

The Key to Being Carefree - Philippians 4:4-7

by Jon Courson

Jon Courson emphasizes the importance of turning our anxieties into prayer to experience God's peace, as exemplified by Hezekiah's faith in crisis.

Scripture: Isaiah 30:1, Luke 11:11, Romans 15:30, Philippians 4:6-7

Topics: "Faith And Trust", "Power Of Prayer"

Description

Jon Courson delivers a sermon on the story of Hezekiah facing the threat of the Assyrian army, highlighting the importance of turning to God in times of crisis rather than seeking worldly solutions. He emphasizes the power of prayer, supplication, and thanksgiving in Philippians 4:6, encouraging believers to trust in God's answers even if they differ from our desires. Through the example of Hezekiah's faith and surrender, Courson illustrates the transformative impact of resting in God's peace and leaving our burdens at His feet.

Transcript

A godly man and a good king, Hezekiah loved the Lord and had a deep walk with Him. Nevertheless, he found himself in real difficulty when he heard that Sennacherib and his million-man Assyrian army were marching towards Jerusalem. The inventors of the siege strategy and the battering ram, the Assyrians had been unbeatable in battle, and unparalleled in brutality. So what did Hezekiah do?

First, he tried to solve his problem financially by attempting to bribe Sennacherib with the gold of the Temple. His plan, of course, backfired because the sight of the gold only increased Sennacherib's determination to plunder Jerusalem.

Hezekiah's next plan was to build an alliance with Egypt. 'You guys have horses and soldiers and military might at your disposal,' he said. 'Ally with us because if Sennacherib beats us, you'll be next.' At that moment, Isaiah the prophet comes on the scene and thunders a prophecy in the ears of Hezekiah:

'Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin: That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my moth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt! For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength; and ye would not.' Isaiah 30:1-2, 15

In other words, 'What God wants from you in this crisis, in this hour of need is to -- return to Him, wait on Him, be quiet before Him.' I wonder if there's not good men and women sitting here today who, feeling pressure relationally or vocationally, ministerially or financially, are saying 'Help me!' to this counselor, or 'Save me!' to that group -- when all along the Lord would say, 'First and foremost, come to Me.'

'Oh, I don't have time to pray,' we say. 'I'm late for my counseling appointment. I don't have time to seek the Lord. I've got to strip the Temple of gold to pay off Sennacherib.' Yet all the while, Paul says we are not to be anxious, not to be full of care about anything. His, however, is not merely a 'Don't worry, be happy' maxim, for he goes on to tell us how . . .

'Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.' Philippians 4:6

'Prayer' refers to general communion with God; 'supplication' to specific requests. Thus, Paul is saying, Be anxious about nothing. Pray about everything. Give thanks for anything. 'That's easy for Paul,' you say. 'His prayers were always answered the way he wanted.' Really?

Turn to the Book of Romans . . .

'Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.' Romans 15:30-32

As he comes to the end of his letter to the Romans, Paul says, 'Pray with me -- first that I may be delivered from my enemies in Jerusalem; secondly that my service may be accepted by the Christians; and finally, that I may come to you at Rome with joy.' But what happened? Paul was captured by his enemies in Jerusalem; his ministry was not happily accepted by the saints; and the only way he made it to Rome was as a prisoner.

Here's the deal, gang: God can say 'Yes' to my prayers, or He can say 'No'. Either way, it's an answer. How many, many times I have said, 'Here's my supplication, Father . . .' only to see that, down the road, what takes place is a whole lot better than what I asked for. 'If your child asks for bread, which of you would give him a stone?' asked Jesus. 'Or if he wants a fish, who of you would give him a scorpion?' (Luke 11:11-12). Sometimes we think we're asking for salmon, but the Lord recognizes it as a scorpion. Sometimes we cry for bread, but the Lord sees it's a boulder -- and He loves us too much to give us something which would hurt us.

So what are we to do? We're to make our request -- and then rest in God's peace, a peace which passes our understanding (Philippians 4:7). We're to say, 'Lord, I choose not to wring my hands. I choose not to try to figure out how I can strip the Temple or ally with Egypt. I choose to return to You, to rest in You, to worry about nothing, to pray about everything, and to be thankful for anything You decide to do.' And what happens may just blow your mind.

Ask Hezekiah . . . 'Seek the Lord,' Isaiah said. And Hezekiah did just that -- even as Sennacherib continued to march. Things looked ominous when suddenly, hearing of a new war breaking out, Sennacherib diverted his troops to an uprising northeast of Jerusalem. But that didn't keep Sennacherib's general, Rabshakeh from firing of a letter to Hezekiah which said, 'If you think we're through with you,

you're sadly mistaken. We will not be stopped from destroying Jerusalem.'

Ever get a letter like that? Intimidating, threatening, disheartening? 'Service will be suspended in five days unless . . .' This time, however, Hezekiah didn't say, 'Oh, no! What am I going to do? Who can I call?' No, having heard the Word from Isaiah, Hezekiah took Rabshakeh's letter, went into the Temple, opened it before the Lord, and said, 'Lord, I'm giving this to You,' as he began to worship the One Who dwells above all, the One Who is greater than all. Here on earth, things seem so big.

Our mountains tower 27,000 feet above us, and the depths of the Mariana Trench plunge 7 miles below us. But from space, our planet looks perfectly smooth. In fact, if our earth was shrunk to the size of a bowling ball, a brand new unused bowling ball would have more grooves and valleys and peaks than would our earth.

It's all a matter of perspective. When you get above the situation like Hezekiah did, suddenly the problems which loomed so greatly and threatened so menacingly take on entirely different dimensions proportionately, for as the story goes on, Isaiah comes to Hezekiah, saying, 'The Lord has spoken that not one person in Jerusalem shall be harmed. In fact, not one arrow shall enter the city.'

The Assyrians did indeed come. As was their custom, they surrounded the city. All it would have taken to nullify Isaiah's prophecy was one soldier to take one arrow and fire it over the wall. But none did. The Assyrians set up their camp around the city, 185,000 soldiers strong. But that night, an angel of the Lord came and smote the Assyrians before even one man could string his bow. 185,000 men were wiped out in a way Hezekiah could never have orchestrated or predicted, in a way no counselor could have directed, in a way no book would have addressed.

That's the way of the Lord. So what does He say to you and me today? 'Take your cares and turn them into prayer.' We all know this -- but do we do it? Do we leave our anxieties and concerns with the Lord -- or even during this message, are we wondering who we can get to help us in the problem facing us?

Right now, I ask you to find a scrap of paper and write on it that which concerns you today. It could be a relational stress, a ministry matter, a financial pressure, a family issue. After you write it down, spread it before the Lord and say, 'Lord here it is. Like Hezekiah, I hear the footsteps and hoof beats of the mighty Assyrians headed my way. But instead of trying to take them on myself or ally with others, I choose to thank You for whatever You want to do in this situation. These are the matters which weigh me down, Lord. Free me of this burden as I lift it up to You.'

Do this, saint, and you will experience the peace of God which comes not from your understanding, but which passes your understanding -- a peace which will stop the Assyrians in their tracks, and which will leave you rejoicing in the goodness of your Father.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jon-courson/the-key-to-being-carefree-philippians-44-7/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net