



Life is full of challenges. We are faced each day with the challenge of balancing work, family, and personal time. Add to that the fact that we reside in bodies that are often limited in what we can do because of emotional, mental and physical limitations.

Often the way we respond to the challenge is to do what comes quite natural, we worry. We tend to spend our days worrying about the future, our health, our jobs, our relationships and we lose sight of the fact that our joy and peace cannot be derived from the temporal things of life but only from the contentment that we can find through a relationship with Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul writes from his prison cell in Rome, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content". "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me". "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus".

How could Paul be content and worry free while a prisoner awaiting the answer to his fate by the Roman Caesar? Paul had learned that contentment and joy could only be found when he allowed the power of God to control his life instead of him trying to control his life and change his circumstances. Paul was content because he knew he was in the center of Gods will and he knew the power of God would sustain him.

To live the contented Christian life we must allow the power of Christ to fortify and strengthen our lives. The believer should not be gloomy and downtrodden in despair, but rather be glorious and rejoice in what we are in Christ. "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice. Paul says keep rejoicing irrespective of your circumstances. Be content.

There can be no peace in a Christian's life if you do not have joy. Paul understood this and Paul could speak from authority because he rejoiced in prison and he rejoiced out of prison.

Joy is a result of being at peace with God, not with winning the lottery or being a successful businessman or businesswoman. Every believer enjoys the peace with God, but not all have the peace of God because of our faithlessness and disobedience in walking with God and allowing the Holy Spirit to lead us. Paul writes in Romans 5:1, "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ". The moment you trust Christ as your Savior the righteous demands of God have been satisfied. You have made peace with God. He no longer deals with you as a sinner but as a saint.

The problem is, even though we have made peace with God we sometimes do not enjoy the peace of God because we refuse to walk with him in union and communion. We refuse to yield and obey. We worry instead of trusting God. Paul writes in Philippians

chapter four that a surrendered, yielded, obedient life produces the “peace of God, which passeth all understanding..”. The peace of God brings Joy and Joy drives out contention, discord and worry.

Paul says, “Let your moderation be known unto all men”. To paraphrase it says this; Let your sweet reasonableness be known unto all men. That is being known for your forbearance (tolerance, patience, longsuffering), your considerateness, graciousness, and gentleness. Get rid of the negative, stubborn, worrying spirit. Replace it with forbearance, gentleness, reasonableness and thoughtfulness. Be known for your sweet reasonableness not your worrying.

Paul writes, “be careful for nothing but by prayer and supplication and thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God”. Stop being anxious (worrying). Don’t get caught up in the habit of worry. Instead of worrying, take it to the Lord in Prayer. We are to worry about nothing and pray about everything.

God may not change your circumstances, but He will change you as you engage in intercessory prayer (specific requests). We often try to use prayer as a laundry list of circumstances that we need changed. Maybe God does not want to change your circumstances, maybe he wants to change you and change your attitude about your circumstances.

Peace with God was made at salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. The peace of God is dependant upon our prayer life and our obedience to His Word, which will produce joyful, worry free Christian living.

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