Finding Peace In A Chaotic World
Philippians 4:6-9 (NKJV)

Please turn with me to tonight’s scripture text in Philippians the fourth chapter.

Philippians 4:6-9 (NKJV)

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

9 The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

P R A Y E R

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

In the classic movie, “Wizard of Oz,” a girlish looking JUDY GARLAND sang one of the classic songs to ever come out of a movie: “Somewhere Over The Rainbow.”

In that song, Garland’s character, DOROTHY, expressed a heartfelt desire to escape to some far off land where all her problems would just melt away “like lemon drops.” She sang about the “blue bird’s” ability to fly over the rainbow to that distant land of peace she longed for and asked, “Why, oh why, can’t I?”
Despite her professional success in Hollywood, Judy Garland struggled immensely in her personal life. She was plagued by financial instability, often owing thousands of dollars in back taxes. She married five times, with her first four marriages ending in divorce. She also battled drug and alcohol addictions throughout her adult life, which ultimately led to her untimely death at the age of 47, on June 22, 1969.

Judy Garland never found the PEACE she was looking for.

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At some time or another I believe all of us desperately search for a place of “peace” in this chaotic world; some place where we can get away from all our troubles and all the pressures and stresses of day to day living.

What do you do when you want to find some “peace and quiet?”

- Perhaps some of you guys head to your favorite fishing hole or climb up in a secluded deer stand in the woods or go play a round of golf.

- Maybe for you ladies, your place of “peace” is curling up in bed with a good book or immersing yourself in relaxing hobby like crocheting or scrap booking.

- Others search for peace by taking a relaxing drive through the country or heading off to a favorite vacation spot for a few days.

But all of us knows the PEACE we find in those places is only temporary at best. Within a matter of a few hours or few days we must return to the reality of our hectic, chaotic world.

In tonight’s message we are going to see that true peace, lasting peace, is not found in a PLACE, but rather in a PERSON. And that person is the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

In our scripture text, the apostle Paul tells us THREE KEYS to “Finding Peace In A Chaotic World.”
First of all.............

KEY #1 : True Peace Is Found In PRAYING Right (vs. 6, 7)

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

1. Paul says, “be anxious for nothing.” That means “don’t worry about anything!

2. If you are a chronic worrier I can tell you that you probably don’t enjoy much peace in your life. Chronic worriers tend to stay emotionally torn up over something during the day and do a lot of tossing and turning at night.

   Nothing drives peace away from our minds and hearts quicker than WORRYING.

   One thing that will drive peace away from our minds and hearts quicker than anything is WORRYING.

3. Do you realize worrying is much more than a human weakness, it is a SIN. In fact, worrying is just as much a sin as lying, stealing or committing adultery.

   Now you ask, “How can that be?” How can worrying be a sin?

   It is a sin because it is something Jesus commanded us NOT to do! In Matthew 6:25,26 Jesus said......

   “Therefore I say to you DO NOT WORRY about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your Heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?
4. Now back to what Paul said, “Be anxious for nothing” but do what instead? “But in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.”

What Paul is commanding us to do is any time we starting getting anxious about something, any time we get all torn up worrying over something, stop whatever you are doing and say a prayer.

When we pray we are transferring the burden of whatever is we are worrying about from our shoulders to God’s shoulders.

5. Then notice what God promises to do when we stop worrying and start praying.

v. 7 “And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

6. Brothers and sisters, if you are searching for peace the place to begin is to turn your worries over to the Lord in prayer and “let go!”

KEY #1: True Peace Is Found In Praying Right!

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Now here’s the second key.........

KEY #2: True Peace Is Found In Thinking Right (v. 8)

8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

1. Do you know the things you feed your mind on have a direct bearing on the amount of peace you have? The things you watch, the things you read, the things you listen to, all affect your level of peace.
ILLUSTRATION: I have really had this truth come home to me in recent months. As you know, about six weeks from now we are facing what perhaps is the most critical election in this nation's history.

In these months leading up to this historic election political news is “in our face” every day; the negative TV ads, political pundits arguing back and forth, newspaper articles, and an endless amount of political information being circulated on-line.

And it seems the more of this stuff I have watched, and read, and listened to, the angrier I became. So what I have I done about it? I’ve had to change my “THOUGHT LIFE.”

I have come to the realization……

- I can’t do anything about the astronomical national debt.
- I can’t do anything about the high unemployment rate.
- I can’t do anything about the ineptness of our political leaders.
- I can’t do anything to stop all the negative political bantering.

But there’s three things I can do………

- I CAN SHUT OFF MY TV and stop watching, reading and listening to all the political negativity. (which I have done, and been more at peace ever since.)

- AND I CAN PRAY about this upcoming election, which I am doing each day, encourage each of you to join me.

- AND I CAN VOTE. Which I plan to do bright and earlier bright and early on the morning of November 6th.

2. Our “thought life” is absolutely critical to our over-all spiritual and emotional well-being. In fact, more of our life takes place in our THOUGHTS than in our actions and deeds.

    Our minds are a BATTLEFIELD for Satan, because he knows if he can effect our way of THINKING he can have an impact on every area of our lives.
3. What Paul is suggesting in this 8TH VERSE is not “positive thinking,” but rather GODLY thinking.

-"Whatever things are TRUE.” This world is full of lies! We must feed our minds on the TRUTH. And what greater source of TRUE is there than the word of God?

-"Whatever things are NOBLE.” That means think about things that inspire REVERENCE and AWE of Almighty God.

-"Whatever things are JUST.” The world is full of unfairness and injustice, and if we constantly dwell on those things we will never have a moment of peace. We must think on the RIGHTEOUSNESS and JUSTICE of God who will right all wrongs, if not in this life, then in eternal life.

-"Whatever things are PURE.” We talked about this in this morning’s message on “Living A Pure Life in An Impure World.” The world is a cesspool of impure thoughts. Everywhere we turn our minds are bombarded with sexual images and thoughts. This is why we must “take captive every thought” and make a concentrated effort to focus on those things that are PURE.

-"Whatever things are LOVELY.” That means we must set our minds on doing things that demonstrate KINDNESS and COMPASSION toward others, rather than thinking of ways to do HARM.

-"Whatever things are of GOOD REPORT.” This means stay away from conversations where GOSSIP and RUMORS are being passed along. Guard your mind against dwelling on the FAULTS and SHORTCOMINGS of others.

-”Meditate on things that are VIRTUOUS or PRAISE-WORTHY. Simply put this means to elevate your thinking above the EARTH and think on HEAVENLY things. Think about things which God would APPLAUD.

4. If you lack peace of mind and heart, take a good inventory of the things you watch, the things you read, the things you listen to, the things you think about the most, and chances are you will discover the source of your problem.
KEY #1: True Peace Is Found In PRAYING Right.
KEY #2: True Peace Is Found in THINKING Right.

Now here’s the third key.......... 

III. True Peace Is Found In LIVING Right. (v. 9)

9 The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

1. In this verse, Paul is drawing a direct connection between PUTTING THE WORD OF GOD into practice in our daily lives and the level of PEACE we enjoy.

2. When you and I live in obedience. When we seek to honor God, and please God, by doing His will, GOD in turn blesses us with an incredible sense of PEACE.

3. You see, it is absolutely impossible to have the PEACE of GOD if you are living outside of God’s WILL.

It is impossible to live in willful SIN and at the same time to know peace.

4. David said in Psalm 32:4 that when he disobeyed God, “the hand of God was heavy upon him.”

That is true of you and me also. When we are living in willful disobedience to God, His hand will be heavy upon us. His Holy Spirit will convict us of our sins. Our own conscience will torment us. And the only way to rediscover God’s PEACE is to repent and forsake our sins.

5. If peace is missing in your life tonight, I would ask you, “Is there some secret sin in your life?” “Are you living outside of God’s will?” If so, then you must repent of that sin and forsake it and come back to God!

TRUE PEACE IS FOUND IN LIVING RIGHT!
CONCLUSION

Years ago an unknown artist painted a picture that perfectly illustrates the peace we can know in God.

In the painting there was a powerful waterfalls spilling over a mountainous cliff. Gray storm clouds were in the sky above. The trees in the painting were obviously bent in one direction from the strong winds of the approaching storm.

But perched on one of the tree branches that jutted out towards the roaring waterfalls, was a little bird resting peacefully in her nest on her eggs. Despite her chaotic surroundings, the little bird found a peace that passes all understanding.

You and I live in a very chaotic world; a world of trouble and hardship that can overwhelm us with doubts and fears if we let it. And yet in the midst of all this chaos, you and I can know “the peace that passes all understanding”……the peace one can only KNOW by KNOWING the PRINCE of PEACE.”

Brothers and sisters, if you want to “Find Peace In This Chaotic World” learn the secret of PRAYING RIGHT…….THINKING RIGHT…..and LIVING RIGHT!

As we close, I want to leave you with these wonderful words of Jesus from John 14:27 (NKJV) :

“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”