

Choosing Peace over Worry
"Winning the Battle for Our Minds"
Philippians 4:1-9

Introduction:

1. Worry is a universal problem. It is not confined to a segmented group of people.
2. Paul deals with the subject of worry in the text before us. Verse 6 says, "*Be careful for nothing.*"
 - The word "careful" means "anxious, full of anxiety." So Paul is saying, "Don't be worried, afraid, or anxious."
 - The word "anxious" means "to be distracted, to have a divided mind."
 - The dictionary defines "worry" as "mental distress or agitation resulting from concern usually for something impending or anticipated."
3. Worry will so consume your thought life that you cannot stay focused on anything because you are being distracted by what you are worried about.
4. Worry adversely affects our lives. Worry can damage our health, consume our thoughts, disrupt our productivity, negatively affect the way we treat people, and weaken our faith.
 - The word "worry" comes from an old Anglo-Saxon word meaning "to choke, to strangle." This is exactly what worry will do to you in your life.
5. But what is the alternative to worry? Look again at verse six, but let's read on this time to verse seven. The alternative is **peace**.
6. Here in Philippians 4, God is going to show us very clearly how we can choose peace over worry. Notice I use the word "**choose**." Peace in our lives doesn't just happen.
7. Peace doesn't seek **us** out. We must **seek** peace and **choose** peace as we implement into our lives the Bible principles that we will be discovering in this passage.
8. How can we choose peace over worry?

First, by becoming a peacemaker. vs. 1-3

Second, by daily rejoicing in the Lord. vs. 4

Third, by replacing your worry with prayer. vs. 6-7

Fourth, by winning the battle for your minds. vs. 8-9

1. Where does worry take root in us? It originates and roots itself in our minds - our thoughts. It may surface in multiple ways (stress headaches, physical ailments, moodiness, quick temper, depression), but it originates in the mind.
2. So, if we are going to overcome the issue of worry, we have to get to the root and somehow replace the thoughts that are leading to worry with thoughts that will produce peace. Having said that, let us read verses 8 and 9.
 - What you allow your mind to think and dwell upon will either bring peace or rob you of your peace.
 - The Philippians had received, heard, and learned divine truth (sound doctrine) from Paul. They had also seen these divine truths lived out in Paul's life.

- They were to take those things that Paul had taught them and think and meditate on them, which would result in them doing them. What is the promise of verse 9? The God of **peace** shall be with you.
3. Did you know that there is a battle raging for the hearts and minds of every person?
 - Unbelievers - **2 Corinthians 4:4**
 - Believers - **2 Corinthians 11:3**
 4. We are bombarded every day with Satan's lies (via T.V., movies, radio, books, magazines, newspapers, internet, music). Why is this? Because Satan is presently the "*god of this world.*"
 - There is nothing you can do about this fact unless you are planning on moving to Mars.
 - Things will not change until Christ returns to this earth.
 5. But there **is** something proactive that you can do to overcome the constant bombardment of Satan's lies. You can fill your mind with truth - God's truth. This is what verse 8 is all about.
 6. If we are constantly bombarded with Satan's lies and have little exposure to God's truth then inevitably we begin to believe and act on Satan's lies which leads to worry, fear, anxiety, feelings of despair, worthlessness, hopelessness, etc.
 7. But if our minds are constantly exposed to the truth of God, then we will begin to live our lives by God's principles and precepts which always result in inner peace. vs. 9
 8. Do you see why it is so important to win the battle for your mind? There is a battle raging for control of your mind between God and Satan.
 9. A person may say, "Neither one is going to have control of my mind. I'm in control." But the fact is, when we refuse God's truth, we have believed the lies of Satan, whether we consciously realize it or not.
 - **Illustration:** "I don't believe in God or Satan." Satan is thrilled with that because you have just bought one of his lies.
 - **Illustration:** "I don't believe Jesus is the only way to heaven." You may think that you thought of that, but that is the same lie that Satan has been selling to people for the past 2000 years, yet God's truth remains the same. **John 14:6**
 - **Illustration:** "I don't think there are any consequences for sin." God's truth remains the same. **Galatians 6:7**
 10. Most of our worries stem back to one or more of Satan's lies that we have ingested and believed.
 - When we spend hours upon hours allowing Satan's world system to program our thinking, is it any wonder that our faith is small and we live in bondage to worry, fear, depression, stress, etc.?
 - In this turbulent world, we need an anchor for our heart and soul. That anchor is God's Word.
 - Think about it, how much time do you spend reading, listening to, and meditating on God's Word? How much time do you spend allowing Hollywood, the Web, books, T.V., etc., program your mind?
 11. Let's look at **Ephesians 4:22, 24**. What is the difference between me living as I did before Christ saved me (vs. 22) and living a life of righteousness and holiness (vs. 24)?

- Look at the verse in between these two (vs. 23). The difference is a renewed mind. **Romans 12:2**
 - How do I renew (renovate) my mind? By filling it with God's truth.
12. Do you want to choose peace over worry? You must win the battle for your mind. You do this by filling it with God's truth. God's Word actively begins to work in your inner man and transform your thinking, your attitudes, and ultimately your actions. **1 Thessalonians 2:13**
 13. Let's read our text one last time. *"Think on these things."*