

Tuesday January 25, 2022

Peace vs Worry | John 14:27 & Philippians 4:6

Overview: Worry will invade our minds psychologically and impair our hearts theologically (Mark Moore, lesson 48). Worry is toxic because it blinds us to what God has and plans to do with us. It puts the focus on ourselves and away from God. Christ throughout the gospels speaks about eliminating worry and finding peace in him. With so much in our lives to worry about, how do we live Christ's words, "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Don't let your heart be troubled or fearful." while acknowledging suffering and hardships in our lives?

Why I picked this verse: 1. I have two teenagers; 2. I confuse peace in my spirit and in my heart

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5RBPGuryFkQ>

Segment Questions:

- What are some things in your life that bring worry?
- If there is a problem you, a loved one, or friend is facing, do you feel compelled to solve it? How can this focus us away from God and potentially more on "worry"?
- How does worry cause discouragement? Compare worry to acknowledging a problem and wrestling with it.

Read John 14:27 and consider the comments on distinguishing between troubled "spirit" and "heart"

- What are your thoughts on distinguishing between being troubled in one's "spirit" vs. one's "heart"?
- What encouragement do you find in knowing Jesus expressed being troubled in spirit? (John 11:33 and 13:21)
- In what ways does John 14:27 support and encourage Paul's writing in Philippians 4:6-7?

Read Philippians 4:6-7

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Action Question:

- What are practical ways that you balance a troubled "spirit" with keeping your "heart" healthy and filled with Christ's promises?

Closing Prayer – God, we are commanded to not have an anxious heart but, in all situations, to come to you in prayer with thanksgiving to let our requests be made known to you. You know our requests even before we do so this is about our need to focus on you and trust you. If our hearts are filled with your word and conversations with you, there is less room for us to idly worry. May our hearts be filled with your promises even if our spirits are troubled so that we learn to be always joyful.

Introduction

The verse (John 14:27) that caught me and led to this lesson isn't from Core 52 but for me, it strongly correlates with lesson 48, Overwhelming Worry (Philippians 4:6). For many of us, this has been a season of uncertainty and struggle. Many times, I found myself acting out of worry and fear as opposed to certainty and trust in the promises of Christ. For context, I have two teenagers at home as a single dad. Well, their mom and I co-parent and share in caring for them, but we are no longer married, so it changes many things. One of our kids, as many teenagers are, is struggling with some heavy identity and spiritual issues and his mom and I are at complete odds on how to support and love him. It is in this environment that I found myself helping at my church, Christ Community Church, handing out care-packages to regular attenders. The packages were token items to encourage people and meant to create an opportunity to connect in person and wish them the love of Christ in the Christmas season. I saw a card we placed in it with the verse I mentioned above: *"Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Don't let your heart be troubled or fearful."* **John 14:27**

I will be honest; I had a hard time reading that card and even found myself questioning what "peace" did Christ leave. So, this lesson comes from me wrestling with that beautiful and encouraging verse and realizing I had let anxiety, fear, and worry cloud my mind and my heart. As Mark Moore points out in his chapter and video – I had let worry become a psychological and theological problem. I was far from **Philippians 4:6**: *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."*

In wrestling with John 14:27, I came to a study that provided context and understanding to Jesus' words. These words were spoken by Christ to the disciples as He foreshadowed his death and the coming of the holy spirit. He knows challenging times are coming for Him and the disciples and he counsels them to "hold fast" (John 13:7; 14:29; 16:4, 33). But what does the peace that Christ offers mean in times when we feel anything but peace; how does it differ from the world? I found these points encouraging:

- Jesus doesn't ask us to not have emotions or concerns, rather he acknowledges suffering and hardships will happen but reminds us to trust in God and rest on his promises for our future and examples fulfilled in the scriptures!
 - Jesus is distinguishing between being troubled in one's "spirit," meaning pain and unhappiness, as opposed to being troubled in one's "heart," meaning fear and despair. Jesus modeled trouble in spirit – (Lazarus' death) When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. (John 11:33); (Jesus foretells his betrayal) After saying this Jesus was troubled in spirit, and declared, "Very truly, I tell you, one of you will betray me." (John 13:21).
- Jesus is offering a peace unlike anything we will find in this world as it is based on hope and reassurance of God's plan. Jesus' peace is permanent, guaranteed, and eternal.
 - And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4: 7)
 - God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain (Hebrews 6: 18-19)