

2. How does prayer help us experience God's peace?

Advent 2021

"How to Pursue God's Peace"

Isaiah 9:5-7; Luke 2:13-15; Philippians 4:5-7

What if, "Do not be anxious about anything" (Philippians 4:6) is an invitation and encouragement, not a _____ ?

A Tale of Two Pauls?

- _____ Paul (Philippians 1:21; 4:11-13; 2 Corinthians 11:24-27)

3. How you grow to value God's presence more in your heart?

- _____ Paul (Romans 9:1-4; Philippians 3:8; 2:25-28; 2 Corinthians 11:27-29)

4. How can you personally (in your present circumstances) grow in God's invitation not to be anxious about anything?

Do you notice a pattern here? When it comes to _____, he's free from anxiety or fear. But when it comes to the spiritual or physical well being of others, you see him sorrowful, concerned, anxious, worried, and fearful for them.

Could it be that when Paul says, "Do not be anxious about anything," he's _____ us to experience God's peace not only IN all circumstances but even IN our anxiety, worry, and fear?

Pursuing God's Peace

1. Pray _____. (Philippians 4:6)

Prayer is _____ because it's simply a conversation with God, but praying well takes instruction and practice. (Luke 11:1-4)

2. Value God's presence and invest your _____ and life in God and his kingdom purposes.

Our sense of personal peace comes from our hope in God himself—in our good God that we can trust—and in our hope is based on the end of the _____ God is weaving. (Philippians 4:4-7)

"The peace _____ God"

As we live in the reality of God's goodness and his plans for shalom/_____ and his presence (a reality that transcends our imaginations), our hearts and minds are protected.

Paul is waiting for God to "put the world to rights" with his hope intact. He confidently and _____ anticipates the day when what's wrong and broken in this world will be made right. And the hope of that day stands guard over his heart and mind.

Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week's sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. What is one thing that is "keeping you up at night" these days or has kept you up at night in the past?
3. Read and reflect on the passages that depict the "fearless Paul." What could you learn from Paul to grow deeper in trusting God with your own welfare and well being?