

"Finding Peace in the Midst of the Stresses of Ministry!"

Phil 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! 5 Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. 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 comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. 9 The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. Phil 3:17 Brethren, join in following my example... 2 Corinthians 11:28 Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure upon me of concern for all the churches. 1 Corinthians 4:16 I exhort you therefore, be imitators of me. 1 Corinthians 11:1 Be imitators of me just as I also imitate Christ. 1 Thessalonians 1:6 You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example o all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. 2 Thessalonians 3:7...for you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example... Habakkuk 3:16 I heard and my inward parts trembled, At the sound my lips quivered. Decay enters my bones, And in my place I tremble. Because I must wait quietly for the day of distress, For the people to arise who will invade us. 17 Though the fig tree should not blossom And there be no fruit on the vines, Though the yield of the olive should fail And the fields produce no food, Though the flock should be cut off from the fold And there be no cattle in the stalls, 18 Yet I will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation. 19 The Lord GOD is my strength, And He has made my feet like hinds' feet, And makes me walk on my high places. For the choir director, on my stringed instruments.	Introduction: Fear & worry are acceptable sins as far as man is concerned but not before God. In order to handle fear in a godly way you must: 1. Rejoice in the Lord. Phil 4:4 ➤ Emphasized by repetition. 2. Resolve to be gentle/patient. 4:5 3. Remember the Lord is near. 4:5 4. Refuse to be anxious (fearful) about anything. 4:6 ➤ Anxiety, Worry, Fear versus concern 2 Corinthians 11:28 5. Rely on Prayer. 4:6,7 ➤ You must pray in every circumstance. ➤ You must pray specifically. (Supplication/petition) ➤ You must pray with thanksgiving. ➤ And God promises peace. 6. Rest your mind on whatever is excellent or praiseworthy. 4:8 7. Reach out and practice what is good. 4:9 ➤ Paul is not afraid to say imitate me. Phil 3:17, 1 Corinthians 4:16; 11:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:6; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-10 ➤ You must practice what is good to feel good. Conclusion: God will guard your heart and mind with His peace. That peace goes beyond understanding. He, as the God of peace will go with you. 4:7-9
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Questions and suggestions that are designed to stimulate your study and application of the text. The Bereans “...were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.” And the Apostle James tells us: “But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.”

- What does Paul mean when he says, “Rejoice in the Lord?”
- When fear, anxiety, worry or depression begin to assail your thinking what practical things could you do to ‘rejoice in the Lord?’
- Why is gentleness/forbearance/patience important when you are facing fear?
- What are some practical steps that you can take to remind yourself that God is near when faced with fearful situations?
- If fear, worry and anxiety are natural reactions or normal emotions how can you actually refuse to be fearful?
- In your opinion, “Why does God allow concern to return time and time again after you have already committed it to Him in prayer?”
- On what basis can you pray with thanksgiving when you are in the midst of anxious situations?
- List some practical ways that you can use to ‘rest your mind on what is excellent or praiseworthy’ when you are in the midst of fearful circumstances.
- List the 5 issues that cause the most fear in your life.
- Now make a step by step plan for turning each of those fears over to God in prayer.
- Now make a list of three positive, excellent or praiseworthy items that would counterbalance that fear.
- Now make a list of at least two things you could do to reach out and practice good to counterbalance each fear that you listed.

Resources

Fitzpatrick, Elyse, *Overcoming Fear, Worry and Anxiety*, Harvest House.

Powlison, David, *Worry: Pursuing a Better Pat to Peace*, Resources for Changing Lives, P&R Publishers.



Don't Shoot the Messenger

Post Valentine Suggestions for Keeping the Real Priorities in Ministry

1) Follow the example of Ezra! (Ezra 7:10) Study the Word to practice the Word and only then should you teach the Word. This concept is the teaching of Jesus and Paul as well. (Luke 6:40; 1 Tim 4:12; Titus 2:7)

2) Remember that your wife and your family are your first disciples. If we fail with our family then we are not qualified to minister to the church. (1 Timothy 3:3-4)

- Make your first appointments for the week with your family and make those appointments your priority. Your wife and children need to know they are first in your heart and ministry.

3) Lead your family as the greatest servant in the household. Remember Jesus came to serve not to be served. How are you taking up the towel in your home? (Matthew 10:28; Mark 10:45; John 13:3-14; Philippians 2:3-5) Please read these prayerfully asking God to teach you what you need to practice with your family.

- Question = How well do you know the needs of your wife and children? How are you serving them to meet their needs? i.e. One pastor with a church of over 200 with 7 children realizes how difficult it is to get the family of 7 ready for Sunday Morning Worship so before he leaves on Sunday morning to feed his flock he fixes breakfast for the 7 children to help his wife. That is a servant's heart.

4) Love your wife and be her protector! The greatest theology is taught in the way you love your wife. See Ephesians 5:15-33.

- Honor her opinion as more important than your own. See 1 Peter 3:7 & Phil 2:3-5
- Make commitments to new ministries remembering the commitment to your wife and your family comes first.

5) If I or we choose to take on this responsibility:

- How will it help us to grow in Christ likeness? (Romans 8:29-29)
- How will it use our gifts to the best advantage for the Body of Christ? (1 Peter 4:10)
- How will it positively or negatively impact other family and ministry responsibilities? (Col 3:23-25)

Resources:

Peterson, Robert L & Strauch, Alexander, *Agape Leadership: Lessons in Spiritual Leadership from the Life of R.C. Chapman*, 1991. (C.H. Spurgeon said of Chapman, he was "The saintliest man I ever knew.")

Peterson, Robert L, Robert Chapman: A Biography, Loizeaux, 1995. Also Kindle

David Platt, *Radical*, Multnomah Books, 2010.

Strauch, Alexander, *Leading with Love*, Lewis & Roth, 2006.

Tripp, Paul David, *Dangerous Calling: Confronting the Unique Challenges of Pastoral Ministry*, Crossway, 2006.

Submitted at Seminary Wives for the wives to deliver to their husbands as suggestions from Dr. Bob Somerville – My suggestions may raise questions in your mind so here is my e mail rsomerville@masters.edu. ☺ May God richly bless your ministry as you love Jesus first, your family next and then your flock.