

Being with Jesus:

A Devotional From the Book of Mark

Scripture

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. — Philippians 4:4-9

Prayer:

Father, thank You for desiring that we be people full of peace instead of people full of fear. Help us to rejoice in You, drop our worries at Your feet, and then think on the good things from Your Word and Your realm that You would have us think about. Amen.

Reflection

In the above scripture, God gives us three things to do that will reduce anxiety. The first of these three is to rejoice in God—always! We thank God constantly for the good things in our lives. Rejoicing in God helps to reduce fear because it calls to mind all that God is doing in our lives and in the world. It changes our posture throughout the day. We can lift our head and our hope and rejoice in God.

The second thing this scripture tells us is to not be anxious but with thanksgiving to present our requests to God. We look at each thing that is making us anxious and lift it up to God in prayer. We ask Him to help us deal with it or to give us strength, or whatever the proper request is. As we name each thing that is causing us fear up to God, the peace of God begins to replace anxiety in our hearts.

Thirdly, we dwell on things that are noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy. We go from looking at all the things that worry us—all the fear producing darkness—and turn to looking at the good things of God in the world and in the scriptures. When we use this practice, the peace of God guards our hearts and minds.

An old hymn puts it like this:

“What a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear! What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer! O what peace we often forfeit, O what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.”

Questions

Have you been rejoicing in God today? Why not start now?

What things are causing you to be anxious that you have not lifted up to God in prayer?

What are some beautiful things from scripture or your life that you can think about instead of fear?