

Sermon: **Incomprehensible Peace (Philippians 4:4-7)**

Date: **January 7, 2018**

Jesus says this in Matthew 7:14, “For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.” Those who are in Christ are not exempt from trials and difficulty in life. There will be many obstacles, burdens, and hardships on the road to glory. But in the midst of the storms of this life, we have access to a peace that doesn’t make sense to the rest of the world. It is an incomprehensible peace. This is a peace that originates in God himself. When our world is falling apart, when things don’t go according to our plan, we can have the peace of God that surpasses understanding guard our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus. Paul writes about this peace in Philippians 4:4-7. He encourages the Philippians to rejoice in the Lord always. He exhorts them to let their reasonableness be known to all. And he commands them not to be anxious about anything but rather to pray about everything. If we as Christians seek to cultivate lives marked by joy, reasonableness, and prayer, we are promised to receive the peace of God that surpasses understanding.

What you need for this study: Bible, Notebook, Pen

Individual Bible Study

1. Please read Philippians 4:4-7 and ensure that you have listened to the sermon.
 - a. Briefly describe the context of the book of Philippians. Where is Paul at in his life when he writes this letter? How does understanding the context add weight to the words that Paul writes in this text?
 - b. Paul commands the Philippians to “rejoice” twice in verse 4. Is this an optional suggestion or a moral command? Explain.
 - c. What does Paul command us to rejoice in? How is it possible to experience sorrow, grief, and sadness and yet rejoice at the same time?
 - d. Why do you think Paul repeats the command to rejoice in verse 4? What is the significance of him restating himself in this way?
 - e. What are some reasons we have to rejoice in the Lord no matter what comes our way in life?
 - f. What does it mean to be reasonable (v. 5)? What is the relationship between rejoicing and reasonableness?

- g. How should the reality that “the Lord is at hand,” (v. 5) motivate us to be reasonable?
- h. Read verse 6. Is anxiety a sin? Why or why not?
- i. Why is prayer an antidote to anxiety? How does prayer help us fight anxiety in our lives?
- j. Why is it important to season our prayers with thanksgiving? How might this help fight worry and anxiety?
- k. What does it mean that the peace of God will guard our hearts and our minds (v. 7)?

Group Discussion Questions

1. How did the Holy Spirit speak to you through the sermon and the Bible study this week?
2. Can you think of a time in your life when you went through a difficult trial or hardship but you had an unexplainable peace in the midst of it? Explain.
3. Why is it important to regularly be rejoicing in the Christian life? What can we do to practically rejoice in the Lord each and every day? What can we do to prevent becoming bitter when life doesn't go our way?
4. Why should our rejoicing in God lead to more reasonableness and gentleness toward others? What are some ways we can let our reasonableness be known to all?
5. If someone confessed to you that they struggle with anxiety, how would you counsel them and encourage them with the Word of God? Why is prayer such a powerful weapon against the sin of anxiety?