

WHY PRAY WHEN YOU CAN WORRY?

Key Text

'Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.'
Philippians 4: 6-7 (NKJV)

Exploring what these verses teach us about anxieties, prayer and peace

Context

Anxieties

Prayer

God's Peace

Context

- **Philippi the City**
 - **Named after Philip II, the father of Alexander the Great**
 - **Became a Roman colony after the Battle of Philippi in 42BC**
- **Letter to the Philippians written by Paul from Prison in Rome (circa 60-62 AD)**
 - **As were Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon**
 - **Most scholars hold this view - in part because of Paul's comments in *Phil. 1:19-26* and *Phil. 2:17 and 23-24***
 - Some scholars think the 'prison epistles' were written from either Caesarea or from Ephesus - but there are serious difficulties in justifying such beliefs
 - **In the light of this, Paul's injunction to '*be anxious for nothing*' is quite amazing**
- **The Philippian Church**
 - **The First Church Founded in Europe**
 - **On Paul's second missionary journey - after his vision of a man of Macedonia saying 'come over and help us' - *Acts 16:12-40***
 - **Lydia was a early convert - *Acts 16:14-15***
 - **Satanic Opposition**
 - **The demon-possessed slave girl - *Acts 16:16-18***
 - **Paul & Silas beaten and imprisoned - *Acts 16:19-24***
 - **A Miraculous Release - led to the conversion of the Philippian jailer and his family - *Acts 16:25-34***
 - **Paul and Silas refuse to 'go quietly' - *Acts 16:35-40***
 - **Paul Visited Twice during his Third Missionary Journey**
 - **Once at the beginning (*2 Cor. 8:1-5*) and again near the end (*Acts 20:6*)**
 - **Philippian Generosity**
 - **Supported Paul on his missionary journeys - *Phil. 4:15-16***
 - **Sent Aid to Jerusalem - *2 Cor. 8:1-4***
 - **Sent aid to Paul in prison in Rome - *Phil. 4:10***
- **Paul's Philippian Letter**
 - **Essentially Practical**
 - **Thanking them for their gift - *Phil. 4:10-18***

- Telling them he was sending Timothy to them - *Phil.2:19-24*
- Telling them why Epaphroditus was returning - *Phil.2:25-30*
- Informing them of his circumstances in Rome - *Phil.1:12-26*
- Exhorting them to unity and humility - *Phil. 2:1-4 and 4:2-3*
- Warning them against false teachers - *Phil. 3:1-4:1*
- **It has a wonderful prayer of Paul's for the Philippians** - *Phil. 1:9-11*
- **It contains Paul's spiritual biography** - *Phil. 3:4-11*
- **It includes a momentous teaching on Yeshua's origin, humiliation and exaltation** - *Phil. 2:5-11*
- **Our text comes in Paul's closing exhortations** - *Phil. 4: 4-9*
 - Rejoice always
 - Let gentleness be evident
 - Meditate on things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely and of good report

Anxieties

- **Anxious - the Greek word (*merimnaō*), pronounced *mer-im-nah'-o***
 - **It means to be anxious about, to be careful of, or to take thought of**
 - Translated as anxious (NKJV, ASV, NIV, RV, YLT); careful for (KJV); anxious, fret or worried (AMP); worry (CJB, GNB)
 - **Its root is from a Greek word *merizō*, pronounced *mer-id'-zo*, which means to part or disunite...interesting...as we shall see!**
- **Anxiety is common today - and probably always has been**
 - **It affects everyone these days - and in some cases has very significant effect on a person's daily life - some people even worry about being so worried!**
 - **Anxiety is the main symptom of several conditions, including panic disorders and phobias** – such as agoraphobia or claustrophobia; post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); and social anxiety disorder (social phobia)
 - **Anti-depressant use has grown dramatically in the last decade**
 - *See Guardian Article from 19/06/17*
NHS Prescribed Record Number Of Antidepressants Last Year
- **The Father intends that Yeshua's disciples should live free from anxiety - in peace of heart and mind and rest in the Lord**
 - **It is intended to be the natural state for the believer**
 - **David's Testimony**

*'My soul, wait silently for God alone, for my expectation is from Him. He only is my rock and my salvation; **He is my defence; I shall not be moved.** In God is my salvation and my glory; the rock of my strength, and **my refuge, is in God.***

*Trust in Him at all times, you people; **pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us.** Selah'*

Psalm 62:5-8

- **Isaiah's Song of Salvation**

'You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. Trust in the Lord forever, for in YAH, the Lord, is everlasting strength.'

Isaiah 26:3-4

- **Yeshua's Promise**

*"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."*

John 14:27

- Anxiety is Not A Sin - but we are not meant to live this way
 - Disciples are meant to live in trust, rest and peace - in all circumstances
 - Yeshua speaks of this in His Sermon on the Mount (*Matthew 6: 25-34*)
*"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?"* **Matthew 6:25**
 - "Therefore, **do not worry** about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."* **Matthew 6:34**
 - Paul uses the same words as Yeshua "do not worry" Greek: *merimnaō*
- Living with freedom from anxiety is not natural - it's supernatural
 - Our natural flesh tends to anxiety - it is part of our fallen nature
 - The flesh wants to drag us down...to draw us away from the Lord
 - Anxiety is like a 'lust of the flesh' - it is our flesh warring against God's Spirit within us
 - Living free from anxiety has to be learnt - spiritually
 - The Holy Spirit being our teacher and guide
 - By Experience - Walking in the Spirit...and not fulfilling the lusts of the flesh

*I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For **the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.***
Galatians 5:16-17
- Be Anxious For Nothing
 - The Greek word (*mēden*) - means 'not even one'
 - Nothing - not finance, nor health, nor relationships, nor singleness, nor marriage...not anything
- In Everything - in every circumstance - in need, in plenty, in the valley and on the mountain top
 - Not that we thank Him 'for' the circumstance (e.g. illness) but thank Him 'in' it
 - Paul gave testimony to this - a few verses after our text
*'Not that I speak in regard to need, for **I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content:** I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. **Everywhere and in all things** I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.* **Philippians 4:11-13**
 - Paul is not writing theoretically here - it is his living experience - his contentment in every circumstance of life speaks of his freedom from anxiety - amazing when we recall his sufferings - *2 Cor. 11:22-33*
- Don't be Anxious - Pray... the Way to Freedom from Anxiety is to Pray
 - If you take antidepressants, Don't Stop!! This message is not telling you to throw them away, but to encourage you to PRAY when you have any worries

Prayer

- There are Different Kinds of Prayer (here are 7...but there are many more)
 - Praise & Worship - giving honour and glory to God for who He is - the Psalms are a wonderful example to us - e.g. *Psalms 8, 96 and 111*
 - Confession - admitting to God that we have sinned (rebelled) against Him - David's prayer of confession is a wonderful example - *Psalms 51*
 - Repentance and Forgiveness - naturally follows Confession, it is determining to 'turn from sin' and then receiving forgiveness from God - *1 John 1:9*

- **Intercession - 'standing in the gap', possibly the deepest form of prayer** - Moses and Daniel offer us examples of this - *Exodus 32: 7-14 and 31-32; Daniel 9:3-19*
 - **Guidance - seeking wisdom to do the right thing**
 - **Seeking God's wisdom for the way ahead**
 - The Lord guided the (rebellious) Israelites - *Exodus 13:21-22*
 - Moses asked God for guidance in his leadership - *Exodus 33: 12-16*
 - **Asking God how to pray when we don't know what to pray**
 - We have the Holy Spirit to help us - *Romans 8:26-27*
 - **Supplications - asking prayers...petitioning the Lord for His intervention**
 - **There are many examples in scripture...almost every page**
 - **The Psalms contain many asking prayers** - e.g. *Psalms 77*
 - **Thanksgiving - saying thank you to God for all that He is and all He has done**
 - **The Psalms contain many thanksgiving prayers** - e.g. *Psalms 95, 107 & 136*
 - **Supplications - Asking Prayers - your 'Requests'**
 - **In our text, in the circumstance of being anxious, Paul tells us to pray asking prayers (supplications)**
 - **The Father loves us to ask Him when we are in need**
 - **The problem is often - we don't ask - we rely on our own resources**
 - **Our resources are very limited compared to God's resources**
 - **Sometimes we are afraid to ask - but children are very eager to ask of their human fathers; so we - as God's children - should be unafraid and eager to ask our Heavenly Father**
 - **The Father knows our need** *Matthew 6:8*
 - Note - it is 'needs' not 'wants'
 - **The Father remembers that we are dust (weak and frail)** *Psalms 103:14*
 - **Paul links Supplications with Thanksgiving**
 - **Forgetting to be thankful**
 - Sometimes we get so wrapped up in our need we forget to be thankful
 - Sometimes we wallow in our need and are self-centred and ungrateful
 - **It is not thanking God 'for', say, our illness; but thanking God 'in' our illness**
 - **Thankfulness in Supplications makes us recall:**
 - **God's faithfulness** - He has been faithful to us in the past - so we can trust Him for the future
 - **Faithful One, so Unchanging!** - a song we often sing
- "Therefore know that the Lord your God, He is God, **the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations** with those who love Him and keep His commandments;"* **Deuteronomy 7:9**
- **God's mercy and love** - He loves us with an all-embracing and constant love - so we can depend on Him because He always is loving
- 'For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, **shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**'* **Romans 8:38-39**
- 'Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because **His compassions fail not.** They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness.'* **Lamentations 3:22-23**
- **God's promises** - His word is full of promises to us, (e.g. to be our refuge and strength) and we can rely on His promises

'...His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been **given to us exceedingly great and precious promises**, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.'

2 Peter 1:3-4

- **God's nearness** - He is always near to those He loves - we can reach out to Him and He draws near to us in our need

'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.'

Psalm 46:1

*The Lord is righteous in all His ways, gracious in all His works. **The Lord is near to all who call upon Him**, to all who call upon Him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of those who fear Him; He also will hear their cry and save them. The Lord preserves all who love Him, but all the wicked He will destroy.*

Psalm 145:17-19

- **God's character** - When we recall God's character we know that He is the one whom we can trust implicitly

"God is not a man, that He should lie, nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"

Numbers 23:19

Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, because **He delights in mercy.**

Micah 7:18

➤ Charles Spurgeon said this:

"Consider what you owe to His immutability (His unchanging nature). **Though you have changed a thousand times, He has not changed once."**

- **Lack of Thankfulness** is to take God's love and faithfulness for granted - being ungrateful or presumptuous
 - **When we are full of anxiety and worry** we can become so self-obsessed that we are oblivious to the care and love others have for us
 - This applies to our relationship with the Father also
 - So Paul tells us to **Ask with Thanksgiving**
- **Make your Requests 'Known to God'**
 - **Known 'To God'** (Greek: *theos*) implying all the triune Godhead is involved
 - **Asking the Lord** - it is the beginning of freedom from anxiety and worry
 - **God knows our need** - before we ask

"And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them. For **your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him."**

Matthew 6:7-8

- **So Why do we have to Ask?**
 - **If God already knows our need** - why do we have to ask?
 - **Not for God's Benefit** - to remind Him or provoke Him
 - **It is for Our Benefit**
 - It shifts our focus from **Our Need** - to **His Supply**
 - It takes us **Out of the Earthly**, and **Into the Courts of Heaven**
 - It is what God has **Ordained** - we are told to ask...and even to keep on asking (*Luke 18: 1-8*)
 - It's all about **relationship** - asking is part of our living and dynamic relationship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit

- We would share our worries with our friends or family
- Children (normally) can share their worries with their mother or father
- So why are we so reluctant to pray - to speak to our Heavenly Father about our worries?
- If anxieties and worries keep crowding in on you - ask the Lord to give you some words of scripture...you will find He will give you words to strengthen and comfort and support you

▪ **Pray To the Father, Through the Son, In the Spirit**

- **To The Father - Yeshua gives us the pattern of prayer**

*'But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, **pray to your Father who is in the secret place**; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.'*

Matthew 6:6

- **'Our Father' - Prayer is not private for the Christian - minimum of 4 people involved (Us/Father/Son/Holy Spirit)**
- **When you pray - Go into your room and say 'Our Father'**
- **The word is 'Abba' - it means 'Daddy'**
- **Yeshua always prayed to the Father (never to the Spirit)**
- **The Patriarchs, Leaders, Kings and Prophets in the Old Testament prayed to the Father**
- **Yeshua prayed to His Father - so should we**
 - In these days of much focus on 'the Spirit' (and much the many ungodly excesses that occur in some church) - we have forgotten that we are children of our Heavenly Father
 - The concept of the Fatherhood of God is sadly neglected today, but it is one which is vital to give us a right biblical understanding of who we are...and whose we are!

▪ **Through the Son**

- **Yeshua is our great high priest**

*'Seeing then that **we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens**, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.'*

Hebrews 4:14-16

- **Yeshua teaches us to pray**

*'And **when you pray**, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. "Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. **In this manner, therefore, pray:***

***Our Father** in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.*

Matthew 6:7-13

- **Yeshua is our greatest Example in prayer - go through the gospels and look at the prayers of Yeshua - a great Bible Study, but more...a wonderful tutorial in prayer**
- **Through Yeshua's shed blood we have Access to The Father, into the very throne room of heaven - the way has been opened to us because we are clothed in Yeshua's righteousness**

'Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who may stand in His holy place? He **who has clean hands and a pure heart**, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.'

Psalms 24:3-5

➤ **We are encouraged to approach the throne boldly with assurance**
'Therefore, brethren, having **boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus**, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, **let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith**, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.'

Hebrews 10:19-22

➤ **Yeshua intercedes for us**
'Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since **He always lives to make intercession for them.**'

Hebrews 7:25

'Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, **who also makes intercession for us.**'

Romans 8:34

➤ **Yeshua tells us to ask 'In His Name' - not a 'sign off' to a prayer, but praying according to His will and under His authority**
'And **whatever you ask in My name, that I will do**, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.'

John 14:13-14

○ **In the Spirit**

➤ **Yeshua never prayed to the Holy Spirit, nor ever addressed Him directly - neither should we**
➤ **The Father sends us the Holy Spirit**
'And **I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper**, that He may abide with you forever - **the Spirit of truth**, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for **He dwells with you and will be in you.**'

John 14:16-17

➤ **Notice, in John 14:16-17, Yeshua prayed to the Father for Him to send the Holy Spirit - He didn't address the Holy Spirit, instead his asking prayer was addressed to the Father**
➤ **He didn't pray 'Come Holy Spirit' - He prayed to His Father**
➤ **The Holy Spirit is our 'Helper' our teacher and guide in all things, including helping us to pray our asking prayers**
➤ **The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness - even interceding for us**
'Likewise **the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses**. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because **He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.**'

Romans 8:26-27

Resource Recommendations:

Book: The Intercession of Christ - John Bunyan

Book: Practising the Principles of Prayer - David Pawson

God's Peace

- **Peace - the Greek word (*eirēnē*), pronounced *i-rah'-nay***
- **It means peace, prosperity, quietness, or rest - occurring 93 times in the New Testament and translated peace on 89 of those occurrences**
- **It comes from a root word meaning 'to join' or 'make one'**

- Remember - the root of the Greek word which is translated 'anxiety' means 'to part' or 'disunite'
- The hint (*remez*) here is:
 - Peace comes when we are one with God
 - Anxiety comes when are parted from God
- The word for peace in *Phil. 4:7* is different than in *Mark 4:39* (the storm on Galilee) which is a word of rebuke - there the Greek word *siōpaō*, translated (peace), is a command to be silent
- The equivalent Hebrew word is **shalom**
 - It means peace - but it means much more than simply the absence of strife...
 - The Hebraic meaning includes 'wholeness', 'completeness' and 'healing'
 - The entire life of Yeshua is marked by shalom - He is called *Sar Shalom*, the Prince of Peace

'For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.'

Isaiah 9:6

- God is called El Shalom, the God of Peace (*Romans 15:33; Hebrews 13:20*)
- Salvation brings Peace (reconciliation) between God and man - reconciling means joining that which had been parted - this through Yeshua's death

'Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.'

Romans 5:1

- God's Peace 'Surpasses Understanding'
 - It is beyond the natural...it is not normal or natural to have peace in many of life's stressful situations - and certainly not for the non-believer
 - It is God's peace - it comes from Him, it is part of His divine nature
 - It doesn't just 'Pass' understanding, it 'Surpasses' understanding...it goes way beyond any 'natural' peace - it is not simply a greater peace, it is a whole different quality and degree of peace
 - The Greek word *huperechō* means to *hold oneself above*, to *excel*; to be *superior*, or implying *superiority*
 - The word is elsewhere translated as better, excellency, higher, supreme, and transcending
 - God's peace is supernatural - not natural - because it is beyond our understanding (our intellect) and beyond human reason
 - Hence, we can have God's peace no matter what is causing us to be anxious or worry - despite our circumstances - in the midst of trials - even in deep distress or sadness
- A Gift - God's Peace is ours as a Gift - when we Pray and Ask with Thankfulness
 - It is a Divine Exchange - our anxieties and worries - for His Peace (*shalom*)
 - It is like the divine exchange that happened at our salvation - our sinfulness for Yeshua's righteousness
 - Both these divine exchanges are miracles; both are blessings of the Father's grace and love and mercy towards us - through His Son, Yeshua our Messiah
 - Gifts are meant to be received - so Ask with Thankfulness and Receive

'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.'

John 14:27

- Notice that Paul, after encouraging us to ask the Father, does not go on to talk about the Father's answer to our requests
 - There is something more important than the Father's answer - that may surprise you!
 - The Father may answer in various ways (e.g.: 'yes', 'no', 'not yet') - but there is something more important than the answer to our requests
 - Don't forget - this is Paul speaking from his experience...it is not theoretical...it is practical...it is real
 - What is more important? It is that in our circumstances, before we even receive an answer, it is far more important that we have God's peace to guard our hearts and mind.
 - It is more important that we live as God intends
 - Free from anxiety and worry
 - In complete assurance of His love and care for us
 - Then we can be at peace in the midst of life's storms
- God's Peace Will 'Guard' Us
 - To Guard means to Keep, Maintain, be a Watch Over (as a sentinel)
 - The picture this paints is that God's Peace is like a sentry that watches over our hearts and minds - like the sentries at Buckingham Palace
 - The Amplified Bible speaks of this peace which 'shall garrison and mount guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus'
 - His peace will be a guard over our hearts and minds
 - Heart - the emotions and the deep part within us
 - We will be kept in the very core of our being
 - We need not have irrational fear (anxiety)
 - The Peace of God brings stillness - in trust - in your heart
 - Mind - the thoughts and intellect
 - We are kept from racing thoughts that run away with our rational senses - it's what anxiety often does
 - Anxiety and worry have their root in our minds and thinking - which then has a physical effect on us
 - We are kept in right thinking - that is, trust in God
 - We do not disregard the reality of our situation - this is not a triumphalist, Word of Faith or Kingdom Now philosophy - it is biblical discipleship - it is asking and receiving
 - Note the word 'will' - it is definite - it will happen if we 'Ask Him with Thanksgiving' because it is a Promise
 - This Divine Exchange is a Sure Promise that God's peace will be given to us if we do as His word says - Ask...with Thanksgiving
- Through Christ Jesus - He (Yeshua) is where our peace is (He is our peace)
 - Our Hearts and Minds need to be stayed on Yeshua

'You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.

Isaiah 26:3
 - In Every Circumstance and Situation

'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though its waters roar and be troubled, Though the mountains shake with its swelling. Selah

Psalms 46:1-3

- Satan wants us to panic, and rely on ourselves
 - Remember - our flesh naturally tends to anxiety
- It is the Father on whom we can rely - because He is Our Father (*Abba*)

*'For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but **you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."** The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,'* **Romans 8:15-16**

- It is through the reconciling (peacemaking) work of His Son, that we are sons (and daughters) of God - He is Our Father, we are in relationship with Him now...because of Yeshua

'For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.' **Ephesians 2:14-18**


'But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.' **John 1:12-13**

In Conclusion

- We are encouraged, in times when we are anxious or worried, to PRAY... with Thanksgiving - Ask - and Receive, in return, the gift of God's Peace
 - What could be simpler - yet it is profound
 - This is how we are meant to live - it is part of the blessing of being sons and daughters of the Living God
- When you find it Difficult
 - Ask others to pray with you and for you - we need each other - we all are part of one body
 - Ask the Lord for verses of scripture - you can trust Him to give you strength and comfort through His words which will be just for you - lifelines
- Don't get on a 'guilt trip' if you do get anxious again - go back to the beginning...and begin again
 - Just do as His word tells us: Pray - Ask with Thankfulness - Receive
 - It doesn't matter how many times you have to do this - simply trust
 - It is a learning process
 - Because it is not natural...it's supernatural
 - Paul had to learn this - *Philippians 4:11*
 - We have to learn to keep coming to the Father and asking
 - To learn that we are 'growing up to be a child'...His child
 - If anxieties keep recurring - ask the Lord why that is!
 - It may be there is something in us that needs to be dealt with - and maybe something about which we need to confess and repent in order to be set free from anxiety
 - It may be there is something in our past that is the cause
 - The enemy can use hurts and feelings, from things that have happened to us in our past, to oppress us

- In which case we may need prayer to release us from such soulish oppression - ask a trusted friend or an elder to pray a simple prayer to release you from whatever 'spirit' is at the root of your anxiety
- This Divine Exchange (Our Anxieties for His peace) is promise we can trust
 - A promise with a condition
 - The condition is not onerous - all we have to do is Ask!
- The Promise is ours because of Yeshua - He is Sar Shalom...the Prince of Peace
 - We are meant to live in His peace - free from anxiety and worry
 - At one - united - with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit - we can live in peace; free from anxiety and worry

Shalom - A Word Study

אֲשֶׁרֵי עָשִׂי שְׁלוֹם, כִּי בְנֵי־אֱלֹהִים יִקְרָאוּ: 

ash-rei o-sei sha-lom, ki be-nei-e-lo-him yi-ka-re-u

μακάριοι οἱ εἰρηνοποιοὶ ὅτι αὐτοὶ υἱοὶ θεοῦ κληθήσονται.

"O the blessedness of the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."
Matthew 5:9

The Hebrew word shalom means "wholeness," "completeness," "healing" -- not merely the absence of strife. Shalom implies the positive enjoyment of God and "pleasures forevermore." In Jewish ethical teaching, *redifat shalom* (רְדִיפַת שְׁלוֹם), "seeking peace," is considered a primary heart quality. Rabbi Hillel is attributed as saying, "Be of the disciples of Aaron, loving peace and pursuing peace" (Pirke Avot 1:2).

The entire life of Jesus is marked by peace. He is called *Sar Shalom*, the Prince of Peace (Isa. 9:6). God is called *El Shalom*, the God of Peace (Rom. 15:33, Heb. 13:20, etc.), and salvation itself brings reconciliation (peace) between God and man (Rom. 5:1).

So important is this idea of reconciliation, that Jesus states that those who "make peace" will be called the sons of God. Peacemakers are one with the Father. The world bestows its honors upon those who are war-makers and who routinely exercise the specious "will to power." But "the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace" (James 3:18). Jesus promised that those who regularly practice/make shalom will be called "children of the living God" - *bonei el chai* (בְּנֵי אֱלֹהִים). Those who seek peace by loving their enemies are doing as the Father does, and therefore they are demonstrating that they are His children (Matt. 5:44-45).