

PHILIPPIANS (COUNT IT ALL JOY)
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WEEK 5 (#912322)
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SERIES: Philippians (Count It All Joy)

TITLE: Program 24 – A Cure For Worry?

THURSDAY

OPEN

Life is filled with tension, isn't it, Beloved? And the more tense you become, the more that you're worrying, the more anxious you become in your relationships, and you get uptight and you get short with others. And pretty soon everything's very, very volatile and why? It's simply because there is so much pressure. You're so worried. What are you going to do about it? How can you live? We'll talk about it today.

PART ONE

Hello my friend. I am so excited about today's lesson. And I'm so excited because we're going to look at a specific way to handle worry. What is the cure for worry? Well we certainly need to know because there's so much pressure on us; I mean so much anxiety. Life is just fraught with problems. And because those problems keep increasing and increasing, and the tension gets greater, it affects our relationships. Now God knows this, and knowing

this He has an answer, because we're looking at His epistle for joy, how to have joy. And in chapter 1 of Philippians, it's how to have joy despite imprisonment, despite where you are confined, despite whatever has shut you up. In chapter 2, it's how to have joy despite people, because people can rob you of your joy. In chapter 3, it's how to have joy despite things, because things can get in our way until we become so preoccupied with those things that we forget God. And when we forget God then we lose joy, because joy is Jesus and then others and then ourselves. So now we've come to this fourth chapter of Philippians, and it's how to have joy despite circumstances. Circumstances can rob you of your joy. And it begins in the mind because as we look at the circumstances of life, as we begin to feel the pressures of life then it builds and builds and builds until terrible anxiety. And that anxiety just causes us to be what we used to say, a real worrywart. So how do you keep from being a worrywart? I don't know what kind of animal that looks like, but I can tell you that it's hair is up on its back; it's bristling, it's, it's tense, it's taunt, it's snapping, it's biting. So let's look at it. In Philippians, chapter 4, in verse 4, he says, **“Rejoice in the Lord always; [and] again I will say, rejoice.” (Philippians 4:4)** And you say, “That is great, but I can't rejoice because of exactly what you're talking about. I can't rejoice because I'm uptight. I can't rejoice because I'm anxious. I can't rejoice because it is affecting my whole life.” Well, he doesn't stop there. He begins with a command. “Rejoice in the Lord,” and then he puts that very important time-phrase in there and you want to draw a little green clock around it, and it's always. In other words, He wants you and me to live such a life of peace and calm with Him and confidence with Him that no matter what happens we can rejoice in the Lord always. And then he says, [“And I say again, rejoice. I am giving you a command.”] Now if God gives us a command, Beloved, then He tells us how to fulfill that command. So this is what he goes on to say. **“Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near.” (Philippians 4:5)** Now there's debate exactly about exactly

what this means, that the Lord is near. It either means that the Lord's at hand. He's right there. He's your right hand. He's your left hand. He's your buckler. He's your shield and He can hold you up. Or it could mean that the Lord is near. He's going to come again. He's standing at the brink of heaven, so to speak, and waiting for the Father to say, "Now My Son, it's time for You come. It's time for You to straighten out this earth. It's time for You to rein as King of Kings and Lord of Lords." Whichever way it is I don't know, but I will tell you, that I'll take both ways, cause both ways are good. So he says, **"Let your gentle spirit be known [unto] all men." (Philippians 4:5)** ["Let your sweet reasonableness be known unto all men."] In other words, don't get uptight. Don't all of a sudden have your voice escalating. Don't all of a sudden let your face get tense and taunt and your voice go up another octave. He says, **"Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near." (Philippians 4:5)** The Lord is at hand. He's got it all under control. He's the sovereign ruler of all the universe. You can rest. You can relax. You can rejoice in the Lord always and I can say to you again, rejoice. Why? Because the Lord is there; because He knows what's going on. You say, "You know I try to think that, Kay. I try to remember, okay, God is sovereign. He rules over all. Nothing's going to happen in my life but what He promises it's going to work together for good. But I can't help it. I just can't help it. It bombards my mind." Okay, so what do you do? Well he tells you very specifically what to do. Verse 6: **"Be anxious for nothing." (Philippians 4:6a)** Now when he says be anxious for nothing, it's literally an imperative. It's literally a command. And as he's saying this, because it's a command and it's because – stop being anxious, it means you are being anxious. So God knows, "Hey, I know you're uptight. I know you're anxious. I know you're worrying, but I want you to stop it." You say, "Great, how do I stop it?" Well he tells you very specifically what you are to do to stop it. He says, and let me read it to you. **"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer,"** that's number one. And number two:

“supplication.” And number three, **“with thanksgiving let your requests be made known [unto] God.” (Philippians 4:6)** What is he saying? He’s saying, “Look, this is the way you stop being anxious. The first thing that you do is you pray. The second thing that you do is you supplicate.” You say, “What does this mean?” We’ll talk about it in just a minute. The third thing you do is you thank Him. And when you do those three things in that order, so to speak, then it goes on to tell you, **“And the peace of God, which surpasses [understanding] will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:7)** I don’t know if you saw the movie Gladiator, and there are other movies around that period of time or if you studied Alexander the Great and you understand his battle tactics and the way that he would move. What would happen is they would take a group of men. I can’t remember right now how many men it would be, and I’m not going to get anxious or uptight about it. But anyway, he would have them in, in like a rectangle. They would take their shields, and the ones on the outside would put their shields in front of them. The ones in the center would put their shields on top until really they were like a moving tank. And so as the arrows came flying at them, they were totally covered by their shields. Well when it says, “The peace of God...will guard your heart,” they’re using that military term. Isn’t that neat? So they’re using that term that you’re going to be shielded all around from the fiery darts of the enemy. So here’s the procedure, and here’s the promise. First we have a command: stop it. Stop being anxious. I tell you why anxiety is so bad for your body. I mean when you live under stress, when you live under pressure, when your mind is going bananas, what’s happening in your mind affects the rest of your body. As a matter of fact years and years ago Readers’ Digest had an article, Thinking Your Way Out of Depression. And they were having this article on Thinking Your Way Out of Depression because they realized that as a man thinks, so he is. In other words, what’s going on up here in the head is going to affect the body. It’s going to affect the hormones. It’s going to affect the

muscles. It's going to affect the whole body. And so here is His command to you. Well let's look at it. Number one, the first thing that you are told to do is stop it. Stop being anxious. But then he tells you how. So the next word where you put a one, **"but in everything by prayer."** (Philippians 4:6a) So this is the way you do it. Number one, the word for prayer in the Greek is PROSEUCHE, P-R-O-S-E-U-C-H-E. Now I know you don't need the Greek, but I want you to understand the difference between prayer and supplication. So when he says, "By prayer," "in everything by prayer," he's talking about general prayer. So he's saying, look, the minute that anxiety hits you, the minute that something comes your way that all of a sudden has robbed you of your joy, that is taking away your peace, that is causing you to be anxious, the first thing that you do, Beloved, is you start with general prayer. You say, "My general prayer would be, 'help'." Well, if it's an emergency help is fine. But in an anxiety situation, it's a mental state. Remember that. It's a mental state that becomes an emotional state that in turn affects you and affects your relationships. So what you do is you get your head screwed on right. And you get your head screwed on right by going to God in general prayer. Now by general prayer I mean this: you focus on who God is. You focus on the fact that He is sovereign. You focus on the fact that He is the One that promises you that whatever comes into your life is going to work together for your good. So you take that general prayer and you stop and you reflect on God. For instance, when my son was lost and I mean it was a terrible storm and in the midst of this terrible, terrible storm my son, a little boy at that time disappeared. And what made it even more anxious is my mind went to the fact that a little boy in Chattanooga had gone out to his backyard. His mother wasn't home. He came home from school. He went out to his backyard to play and a man found him and murdered him there in his own backyard. And they didn't know where that man was. And so my little boy's lost and I'm thinking what is going on? And all of a sudden I'm in the midst of this horrible storm. My

child hasn't come home and I am full of anxiety. So what do I need? I need to remember that God is omniscient, that He is all knowing. We'll talk about it more when I come back.

PART TWO

Anxiety: there is nothing like it. It rings out your gut and leaves you like a limp dishrag. And that's exactly what happened to me when I lost my young son. And I have to tell you that in the midst of my son disappearing and my not being able to find him, I became very, very anxious and I got mad at my husband. And I got mad at my husband because I kept saying to him, "Honey, a, a storm is coming. We've got to find David." And he would say to me, "O no. David'll be home." I guess David was eight. I guess he was nine. "He'll be home. He's all right. He knows enough." Now we lived on a big piece of property, and that's Precept Ministries. And at that time this property was not developed as it is now. I mean it had barns on it and we had lots of fields to run and play in and, and the boys had a great time growing up. But we couldn't find David. Finally the storm got so bad that Jack said, "We better go look for him." So we got in our car, we sent two other people out in their cars going through the neighborhood crying and looking for David. And as we looked and couldn't find him then my sweet reasonableness was not there. My gentle spirit was gone because my son was gone. What was I doing? I was attacking my husband. And I was attacking him and I was saying to him, "You know, we should have gone sooner. Why did you wait so long?" I've got the window open. It is storming. It is blasting on me and I am yelling for my kid, and all of a sudden the Lord reminds me, "Hey, Kay, what did you learn in Philippians, chapter 4? You learned that you're to be anxious for nothing. You learned that you are to rejoice, and again I say rejoice. You've learned that your sweet reasonableness is to be known to all men. The Lord is near. God is here. He hasn't left His throne, Kay. He has the situation under control." So I stopped.

I just, it was like I put on the brakes in my mind. It's like I pulled over to the side of the curb. It's like I turned off the engine. It's like I took a deep breath and said, "Okay, I will do what You tell me to do. I will begin with prayer, with general prayer." And so I started, and I said, "God, I don't know where David is, but You do. You know because You're omniscient. And God, You know if my son is in danger and Father, You're omnipotent. You are able to protect him. And Father, You tell me that this will not only work together for my good in my life, but it will work together for David's good." So I started rehearsing general prayer, what I knew about God, and talking to God about who God is. Well, as I talked to God more about who He was, then I calmed down, then it was easier for me to look at this in a peaceful perspective because I remembered everything about God. You say, "But no; you've got to take care of it. You're just normal; you've got to worry, and, and you're rubbing your hands, and you're, you're getting tight and you're getting tense." Can you change the situation? I mean do you know where he is? Can you protect him? No, you can't: so why are ringing your hands as if you could do something about it? You can't do anything about it. God can. God is God. So then the second thing that you move into is supplication. Now what is supplication? Supplication is a specific request. So what you do is in everything with prayer, with your general prayer, remembering who God is, remembering the promises of God, remembering who you are, remembering that you are not the Savior, remembering you are not God, remembering that you are on equal plane with the rest of humanity, unless you're a child of God and then you're on a higher plane because you have access to God; but remembering that you're a human being. You go to God in general prayer. Then you go to God in specific supplication. My specific supplication was this: "God, I'm asking You in the name of Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, to protect my son. I'm asking You Father to show me where he is. I'm asking You Father to, if we don't find him to bring him home." Well we roamed the neighborhood and we didn't find him. And, but

when we got back he was there; I mean soaking, dripping wet with his little friend. And of course you want to throttle him. And you want to throttle him because they've caused you anxiety, because you didn't know where he was, and at the same time you want to hug him and love him and kiss him and you know, just shower everything on him. And I said to him, "Honey, where were you? Where were you?" And he said, "Mom," he said, "I got lost." And he says, "And then I figured out the way to get back home." I mean he had gone quite a distance and he and this boy had just been exploring nature and just having a great time, and he, and he got turned around. But God answered my prayer specifically. But listen; before I ever saw him there was a third thing that I had to do in order to have the peace of God. Remember he says, **"Be anxious for nothing."** Stop it. **"But in everything [in] prayer..."**, number one, general prayer; number two; with **"...supplication..."**, number three, **"...and with thanksgiving."**

(Philippians 4:6) Thanksgiving means that you (breathes heavy), you stop and you recognize that for this, Beloved, for this trial, for this calamity, for this worry, for this anxiety, you have Jesus, you have Jesus. And if you have Jesus, then you have access to the Father. And if you have access to the Father, then because of the grace of God you have everything, everything that pertains to life, everything that pertains to godliness. You have the promise of eternity, so you have all this. So it's **"in everything [with] prayer and supplication [and] thanksgiving."** What do you do? You **"let your requests be made known [unto] God."** **(Philippians 4:6)** You stop and you say, "God, I'm so thankful that You're God. And I'm so thankful." And, and you take these, these things that you know about God, "that my times are, like the psalmist says, my times, David's times, are in Your hands. And so I'm thanking You and I'm telling You this is what I need. And I'm telling You that I am going to be obedient." And when you do, click, click, click, click, click, the army is marching and you are surrounded, you are shielded by the peace of God that passes all understanding. O Beloved, there

is a cure for worry. There is a cure for anxiety. You don't have to live that way. And the cure is right here in Philippians, chapter 4, so that you might **"Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4)** so that you might walk in that sweet reasonableness, in that gentleness of spirit with others, even in the midst of tension, even in the midst of trauma, that you might take that trauma and move it off of your shoulders onto the shoulders of God through prayer, through supplication, with thanksgiving, letting your requests be made known unto God. And when you do, it is the peace of God that will guard your mind and your heart, so that you can walk and live as more than a conqueror. For this is the victory that has overcome the world with all of its anxieties: our faith, our faith. And if you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, then you have access to God and you have access to everything that He says is yours in Christ Jesus. And one of those things is peace, not anxiety.