

## THE GOD OF PEACE

***Php 4:7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.***

***Php 4:9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.***

Here in Philippians chapter four Paul is revealing the progression of Christian maturity. In verse 7, he shows us that the peace of God is available for all of His saints. However, in verse 9, Paul reveals something much deeper and powerful. We can have more than just the peace of God; we can experience the God of peace! In verse 6, Paul tells us to not be anxious about anything. This is what characterizes immature Christians -anxiety. Immature believers often go from crisis to crisis and come to God for His peace. This is good and a necessary part of development. This is where a young believer learns the dependability and goodness of God. God is always there for us to come to Him with our problems and our petitions. He always will give us His peace if we trust Him. However, God intends that we move on from immaturity to maturity. See, carnal or young believers have an external view of God. They see God outside of themselves. They feel that God must be approached and often coaxed to come down and get involved in their issues. God is an external "up there" God to them. Maturity takes place when we get a revelation that the "up there" God is also a "down here" God. He is not just a "down here" God but He is also a "in us" God. God is at hand. This is what Paul says in verse 5. We can show forbearance with others because the Lord is at hand! When others try to shove in front of us, we can look to Christ and realize He is at hand to take care of us! He is near to us to take care of us as we look to Him.

**Rom 10:6 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)**

**Rom 10:7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)**

**Rom 10:8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;**

Here we see that we are not to say in our heart, "Who will ascend into heaven to bring Christ down?" or "Who will descend to bring up Christ from the dead?" The revelation of grace teaches us that it is not up to us to get God to come down and to get involved in our situations, but that He has already done that! Christ came down

of His own accord into our mess and died on the cross. We don't have to raise Christ up to take care of us. Christ has already risen. Now Christ is in us so close that he is in our heart and in our confession of faith in Him! Christ is at hand. So, we can move from coming to an external God in order to get His peace, to enjoying the ever present God of peace! Paul describes the process of maturity it takes to get to this point. The first step out of immaturity and into maturity is to control our mind vs. 8, and then to renew our mind in vs. 9. You cannot renew your mind unless you first learn to control your mind! When Paul admonishes young men his one admonition to them is to become sound minded! [Titus 2:6] Once we can control our thought life then we can renew our mind to the Word of God. How do we renew our mind? It comes from what we learn and receive from God Himself, and then what we hear and see from ministers and other Christians. Paul in verse 9 says that it is important to learn. We learn by studying the Word of God. He also says it is important to receive from the Lord. We do this by receiving revelation from the Holy Spirit. Often these two can dove-tail with one another. What you study and learn the Holy Spirit will give you revelation on. What the Holy Spirit reveals to you can cause you to turn to the Word to study and learn further. Notice that learning and receiving from the Lord is the foundation of your Christian life. It is more important than what you get from other people. We need other people but we must put our time with God and what He says to us as first place. Next, Paul says that we need to hear. This speaks of receiving input from others. We need to hear messages from our pastor and from ministers. We need to hear what more mature saints have to say. Finally, Paul says we need to see the Word and Spirit modeled by others. The greatest sermons are seen in the actions of others. So, we need to learn, receive, hear, and see the Word modeled to grow in maturity. When we keep learning, receiving, hearing, and seeing we will be empowered to do the Word. Notice that it takes four times the input of the Word to output the fruit of the Word. When we do the Word then we will experience the God of peace. We can stay in peace 24/7 because of what we learned about God, received from God, heard about God, and see about God in others. When we do this then we will start bearing fruit of the Word. What we receive, we then turn around and give it out to others. We receive love from God and then turn around and give it to others. This is true of everything else we receive from God. We turn around and give it away. We experience the fruit of labor!

The most peaceful Christians are those who walk in the abiding presence of Christ that is with them. They no longer look at God as the external "way up there" God. He is the near "right here" God. The God of peace will cause you to remain calm no matter what happens.

**Luk 10:40** But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

Martha in the book of Mark was serving a distant Jesus. We see this by her statement, "Do you not care that my sister has left me to serve *alone*". Martha felt alone. She felt disconnected. Mary on the other hand had a present Jesus. She sat at His feet and enjoyed His presence. The God of peace was right in front of her. She was filled with joy and peace. Martha felt alone and quite upset and disquieted. We are never alone. Christ abides with us. He is our covenant partner and His eyes are always upon us and He is ready to minister Himself to us at all times. He is as close as your heart of faith and a whisper of His name. The God of peace is with us. Let Him fill you with His peace.