

# Have No Anxiety About Anything

by Richard E. Bieber

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*By rejoicing in the Lord, showing forbearance, practicing God's presence, and turning worries into prayers, we can live a life free of anxiety and experience the peace of God that passes all understanding.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 139:7, Luke 10:21, Philippians 4:4, Philippians 4:6, Colossians 3:13, 1 Thessalonians 5:16, Hebrews 12:2  
**Topics:** "Faith And Prayer", "Peace Of God"

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## Description

Richard E. Bieber preaches on the discipline of joyful faith as outlined by Paul in Philippians 4:4-7. Paul, who endured countless trials, shares the key to maintaining faith amidst adversity: rejoicing in the Lord always, showing forbearance, remembering the nearness of the Lord, and turning worries into prayers with thanksgiving. By following these steps, believers can experience the peace of God that surpasses all understanding, sheltering their hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

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## Transcript

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let all people know your forbearance. The Lord is near. Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:4-7

This passage is worth taping to the refrigerator door or the bathroom mirror, so we can read it and reread it until it is burned into our souls. These words were written, not by a philosopher in an ivory tower, but by a man who lived through a thousand storms far worse than we have known. In this passage, Paul is passing on to us the key to how he survived beatings, whippings, stonings, shipwrecks, imprisonments, rejection again and again --- and kept his faith.

"Here's how you do it," he says. "You rejoice in the Lord all the time. You never stop rejoicing."

"You show forbearance toward everybody, all the time, without exceptions. Forbearance: the generous overlooking of insult or injury."

"You keep remembering that the Lord is near. Not only is his return close, he is with us right now, exactly where we are."

"You have no anxiety about anything. You quit worrying by turning your worries into prayers."

"But in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God."

"Tell God what's worrying you, and start giving thanks --- always giving thanks."

"Live this way, through good times and bad, and the peace of God, which passes all understanding will keep you sheltered in the presence of the Lord Jesus."

It worked for Paul. It works for us. It's a discipline. It's a way of life that takes you through the storms and brings you out on the other side, alive and strong, every time.

Now the part of this discipline of joyful faith that most of us have trouble with is where Paul tells us to "have no anxiety about anything."

Have no anxiety about anything? Give me a break! Who can live without worry? It's always there, in the back of your mind.

Anxiety: the fear that tomorrow will not be safe. The fear that something is going to happen that will mess up my plans, destroy my dreams.

"Have no anxiety about anything." Easy enough for him to say! He doesn't understand what I'm going through! I don't know how I'm going to pay my bills. What's the doctor going to say when he gets the results of my blood test? I have this pain in my side. My kid just lost his job. And I'm not supposed to worry? Who wouldn't worry if they had what I have to worry about!"

"Have no anxiety about anything." If we take that one command, all by itself, and try to obey it, we fail every time. It is impossible to stop worrying just by "deciding" to stop worrying. Anybody with eyes in their head can see plenty to worry about.

But once I know that I'm being watched over, protected, cared for, by my heavenly Father --- once I know that Jesus is actually here, with me, walking beside me, living within me, that God is even in charge of my circumstances --- then I can use the strength I wasted on worry to simply walk in the light.

Our anxieties will disappear. God himself will take them and nail them to the cross, when we do four things which are within our power to do:

1. Rejoice in the Lord always.

We can do that. We see this in our Lord Jesus. We see it in Paul They were always rejoicing in God.

"Who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, scorning the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."

Hebrews 12:2

In that same hour (Jesus) rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to babes; yea, Father, for such was thy gracious will."

Luke 10:21

Jesus was always rejoicing in his Father.

When Paul and Silas were locked up in prison in Philippi, their feet were in stocks, their hands bound with chains, how do they pass the time? Hard as those wooden benches are, they are singing praises to God at midnight! Rejoicing!

It's a habit we form. When we get up in the morning, as we walk through the day, we rejoice in the Lord. We give thanks.

Many years ago I went to visit a parishioner who was a patient in the Nova Scotia (Psychiatric) Hospital. "There's someone you must meet," she declared, as soon as I arrived. "Since this woman has arrived on the ward the atmosphere has changed. She gathers the folks around the piano and has us all singing. She cheers everybody up! Wait here, I'll go find her."

When my friend arrived with the new patient, the woman greeted me with a gigantic smile and a joyful, "May God be praised! I was on the street in Halifax a few nights ago and these kind policemen invited me into their car. They brought me here. Now I have clean clothes, a warm bed, good food, and all these friends! Isn't God good!"

As I was leaving, Dr. Bentley, the Assistant Superintendent of the hospital drew me aside and asked, pointing to this woman, "What do you think of her?" He was baffled. This smart psychiatrist was baffled. "Looks good to me," I answered and to the Lord I said, "Make me more like that woman!" Think of the change if we had two or three of her in each of our churches!

## 2. Let all people know your forbearance.

This may seem a strange ingredient in a cure for anxiety, but it works. A changed attitude, from cynicism to mercy. From negative to positive. Surely, if we're rejoicing in the Lord, we can afford to cut a little slack for our fellow man, our brothers and sisters in the Body!

Heaven will help us get that chip off our shoulder and begin to generously overlook insults and injuries. Why, you might even find yourself praying for those people who give you a hard time. And when you pray for them, it's not, "Lord, straighten them out! Show them how wrong they are! Make them apologize to me!" No! No! No! Rather let it be, "Lord, bless them! Flood them with your fulfilling mercies! Meet all their needs! Surround them with your love!"

Pray like that, and behold, your anxieties will mysteriously diminish. You might even be relieved of some of those allergies!

## 3. Practice his presence.

"The Lord is near." He's near! Many people do not realize that they can practice the presence of God any time, anywhere. There is no place where God is not. It's our awareness of God that's lacking.

Your car won't start. Just when you had a thousand things to do, you turn the ignition and nothing but a feeble grinding! So you sit there and turn your thoughts to God. "Lord, I don't know if you're going to help me get this thing going now, or if I'm going to have to call the tow truck, but I'm looking to you to help me keep my cool. Help me! I thank you that you're here!"

You wake up one morning with a sore throat. Your first thought is, "Why is this happening to me?" But then you gargle with salt water and get on with your day, sore throat and all, giving thanks to God that he's with you, even with your sore throat. The Lord is near!

4, Turn your worries into prayer.

Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.

Now we can do it. ---- Because, we're rejoicing in God.

We're showing forbearance and generosity toward people.

We're practicing God's presence.

Now we can turn our worries into prayer. We take the stuff we worried about and unload it at the feet of the Master. We bring it to the Father's door.

"Lord God, I'm worried about my kid! I have this pain in my side! I lay it before you. I cry out to you for help!"

And every time the anxiety comes back you turn it over to the Father again, if you have to do it a hundred times a day.

How God is going to answer those prayers, when God will answer them, we leave with him, and just start giving thanks. And even before the answer comes, one gift arrives immediately: peace. God's peace.

Peace, knowing that God is in control, and that God is good.

Peace that passes all understanding.

Peace that wraps you in the Spirit of the Lord Jesus and holds you there.

All of us are faced with things to worry about, problems that threaten to overwhelm and depress us. But we can learn to live lives free of anxiety. It worked for Paul. It will work for us.

Remember that the man who wrote these words, lived them, and we can live them too!

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let all people know your forbearance. The Lord is near. Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

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