

# Worry Warrior

Philippians 4.4-7 ~ July 11, 2010

## ➤ v4a ~ “Rejoice in the Lord always”

- Paul mentions joy or rejoice in this letter 16 times (104 verses)
  - Paul is currently in chains (**Php 1.13**)
  - False brethren are preaching Christ to cause Paul affliction (**Php 1.16**)
  - The Philippians themselves are undergoing persecution (**Php 1.29**)
- He’s already proclaimed joy and rejoice 13 times – and a 14<sup>th</sup> . . .

## ➤ v4b ~ “Again I will say, rejoice!”

- And now a 15<sup>th</sup>!
  - “*Are the Philippians tired of hearing this yet . . . ?*”
  - Some of us tire quickly of repetition
- But both Augustine and Spurgeon were converted via simple repetition
  - **Augustine** heard a child’s voice saying “*pick up and read*”
  - **III: Charles Spurgeon** ~ Minister didn’t show up . . .
    - A thin man ~ tailor or shoemaker ~ went into the pulpit
    - “*It is well that preachers be instructed ~ this man was really stupid*”
    - “Look unto me and be saved . . .” (**Is 45.22**)
      - ◆ “*Look unto me - I’m sweatin’ great drops of blood*”
      - ◆ “*Look unto me - I’m hanqin’ on the cross*”
      - ◆ “*Look unto me - I’m dead and buried*”
      - ◆ “*Look unto me - I rise aqain*”
      - ◆ “*Look unto me - I ascend into Heaven*”
    - Then he looked at Spurgeon ~ 12 people in the place . . .
    - “**Young man, look to Jesus Christ. Look! Look! You have nothing to do but look and live!**” ~ I saw at once the way of salvation . . .
- The Philippians needed to hear this ~ the message of joy bore repeating
  - And we need to hear it too . . .
  - Rejoice — in the Lord — always
    - Real “joy” is only found in the Lord
    - All other earthly joys are pretenders and quickly fade away

**Xition: We’re to rejoice, and we’re to do more . . .**

➤ **v5a ~ “Let your gentleness be known to all men”**

- No one word in English conveys the meaning of the Greek
  - patience, modesty, forbearance, moderation, reasonableness
- Let the Bible define it:
  - **1 Cor 6.7** ~ “*accept wrong*”, “*let yourselves be cheated*”
  - **1 Cor 6.8** ~ “*But instead, you yourselves do wrong and cheat brethren*”
  - **1 Tim 3.3** ~ “*gentle, not quarrelsome*”
  - **2 Tim 2.24** ~ “*servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all*”
  - **Read James 3.13-17** ~ “*the wisdom that is from above . . .*”
    - This wisdom from above makes Christians like Christ . . .
- Paul is commanding us to leave ourselves vulnerable (to hurt or abuse)
- And note we’re to be this way to all men (we must not pick and choose)

➤ **v5b ~ “The Lord is at hand”**

- John Calvin points to this phrase in defense of this view of vulnerability
  - “*the rage of the wicked is the more inflamed in proportion to our mildness*”
  - “*the more we are prepared to endure ... the more emboldened they are to attack*”
  - “*We must howl when among wolves*”
  - “*Those who act like sheep will be devoured by wolves*”
- Calvin’s response was “*The Lord is at hand . . .*”
- God’s power alone can overcome the audacity of evil . . .
- This phrase teaches us to wait patiently upon God
  - Calvin: “*ignorance of the providence of God is the cause of all impatience*”
- It also teaches us to trust God for our security (physical and spiritual)
  - “*We are not exposed either to the rashness of fortune, or to the caprice of the wicked, but are under the regulation of God’s fatherly care.*”

➤ **v6a ~ “Be anxious for nothing”**

- III: Bouncy woman’s story of why her husband doesn’t worry
  - We’re familiar with term designated drivers ~ designated worrier
- To not worry does not mean to be unconcerned or act irresponsibly
  - But we’ll soon get to how we’re to act on our concerns
- “*What are we do be anxious for?*” (repeat)
- “*What are we to worry about?*” (repeat) “*What’s in your head?*” ☺
  - Okay! We are NOT to worry . . . We are NOT to be anxious . . .

**Xition: “But how do we accomplish this miraculous feat?”**

➤ **v6b ~ “but in everything by prayer and supplication”**

- **Read all of verse 6**
- Obeying this simple verse works a miracle in our lives
  - It frees us from all worry and anxiety
  - *“I’m not saying that!” ~ “God’s Word says that!”*
- Anxiety and worry will come at you
- They’re like all other temptations
  - You may be more or less susceptible to any temptation
  - You may be more or less susceptible to worry
    - But indulging in it is a sin
    - When you worry ~ you give in to temptation
    - You are NOT doing what you ought to do . . .
- *“What ought you to do?”*
  - Pray ~ You should cast all your cares upon God, for He cares for you
  - **PUSH** – Pray Until Something Happens
  - *“What is the something?”* ~ The peace of God

➤ **v6c ~ “with thanksgiving”**

- Note that we are to pray to God with thanksgiving . . .
- We are all too often a thankless people
  - We are a generation grown accustomed to many comforts
  - And pity the person who fails to provide us comforts we expect
- God has given us so much ~ But we still are so unhappy, so discontented
  - III: Blind Side ~ *“You’ll never like it more than you do in the store”*
- A few verses on Paul says, *“I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content”*
  - III: Jonathan Kayser’s email address – **content** man ~ **content** man
- Thankfulness teaches us contentment
  - **Prov 30.15** ~ *“The leech has two daughters. ‘Give! Give!’ they cry.”*

➤ **v6d ~ “let your requests be made known to God”**

- But, *“Why would content people pray?”* – They don’t need anything
  - Paul told Timothy, *“having food and clothing, with these we shall be content”*
- But contented people want many things
  - To see people saved – to see justice prevail – to see God honored
  - But they don’t seek their joy / contentment in these things

**Xition: When we pray to, plead with and take time to thank God, then . . .**

➤ **v7a ~ “the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding”**

- Then we are blessed by the peace of God
- God is said to have attributes ~ communicable and incommunicable
  - (omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent) ~ (love, mercy, justice)
  - Peace here is not just a state of mind ~ either ours or God’s
- Paul in **Eph 2.13-14** wrote *“But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace ...”*
- John Frame writes in *“The Doctrine of God”* ~ “... peace among men is a reflection of God’s own nature; it is a divine attribute. God is completely at peace with Himself. We often experience struggles between contradictory impulses within us. God, on the contrary, is completely in harmony with Himself.”
  - God is always at peace ~ We’re usually not ~ But you can be . . .
  - This peace *“surpasses all understanding”* ~ it is supernatural

➤ **Summarize where we are**

- Let’s say you’ve done these things . . .
  1. You are rejoicing without regard to changing circumstances
  2. You are exhibiting supernatural gentleness ~ conduct of Christ
  3. You are aware of God’s presence and trust Him for security
  4. You are overcoming anxiety through thankful prayer
  5. You have now been blessed with the peace of God
- What now? What next?

➤ **v7b ~ “will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”**

- This peace of God will guard our hearts and minds
- What Paul has described is a virtuous cycle
- Other cycles are known as vicious
  - A vicious cycle leads to bad things ~ destruction and ruin
  - A person gets depressed and starts drinking, lose job, drink more . . .
- But a virtuous cycle leads to good things
  - Success, happiness, peace, contentment . . .
- But it doesn’t just happen . . . God has decreed it
- God has decreed that those that go to Him in thankful prayer will
  - have the peace of God guard their hearts and minds

**Xition: But now we have to ask the obvious question . . .**

➤ **“If this virtuous cycle leads to such good things, why are we not all on it?”**

- Not more than 1 in 10 of us are on this virtuous cycle
  - *“Do you rejoice daily despite your circumstances?”*
  - *“Do you behave in this gentle, self-sacrificial way described by James?”*
  - *“Do you have faith that God will protect you if you take risks for Him?”*
  - *“Do you fight the temptation of worry through thankful prayer?”*
  - *“Do you crave the supernatural peace of God that can be yours?”*

➤ **I see several reasons in my own experience**

1. *“A closer walk with God would make me uncomfortable”*
  - My relationship may not be close
    - But to get closer would make it too close for comfort
    - Any closer and God might make me do this or not do that . . .
2. *“I am content with the secular / sacred balance of my life”*
  - I don’t value holiness enough to seek to grow more
  - I’m holding steady here and that’s good enough
3. *“It is enough to know a deeper relationship is possible (should I want it)”*
  - There’s always tomorrow . . .
  - And I can only go so far this side of Heaven anyway . . .

➤ **We are making do with less than what is possible**

- *“Do you want more out of life?”*
  - For Christians, the only way to get this, is to pursue God
  - Nothing else will ultimately satisfy your deepest longings
- *“We can pursue many things in life . . .”*
  - But if we don’t also pursue God ~ those achievements will be empty
- Augustine said, “Our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee”
  - This applies for everyone through all of life . . .

➤ **The title of this message is “Worry Warrior”**

- I chose that title because for many of us the title is too true . . .
- Let us not be Worry Warriors . . .
- But becoming Prayer Warriors requires discipline and obedience
- We studied the path to this today
- And we’ll go deeper in 2 weeks time . . .

**Let us pray . . .**