

Philippians: Week 13 Study Questions

Philippians 4:6-9

In our culture today, we have the expectation for control and for connectivity. In Philippians 4, we are instructed to cease worrying about the ever-increasing issues we are controlled by and connected to and to instead pray. In the context of thankfulness, our prayers should ultimately come from an overflowing heart of gratitude for what God has done for us. While we naturally attempt to be self-reliant by worrying, we must trust the Lord and go to Him for all that we need.

Application

1. In humility and thankfulness, and in the context of all He has done for us, we present our requests to God. When is the last time you remember praying in this framework of gratitude? How would your prayers look different if you prayed like this?
2. Peace comes when we pray *without* worry. Matt commented that both prayer and not worrying take faith. Do you think you have faith to stop trusting in yourself and to go to Him in prayer? Why or why not? Do you have faith to stop worrying and trust Him with the outcome? What is a situation in your life where you need to stop worrying as you pray?
3. Matt addresses two ways to apply Paul's instruction in this passage: systematic (built-in systems in your life to help you redirect to prayer) and spontaneous (when you get bad news, what is your initial response?).
Systematic: What systems do you have in place to help you pray throughout the day?
Spontaneous: When do you worry, and what do you worry about? What is your default response when you are in pain, difficulty, or strife? What do you turn to first, and how can you begin to train yourself to rewire that initial response?
4. When worry drives our lives, we try to self-soothe using unhealthy habits to fill our minds and souls. These things distract you at best or they destroy you at worst. What is it that you need to cut out of your life that is not feeding you in a healthy way? What are you feeding on or consuming or escaping into that is not helping you grow?

Key Points

- Worry puts us at the center of our situation, assuming that we know better than God. As Oswald Chambers once said, "Worry on the part of God's children is unconscious blasphemy."

- As we pray, we redirect our energy to trust God and dependence on Him for our issues. The reality of our situation may not change, but we can have peace.
- The only way to stop worrying is to pray, releasing control of your will, giving it to God, and choosing that you are okay with whatever He decides.
- When you continue to worry it is because you have your own agenda, and you are worried you will not get your own way. We have to let go of our own agenda and surrender to God's.
- Pride, demands, and entitlement feed worry. When you demand certain outcomes and you have no power to make them happen, you will worry.
- Culture tells us to empty our minds in order to gain peace, but Scripture tells us to *fill* our minds with what is good. We have to *fix* our minds every day and direct our thoughts to what is excellent, pure, and praiseworthy.
- Matt read a response to "What is meditation?":
When I talk about prayer and meditation, I'm talking about slowing down in reflective prayer over the Scriptures and lingering with God over how they need to apply to my life. ... The goal is not to empty my mind but to redirect my mind to the great Truth of Scripture. This is the real work, and it takes time and effort.
It involves "putting off" and "putting on" (Colossians 3 ESV).
It involves confession of sin and weakness.
It involves pleading for transformation by the Holy Spirit.
It involves hungering and thirsting after God.
It involves a willful rejoicing for the great things that God has done for me in Christ even and especially when I don't feel it. [I am overriding feelings with the Truth]
It involves capturing my imagination and fixing it on the throne room of Christ and imagining the day when He saddles up and returns to claim us and His world.
It is also that I view my circumstances from this perspective that God's will in this world becomes clear, and I am settled in a place of contentment, clarity, and peace.

Scripture References

[Luke 12:22](#)

[1 Peter 5:5-7](#)