

*6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

*Phil 4:6-7 NIV*

When something comes up that maybe challenging, unpleasant, or goes against the grain for us what do we do? There are those who can take things in stride. I admire such folk, however I 'm not in that category, and I suspect you may be not either. Too often our emotions work overtime, and we can anxious about a situation or what we have to face. In fact for some of us it effects our health which can drag us down even more. Once when someone proposed a project that they were going to pay for at church I was pastor at, I felt before the project commenced the appropriate committee should approve it. The individual got very anxious about it and when I told that person not to jump to conclusions, the person quipped back, "At my age that's the only way I can jump at all!"

What happens to us I think, is when we are faced with a challenging or unpleasant situation, we tend to get anxious on how we're going to resolve it, or we get anxious wondering how other parties may react or how the situation is going to unfold. Many times none of our anxieties are ever realized when things play out, but they are there very real to us taking us for quite a ride. Mark Twain once quipped "I am an old man and have known a great deal of troubles, but most of them never happened".

St. Paul was writing from prison awaiting trial (how's that for an "anxiety provoking situation?) to his dear friends in the church in Philippi. He seems to have found a way in the verses quoted above. Instead of trying to figure these situations out ourselves, we should be taking them to God. We forget that we are God's children, and God indeed cares for us, all we have to do is go to God admit our neediness, and place it in God's hands. Perhaps what's hard in saying that is deep down we want to resolve things ourselves and not let go of them. In that case anxiety has the upper hand.

We need to "let go" as the expression says and "let God". Paul says that when we do, we experience God's peace. One of the ways I have found that to be true is at night when there is much on my mind when I go to bed. Sometimes, inconveniently, in the middle of the night I will wake up, anxiety up and running, trying to solve the problem (which is ridiculous when you think about it, how can anyone really solve anything in the middle of the night?)

Finally I had enough, so before I go to sleep at night I try to pray "Lord there is nothing I can do about anything right now, you need me to get my rest, so I put all my cares and situations in your hands this night" The word of my testimony is that it has been very helpful in doing that.

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