of praying. Any prayer requests, any supplication that we take to God should be bathed in thankfulness for what God has done for us. First and foremost, the salvation that He gave us through His Son Jesus Christ. But all the other blessings that we have in our lives.

The hymn, "Count Your Blessings, Name Them One by One," is something that we should probably sing to ourselves every single morning when we wake up. Because the first thing, I am 48 years old now, and I have reached the point in my life where I wake up in the morning and I have aches in my body that make no sense because I did not do anything to earn them. When I was younger, believe it or not, I went to the gym every once in a while. I do not do that anymore unless I am picking somebody up that was at the gym and needs a ride home. But when I was younger and I used to actually do real physical activity, it made sense. I would wake up in the morning and my arms hurt or my legs hurt or whatever, right? Because I lifted weights the day before or maybe I played basketball for three hours the night before. I do not do any of that stuff anymore. Now I wake up in the morning and my feet hurt, my legs hurt, my back hurts, and all I did was lay on a really nice comfortable mattress all night long. It makes no sense.

I get up in the morning and I am like, "What is happening with me? Lord, what is going on?" I am thinking about all these different things. You know what I am not thinking about? Is the fact that I got air in my lungs. Is the fact that I even did wake up. Is the fact that God, I woke up this morning and what is going on in my life, I know that someday I am going to go home and be

with You in heaven for all of eternity. I know that someday I am going to die and when I open my eyes, I am going to be in heaven in the presence of God for all of eternity. Those are things to be thankful for. Those are things that we should think about every morning as we start our day and throughout the whole day. But so many times we just get caught up in our lives and our own struggles.

Ephesians 5:20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

1 Thessalonians 5:18 In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

We know this. Almost everybody in this room has been through Discipleship 1. You have been through the lesson on prayer. You know that giving thanks is one of the four types of prayer. We know that we are supposed to give thanks. So it is not a matter of what we do or do not know about this. It is a matter of the fact that we just simply do not do it. There are so many things. When I teach the Bible, whether it is discipleship or marriage lessons or whatever, one of the things that I say people probably get tired of hearing me say it is, "Look, this is very simple. It just does not mean that it is easy." Living a life for God is not complicated. It is simple. Yeah, there are things in the Bible that are complex and are hard to understand. But most of the Bible, the things that God really wants you to get down, the things that He wants you to practice in your lives on a daily basis, are not complex things. It is just that our flesh gets in the way and we refuse to do it. We refuse to obey and do what God tells us to do every day. Being thankful is one of those things. We know we are to be thankful in all things, but it is just such a hard thing to do, I think, for us sometimes.

The question is, and again, being thankful for the good things in our life, that is pretty easy. That is low-hanging fruit. You get that raise at work. You get that new job. You get some blessing in your life. That is easy to thank God for. Do not pat yourself on the back about that. The question is, can you thank God for the difficult things in your life? Can you thank God for the problems in your life? Can you thank God for the enemies that are in your life?

Back talking about the book of Daniel a little bit further on, in Daniel chapter 6, you have the story of Daniel and the lion's den. Again, another story that probably everybody knows, and I am not going to get into all the details of it. But when Daniel found out that Darius had signed the decree that he was not allowed to pray to his God anymore, or risk being killed, what happened? What does it say that he did?

Daniel 6:10 Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.

First of all, I mean, we might as well, as long as we are here, talk about Daniel's courage, right? He was not afraid of allowing anybody to see. There was no private prayer closet for him. I am not saying you guys should get out on your front porch and get on your knees and pray for the neighbors to see every day. That is not my point. My point is, do not live your life in a closet

where you are trying to not let people see who you really are because you are afraid maybe something bad will come of it. So he was not afraid. He was not worried about what was going to happen to him or what could happen to him. It says he knelt upon his knees three times a day and prayed. What did he pray? It says, "and gave thanks before his God as he did aforetime." So Daniel went out there and he prayed three times a day, regardless of what the consequences were going to be. It says he gave thanks before his God. He was facing death. He knew, and based on what had happened, he knew that he had guys that were coming after him, trying to basically politically assassinate him and then literally assassinate him. Yet he was thankful. He prayed and he gave thanks before his God as he did aforetime.

Does your thankfulness change based on the circumstances in your life? That is a question we should ask ourselves because, like I said, it is easy to be thankful when things are going great. But it is when problems arise, it is when the enemies come in and start attacking you, that it gets a little bit hard to pray and be thankful for something.

Quick little story. Most of you guys probably know this. Maybe you do not. This is not some sort of bragging story. I am just going to relate a story. A little over a year ago, I had a kidney stone, and probably everybody knows I have had kidney stones because most of my friends make fun of me for it. I cannot wait until they get one because I have promised to sit bedside and just laugh at them for hours for how much pain that they are really in. But anyway, I have had kidney stones. So a year ago, I had my fourth one. I am getting good at it at this point. It took a little while for this one to pass. It was getting so painful to the point that Jamie is like, "You need to go into the ER." I said, "Okay, let us go. At the very least, I will get a day's worth of really strong pain meds and we will get some comfort." So we go down to the ER at KU. Same as any time I have been there before. They take me back. They do a CAT scan. They want to look at it and see where it is. Make sure that it is not so big that you cannot pass it. They do the whole deal. Give me some pain meds. Send me home. "We think you are going to be fine. You are just going to wait it out." No problem.

About a week later, I get a phone call from one of the nurse practitioners that works in the emergency department at KU. It was just a little bit weird. I got a message. She is like, "We need to talk to you about something that we saw in your scan." I am like, "It was normal. What do you mean?" So I called back. Basically, what had happened was one of the radiologists had gone back. I do not know why, other than that it was God that did it. He had gone back and looked at my scan again. The fact that they were looking at where you have kidney stones, right? It is your middle. You guys know the spot. So they do the CAT scan and they get a broad area. Well, my whole hips are in this thing. So they see something in my left hip that looked a little bit funny. So they are like, "We want you to. We think you need to look into this because the doctor saw your left hip. You have a spot in your bone that looks like it might be something called Paget's disease." Nothing terribly, terribly serious. But anyway, something worth looking into. I will save you the rest of the story. A year later, I have a doctor that is treating it, and it should be all good. I do not want anybody crying tonight over me and my health.

But the point is this. The kidney stone was not good. It was not a fun thing. It was not a great thing at all. It was like four weeks. It was very uncomfortable. But this particular one led to a

diagnosis of an issue that is one of those things that will go unnoticed for years and years and years. By the time that it does finally show up and really does get noticed, it is kind of too late to do anything about it. So the fact that I had this stone, God used that for a good thing in my life, is my point.

What I am getting at is we do not know why the things happen in our lives. But we know that we have God's presence, right? We know that we need to be thankful for everything that happens to us no matter what, because many times there are, God has a good intention for a very bad thing that happens in our lives. Many times it is not even for our benefit. That is something else that we have got to learn. Sometimes you guys are going to go through it and take it in the neck because somebody else in your life needs to see you go through that thing. A family member needs to see you go through that and handle it in a biblical way and give God glory through it and be thankful through it. Maybe they will come to the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ because of that, because of your testimony. So the point is this, be thankful for everything, even for the negative things in our lives. So that is the first thing to get that peace of God is we have to have the right praying.

Right Thinking

The second thing is we need the right thinking. Look at verse 8.

Philippians 4:8 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.

So not only do we need to be praying the right way and have thankfulness in our prayer, but we need to be thinking about the right things. He gives this whole laundry list of all these things that we need to think on if we want to have the peace of God in our lives. Guess what? Every single one of these things, it is not on TikTok. I have been on TikTok before. I have been on YouTube. I do not have Instagram, but people show me videos on Instagram. I have never really seen any of these things on there. I have not seen it on TV. I have not seen it in movies. I have not seen it anywhere. I feel like I get close to it every once in a while when I watch KU basketball, but that is it. That is the only thing. There are a couple of these things that are maybe in there. But no, the only place you find these things is in the Word of God. The only thing where these things exist and are consistently there is in the Bible. It is the truth and the principles of the Word of God. That is what you need to think on. That is what your mind and what your thoughts should be. Too many times we go throughout an entire day and we do not think about one thing that God has ever shown us in the Bible. We did not read our Bible that morning, and so how could we get anything from that day? But we are not thinking about a million different things except for the things that we should be thinking about.

Psalms 19:7-9 The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

These are the things that we need to be thinking about and occupying our mind with.

Isaiah 26:3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee:

You want to be in perfect peace? Keep your mind stayed on the Lord. Keep your mind stayed on the principles of the Word of God.

Romans 8:6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

You have to have your mind in the right place. You have to be thinking about the right things. What you think about on a daily basis absolutely affects you and affects every part of your life.

Proverbs 23:7 For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he:

Listen, we all get frustrated with things in our lives. It just happens. When you are in the ministry, you are going to deal with frustrating things. You are going to deal with frustrating people. Sometimes you have got to talk about it. That is what your husband is there for. That is what your wife is there for. That is what your pastor is there for. To go to somebody, that is what your disciple is there for. That is not what all the friends in your world are there for. That gets into gossip. But I am saying sometimes you have got to talk about things and you have got to get stuff off of your chest. But you have to be very careful that you leave it right there. That you deal with it and then you put it away. Because if you allow yourself to dwell on those thoughts and to think about those things, even if God has put somebody in your life or the devil has put somebody in your life, that is literally the bane of your existence. It will kill you spiritually if you allow yourself to continue to just think negative things about them and think about how, "Oh my gosh, that person drives me crazy. I cannot believe they are like that. Why will not God just get them out of my life? Why will not God just fix them, fix their problem, whatever it is?" You have got to be thinking about the right things. You have got to have your mind on the right things. What you think about is what you will become. I promise you that. You cannot get away from that principle. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Be very careful where you allow your mind to go and just how negative you allow yourself to be about things in your life.

Look, there are negative things in life and you have got to acknowledge them and you have got to deal with them. But you better quickly get away from it and get your mind back where it needs to be and back in the principles of the Word of God. You know, there are Christians all across this country right now who think that they are doing God's work trying to get Donald Trump re-elected as president. Look, I do not really care who you are going to vote for or even if you are going to vote this fall. I do not care at all. But it blows my mind that somebody who is a Christian will go out and put stickers on their car and signs in their yard and fly flags from their pickup truck for a man who is a known adulterer and fornicator of the worst kind. We are going to act like this guy is some sort of savior of the world. Look, again, I do not care if you vote for him because maybe life will be a little bit better. Your taxes might get a little bit lower, whatever. I do not care. But getting wrapped up in political arguments one after another, completely ignoring the fact that the Bible says, "no man that warreth entangleth himself in the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier." Christians have no business

getting involved in politics and getting into that mess. Republican, Democrat, Independent, whatever they are, the entire system is corrupt. Every single politician out there is a liar and a cheat. I promise you, they did not get elected and get to where they are by being honest. So do not waste your time. I cannot tell you how many Christians and people that I have talked to that have literally said it is your biblical duty to go and vote for this Republican or that Republican. It is not just Donald Trump that has been going on for years. I am like, "No, the only biblical spiritual duty that I have is to preach the truth to the people that God puts in my life." I have got no business worrying about politics or getting involved in any of it. The thing is, when you have Christians that waste their time with that kind of thinking, waste your time worrying about those types of things that are going on in this world. It is no wonder that they have no peace in their lives, that they have no peace in their heart. You have to not only be praying for the right things in the right way, you have got to be thinking about the right things. You have to have your mind focused on the right things.

Right Living

The third thing to get God's peace is in verse 9, and that is the right living.

Philippians 4:9 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.

He says, "Look, all those things, the things you have learned, the things that you have received, the things that you have heard from me, and the things that you have seen in me." Everybody in this room has people in their lives that are examples to them. We have a pastor that preaches the Word of God to us, and is an example and an example for us. You have people in your lives where you have seen all of these things. What does he say next? He says, all of those things, he says, one simple word, "do." "Do. And the God of peace shall be with you."

It is not enough just to learn the Bible. It is not enough to come on Sunday mornings and come on Thursday nights and come to Institute on Saturdays and come to People Ministry and go to the bookstore. We have so much material that you can get to learn everything that you ever want to learn about this Bible. It is completely meaningless and worthless as far as God is concerned, and as far as your own personal relationship with God is concerned, if you do not do any of the things that you learn out of the Bible. God is not impressed with how much you know out of the Bible. It is how much you do. It is what do you do with the things that you have learned? What do you do? How are you living your life? You want to have God's peace in your life, you have got to pray the right way. You have to have thanksgiving in your heart. You have to think on the right things, but then you have to live your life the right way. You have got to do the things that you know are the right things to do.

Isaiah 32:17 And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.

What is righteousness? Righteousness is not difficult, right? It is the right things. Righteousness is doing the right things. The work of righteousness is doing the right things in your life. It says

the work of righteousness shall be peace. He is telling you that is the result of that in your heart if you do the right thing. "And the effect of righteousness, quietness, and assurance forever."

Isaiah 48:18, 22O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea:There is no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.

Like I said, a lost person cannot have peace. They will pretend like they do. They will try to convince themselves that they do. But they have no true peace in their lives. They have no true peace in their heart. You know this, because you know how it felt before you got saved. You lay your head down at night and your mind is racing. Because you have no real peace. You have no real, you just do not have that peace with God. Because you have never made peace with God, you do not have the peace of God in your lives.

It is not enough to use the Bible as a basis for praying and claiming the promises that are in it. You must also use it as a basis for living and obeying its precepts. You cannot just stop at praying, claiming the principles, claiming the promises, and saying, "God, You promised that You will do this for me, that You will take care of me." If you do not hold up your end of the bargain by turning around and then living an obedient life, obeying the precepts and the principles that are listed in it. There is no requirement of works for salvation, and we know this, right? We know that God does not require you to do anything to be able to get saved. But if you do not understand that the minute that you do get saved, that there is an expectation on God's part and a requirement for you to do good works and for you to live a life holy and righteous as best as you possibly can in service to your Lord and Savior, then you do not understand anything about your Bible. You cannot read the New Testament without seeing Paul talk about doing works over and over and over again. Never in the context of salvation, so do not get confused. But always in the context of after you are saved, God has got a job for you to do. You need to be about your Father's business the same way that Jesus Christ was about His Father's business.

There are a lot of things in this world, a lot of things in our lives that will get in your way, that will muddy things up for you, that will distract you from the job that God has called you to do. I promise you, not a single one of those things is worth the trade-off of what you are going to give up and what you are going to lose at the judgment seat of Christ someday. If you live your life pursuing all of those wasted endeavors, and then you stand before the Lord someday and you stand there naked and empty-handed because you did not do anything for Him after you took this free gift of salvation. Do not waste your time getting involved in those things that have no eternal consequences. Everybody is going to have some of those things in their lives, but it cannot be the sole focus of your life. You have got to be focused on things that are going to have eternal consequences. That is why Bob always preaches, "What are the two things that we know that are going to last forever? The Word of God and the souls of men." So we know that those are the only two things that are truly worth investing our time and our energy in, because those are the only things that are going to reap eternal rewards and that are really going to last forever.

IV. God's Power

Let us move on to our third thing. So we have talked about how we have God's presence, and then we have God's peace. The third thing we have is in verses 10 through 13, and that is we have God's power.

Philippians 4:10-13 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. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

That is God's power in your life. You can do all things. There is not a single thing that you are unable to do for God as far as His plan for you is concerned, as long as you do it through the personal Lord Jesus Christ. There is not a single thing that you cannot do because you have God's power in your life. You have the power that spoke the universe into existence, living inside of you. It is incredible how we deny that power on a daily basis and how we ignore it and we pretend like it is not there, and we just wallow in our issues. We wallow in our worry about everything. Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." You have God's power in your life. Paul had learned this through experience. Paul had been through some things and he learned through experience that if I do everything through Christ, then it strengthens me.

Listen, again, I said this earlier, it is very simple. We operate through our own power, we are going to fail. Plain and simple. You try to live this Christian life, you try to live your life through your own power and through your own abilities, you are going to fail. 100% guarantee it. But if you operate through Him, He will fight your battles for you. Again, 100% guarantee it.

Deuteronomy 20:4 For the LORD your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.

Deuteronomy 3:22 Ye shall not fear them: for the LORD your God he shall fight for you.

You know there are so many times we find ourselves in the verse that is not really directly talking about us, but as Christians we do this.

2 Timothy 3:5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

Listen, we have more than a form of godliness, I have God Himself living inside of me. But so many times when I allow worry to creep into my life, when I start being fearful of the things that the devil is trying to bring me down with, I deny that power that lives inside me. I am denying the power of God Himself who wants to be strong on my behalf. But He is only going to fight my battles if I allow Him to. He is perfectly willing, unfortunately for us, to let us fight our own battles if we choose to do so. He is there to fight them for us, but it is only if we do those things through Him. It is only if we turn to Him. It is only if we acknowledge Him, and it is only if we do all of those things through Him, that we are truly going to experience that power. The power is there, but you have to turn on the switch.

I was trying to, I could not figure out what was going on. I had my laptop computer for work plugged into an outlet in our dining room where I worked throughout the day most of the time, where I always have it plugged in, and my computer died, and I did not even notice. I am like, "What in the world?" So being the genius that I am, I am trying to figure this thing out, so I bring my phone charger over and I plug it in and it is not working. So I am like, "Man, I wonder," and I am going to different outlets, "Like this outlet over here works, that outlet over there works." Well, finally I got smart enough to go downstairs and look at the breaker box, and somehow the breaker had been tripped. So I switched it and flipped it back, and then voila, all of a sudden, there is the power. Here is the thing, I did not lose power to the house. The lights were on everywhere else, all the other outlets worked, but the outlet that I needed had no power because the breaker had been flipped. All I had to do was go switch it back on. That is the thing. You have all of that power if you are saved today living inside of you. You have the ability to defeat those fears. You have the ability to defeat those worries in your life. You have the ability to defeat those enemies living inside of you, but you have to flip the switch on. We flip the switch off in our lives when we get caught up in our sin, when we get caught up in our worry, when we get caught up in our own day-to-day lives and all the things that we want to do. We literally disconnect ourselves from that power. It is still there, but we just have got to plug back into it. We just have got to plug back into it. So that is the third thing.

V. God's Provision

The last thing to help us eliminate worry in our lives. After God's presence and after God's peace and after God's power, the fourth thing that we have is we have God's provision.

Philippians 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

We get so caught up in worrying about things, worrying about the things in our lives, worrying about the things that we have, worrying about the things that we do not have. Especially in Laodicea where Revelation 3 tells us, "We are rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing." But God tells us our true spiritual nature, our true spiritual state, is that we are wretched and miserable, poor, blind and naked. This is the problem that we have. It is unbelievable the comfort that God allows us to live in in this day and age. We drive cars around now that you can literally set two different temperatures. I can set it to cold in the summertime, which is normal, and Jamie can turn the heat on, which is not normal, in the summertime. She does that. I do not understand it. But we can do that. How much does that make no sense? When I was a kid growing up, we barely had air conditioning in our car that worked. I was the youngest in my family, and I always was stuck sitting in the backseat in the middle, on the hump with my feet up into my nose. But the one good thing I had going for me was I was in between the two seats. So the little bit of air that would float back to the backseat, I could stick my face up and kind of try to feel it. It was miserable, right? Today, you can set the temperature in your car you want. I am like, "Ooh, 72 is a little bit, a little toasty. I am going to turn it to 69. Ooh, that is so much better." And then the air will come on and it will turn off. It is ridiculous. We have too

many things in this life. Too many things that spoil us. We get focused on those things. We get worried.

Here is the funny thing. The things that we do not have that we want, we occupy our thoughts with them, and we think about them. "Oh, I really wish I had that. I wish I had that car. I wish I had that house. I wish I had a boat. I wish I had a little bigger TV. I wish I had a PS5 instead of a Nintendo." Whatever. All these things that we wish we had. Then, you know what happens when you finally get some of those things? You start worrying that something is going to go wrong with them. You start worrying all of a sudden that something is going to break. That somebody is going to steal it. Or something is going to happen to it.

When I was a kid, and everybody was probably like this, right? There was nothing better than getting a new pair of tennis shoes. You get a new pair of tennis shoes, and it was like you were on cloud nine, right? You would put those things on, and you would go out and play with your friends, or you would go to school or whatever. It was the best thing in the world until what happened? Until somebody, some idiot comes along and steps on your toe and scuffs them. Your brand new Nikes are now ruined because you got a scuff mark on the front and you cannot get it off. You are like, "What is the matter with you? I just got these yesterday." Now all of a sudden they are not as good as they were. That is it. That is what things are like. Things go bad. Things break down. Things get scuffed up. New cars get, I mean, they get door dings. So just, we have got to stop focusing on that stuff. But we focus on what we do not have, and then when we do have the things that we finally want, we focus too much on those things because things are going to go wrong, and we are going to lose them.

Listen, the bottom line is, God is going to supply you what you need. He promises that in this verse. Nothing more, nothing less. He says, "But my God shall supply all your need." Now here is the deal. We do not unfortunately get to define what that need is. God defines what that need is. So we get ourselves into trouble when we start thinking, "Well, I just need this. If I just had this God, then I could really start spending more time serving You. If I just got this new job, if I just got this thing that I need, then everything will be different. Then everything will be better." But it is not up to us to define what those needs are. God defines what those needs are. So when we sit and we spend time in our lives worrying so much about those things that we think we need, that we do not have yet, we are wasting our time. That is that worry that God does not want us to have. God is going to take care of you. God is going to take care of you. We do not need a big fancy house or a super fancy car. If God blesses you with those things, then praise the Lord and thank Him for it and be appreciative of it. But do not hold so tightly to it that you are worried about losing it. You should have the understanding. You should have the idea and the thought in your mind that if God took it all away tomorrow, I would be fine. As long as I still have this Bible that He gave me, as long as I still have a church that I can go to that preaches it, and as long as I still have the Holy Spirit of God living inside me, that will help me understand and help me live for Him. That is all I need. I should never be so caught up in the things that I have in this life that if God took it all away tomorrow, that I would not be okay.

I was thinking about that, and maybe a lot of us were, all these storms that have been hitting over the last couple of days, and terrible tornadoes that went through Nebraska on Friday, and then

there were more tornadoes yesterday, and overnight in parts of Oklahoma, maybe in Nebraska again, and in our area, south of Kansas City, I think there was a tornado last night. I mean, I think about those things. Praise the Lord, I have never been touched by one of those, right? But you look at the video, and you see those neighborhoods where there are, I mean, those houses, they are just leveled. I could not imagine what that would feel like, where you go down into your basement because the sirens are going off, and the storm rages, and it passes, and you come up, and you look around at what used to be your house, and there is nothing there. You are literally looking at the blue skies that have appeared after the storm has gone through. I cannot imagine what that would feel like, but I would like to think, I would hope, my prayer would be, that I would be okay. Because I would know that, like I said, as long as I have still got my Bible, as long as I have still got my relationship with the Lord, if I still have my family, and I still got breath in my lungs to be able to live and breathe and serve God with, then everything else is going to be fine. Everything else is going to take care of itself. God is going to work those things out one way or another. But when we lose sight of that, when we lose understanding, and we lose sight of God's provision in our lives, that is when we begin to worry. That is when we begin to worry about the things that we have, or the things that we do not have. We begin to worry about losing those things. As long as we have our Bible, and we have a church, and we have a relationship with the Lord, then everything else on top of that is gravy. Anything else that God chooses to bless us with is gravy. We have got to quit focusing on the things in our lives, and focus on the relationship that we have, focus on the blessings that we have, and the job that God has called us to do.

VI. A Checklist for Eliminating Worry

In closing, I want to quickly go through a short list of things, a checklist for you, that you can use in your life to help eliminate this problem of worrying. Eight very simple things that I am going to give you. You can write this down. Go through it every day. Make sure that this is something that you are focused on. This is something that we should all be focused on.

1. Admit your problems are on the inside. Problems that you have in life are not because of circumstances around you, things that are going on in your world. Do not blame your worry on the people and the circumstances or the things in your life. You are never going to have God's peace in your heart unless you can recognize worry for what it is. Plain and simple, it is sin. We are sinning against God when we spend time and we worry about these things in our lives. Listen, trust me, I worry about stuff. It is hard. Like I said, it is simple, but it is not easy. I lay awake at night worrying about things sometimes. This is a struggle for me at times. Those of you that are parents, you guys understand this? When you have kids, you worry about them. You worry about what kind of people they are going to grow up to be. You worry about whether they are going to grow up and love the Lord and want to serve the Lord. You worry about whether they are going to be safe. You worry about a whole list of things, but it is not right. It is okay to think about those things. It is okay to pray for those things. But worrying about them is not okay. Worrying about them will defeat you.
2. Let God search your heart and mind.

Psalms 139:23 Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:

You must be willing to admit and confess what is really in your heart and mind. When you have worry in your heart, you have got to allow God to search your heart and mind and tell you what it is and then be able to deal with it. You cannot be in denial about it. Convince yourself that it is not a big deal.

3. Be single-minded.

James 1:8 A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

You cannot serve your Lord and your flesh at the same time. Everything that you do in your life, you need to do it for Him. You work hard at your job every day, do it for the Lord. You study to get good grades in school, do it for Him. Paul says, right here in this book, "For to me to live is Christ." Everything that we do in our life should be about Him. Single-minded. Single-minded focus on the Lord and the Lord only.

4. Have a submissive mind. Be submissive to the Word of God. Pride is always going to cause friction in your life. The submissive mind puts Christ and others ahead of yourself. You have a submissive mind to the Word of God and the things that God is trying to teach you, the things that God is trying to give you, God will begin to eliminate the worry because your thoughts and your mind will get off of yourself. Like I said, the submissive mind puts Christ and others ahead of yourself. That is one of the keys to getting rid of worry.
5. Have a spiritual mind. We talked about how you need to have the right thinking. You need to be thinking on spiritual things, on biblical things. Do not get wrapped up in earthly things, possessions, enjoyments, achievements. The Bible says in Colossians, "Set your affections on things above." Earthly things will never satisfy you fully, so stop worrying about them so much. We talked about that the new pair of shoes is going to get scuffed a day after you got it. So quit worrying about them so much. They are going to get scuffed. So if you just walk around trying to protect them everywhere you go, you are wasting your time. You could say, "I do not want to wear my shoes out and go play with my friends today because they might get dirty." So you sit in your house all day and you do nothing. That is what we do as Christians. We sit in our house all day and we do nothing for God because we are worried about what might be out there. We are worried about things that might happen. Have a spiritual mind. Do not get wrapped up in those things. Be focused on God.
6. When you do start to worry, you have to recognize it and then you have to stop and examine yourself. You are allowing yourself in that moment to have the wrong thoughts and you have got to stop yourself in your tracks. You have got to recognize when it is happening and literally you have got to change your thought process right in that moment. Do not dwell on it. Do not dwell on that worrying.
7. If you have worry, discover the cause, admit it and confess it immediately.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

You guys know the principle? We are to confess our sins daily, hourly, minutely with the Lord, minute by minute. If we have to, minutely, I do not think is a word. But if you have worry, you have got to discover the cause. It is coming from inside. You have got to deal with it immediately. You have got to confess it. You have got to put it under the blood and you have got to fix it.

8. Maintain an obedient Christian life. Remember the formula for peace that we talked about earlier, right praying, right thinking, right living. Then memorize this verse. We read it earlier.

Isaiah 32:17 And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.

The work and the effect of righteousness in your life is peace and it is quietness and it is assurance.

VII. Conclusion: Focus on God, Not Problems

Listen, notice that I did not read you a single verse today or give you a single principle that talked about how you can eliminate problems in your life. Because you will not eliminate problems from your life. You will not eliminate the things in your life that cause you to worry. So that is not how you solve it. You have to go inside in your heart and find where the real problem is. You have to eliminate it on the inside. You have to realize that you have God's presence in your life to help you with every one of those problems. You have to get the right praying, the right thinking and the right living in your life. To get God's peace in your heart. You have to get these things in your life to be able to eliminate worry. Because the problems are always going to be there. For you guys that have been around long enough, you know that even when one problem gets eliminated from your life, there is one right around the corner. There is always another one coming right around the corner. It is this way, it is that way in churches. When we were a very young church, there were different times and there are people that come into a church to cause problems. It just is how it is. You look at those guys and it is like, "God, why cannot You just get this guy straightened out? Or maybe just get him out of here." Because he is just doing nothing but causing problems. You know many times that person gets moved on. You know what happens? There is somebody that literally almost walks in the door the day they leave to take their spot. There is always going to be problems in a church. There is always going to be problems in your life. So even if you get rid of one, another one is coming right behind it. So that cannot be your focus. Your focus cannot be on trying to eliminate those things. Your focus has to be on how do I have the right attitude about everything that is in my life? How do I deal with the things that are coming at me without getting swallowed up and strangled, like we talked about at the beginning, with those worries. That will absolutely choke you out spiritually and make it so that you cannot ever really accomplish anything for the Lord. Because you are just constantly worried about every little thing in your life or even the problems that have not even cropped up yet.

I hope that helps you guys. Like I said, this was not a deep message today. This is not one of those deep principles out of the Bible. This is not a complex thing out of the Bible. Dealing with worry in your life is a simple thing. But it is a hard thing to do. It is something that you have to make the decision every day that you are going to handle it the right way, that you are going to have the right attitude, that you are going to get these principles into your life, and that you are going to recognize it when it crops up, and you are going to deal with it when it crops up. I struggle with it just like you guys do. I will lay in bed tonight and I will probably start worrying about something about work for this week. But these are principles. These are simple steps that we can take, we can follow, we can put into our lives to help us begin to combat this thing so that we can have that free mind that we need, and we can have that ability to become everything that God wants us to be, and not just be burdened so that when we are living our lives and when we come into church, we are not burdened with our thoughts being wrapped up with all of these things that are twisting us up that we are worried about. But we can actually be looking around for other people that maybe need to be ministered to. Maybe somebody that we need to reach out to, somebody that we have not talked to for a couple weeks that we can go say hi to, that literally might just need that very blessing of you going up and saying hi to them, telling them that you love them, telling them that you are praying for them. But when we walk in this building, all twisted up, enveloped in that fog from that one glass of water that is nothing at all, but we cannot see anything that is going on because of the worry that we have allowed in our lives, we miss all of those opportunities that God has for us, all of the things the people that God wants us to impact.

Let us close in prayer and you guys will be dismissed. Heavenly Father, again we thank You and we praise You for the Lord Jesus. Thank You so much for everybody that was here today. Father, we thank You for the message today, Lord. I need it as much as maybe anybody else in here, Lord. I pray You will help us to take these things and help us to really look into our lives, look into our hearts, and really determine and help us to do the things that we need to do to get the worry out of our lives, to get the worry out of our hearts, that we will get these principles, Lord, that we will get our mind focused on You and stayed on You. We will get the thankfulness in our prayer that we need to have, Lord. We will get our mind focused on Your Word and then we will begin to be obedient to Your Word. We will begin to do the things that You want us to do on a daily basis and watch those worries and those fears start to go away, Lord. Just free our minds to really be able to be everything that we can be for You, Lord. I just pray You will watch over everybody throughout the day and throughout the week and bring us back here safely together Thursday night at Bible study, Lord. We love You. We ask this all in Jesus' name. Amen.