

Philippians 4:6-13 NAS

Peace and Thanksgiving

In Every Circumstance!

Wednesday, November 26 at 7 PM

Thanksgiving Eve – 2014

Wednesdays in Advent: [Services 11 & 7](#) [Meals 12 & 6](#)

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: It is common to associate **peace**—*with the absence of war* and **thanksgiving**—*with special blessings*. Such views of peace and thanksgiving are not wrong, but God is calling us tonight to a ♦*much higher view of peace* and ♦*a much more beneficial way of thanksgiving!*

We now turn our attention to Philippians chapter 4, beginning in verse 6. As we proceed, keep in mind that Paul wrote this letter *while in prison* to thank the believers in Philippi for their gift of support. So even while Paul was *in chains*, he saw God's hand of blessing and gave thanks!

1. **Anxiety Gone, Peace Received:** ⁶ **Be anxious** [*distracted*] **for nothing** [*or no one be anxious*], **but in everything by prayer and supplication** [*the action of asking or begging for something earnestly*] **with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.** ⁷ **And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.** //
 - a. When we are anxious or distracted, what parts of us are affected? Our hearts and minds. Are anxieties pleasant? *By no means*; they can result in *stress* and *sleeplessness*, even in *suicide*.

- b. Therefore, God has given us the remedy: He invites us to get rid of our anxieties by taking them all to Him through *praying* and *even begging*, but also *with thanksgiving*.
- c. As we dig into the source of our stress in order to bring it to God – that can pull us down, so God tells us to do so with thanksgiving – *by which he will lift us up!* For example: I can get stressed *when I think about our members who do not attend*, but God lifts me up as I *give thanks for those who faithfully gather and gladly receive His blessings!* So, *each day*, let us pass our anxieties to God ♦*in prayer* and ♦*with thanksgiving*; then let us gladly receive *His peace!*

2. **Thoughts > Practice > Peace:** ⁸ **Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable** [*dignified*], **whatever is right, whatever is pure** [*holy*], **whatever is lovely** [*pleasing*], **whatever is of good repute** [*commendable*], **if there is any excellence** [*virtue (benefit)*] **and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things.** ⁹ **The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice** [*do, perform*] **these things; and the God of peace shall be with you.** // **God with us** is far better than **us without God**; therefore, Paul told us the *formula* for blessing:
 - a. Let your mind dwell on the right things: That is quite a challenge in today's world *when so many wrong things are trying to fill our minds*; therefore, it is essential for us to be self-disciplined – to be ♦*closed* to worldly things and ♦*open* to God-pleasing things.

- b. Do the right things: It's one thing to know, but *it is super-essential to act on what we know!* It says in Romans 2:13: "...not the hearers of the Law are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified." (NAS)
- c. The God of peace will be with us: The *True God* is the source of *true peace*; He not only wants to trade with us – *our anxieties for His peace*, but He also promises to *be with those who trust in Him as their God and Savior*. Jesus said: "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him." (John 14:23 ESV)
3. **Content In Christ**: ¹⁰ **But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned before, but you lacked opportunity.** ¹¹ **Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content [satisfied] in whatever circumstances I am.** ¹² **I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.** ¹³ **I can do all things through Him who strengthens me. //**
- a. Concern and action: At one point the Philippians were concerned about Paul, *but had no opportunity to help him*. We may feel the same sometimes. However, when the opportunity comes, *it is important to seize it!*
- b. Contentment in every circumstance: How is that possible, considering that some circumstances

are wonderful and some are horrible? It is possible when we **stop** tying our contentment to our circumstances! Let's think about two words: peace and contentment; even though we tend to tie them to our circumstances, *God wants us to see how they are actually tied to our relationship with Him.*

- i. Peace: True peace is not the absence of war, *but forgiveness through Jesus*; therefore, even on a battlefield, *we can enjoy God's blessing of peace!*
- ii. Contentment: True contentment is being aware that *♦God is our true Father and ♦we are His true children!* As a good earthly father provides for his children, *how much more will our heavenly Father provide for us?* So if I have a little, *that is God's will and I should be content*. Or, if I have a lot, *that is also God's will and I should be content!* But how are such things possible? **"I can do all things through Him [Christ] who strengthens me."**

Conclusion: Therefore, on this eve of our national day of Thanksgiving, let us → keep trading with God – *anxieties for peace*, → honor Him with our lives – *knowing He is with us*, and → be content in Christ – *knowing that whatever we have is what our heavenly Father knows that we need!*

And all God's people said: **Amen!**