

*I press on
toward the goal to
win the prize for
which God has
called me
heavenward
in Christ
Jesus.*

Philippians 3:14

Following the upward call through Philippians ...

Peace beyond Comprehension

People want inner peace. They often do not know how to get it, or are unwilling to yield to the principles which will provide it. But they want it. Hence it is that the purveyors of the world are able to supply all sorts of remedies, offering a temporary relief or fake hope. Whether it is the liquor business, the drug trade, or false religion, the providers are playing on their clientele's need for inner peace. The solutions proffered, of course, do not work; they simply pull people deeper into the quagmire of despair and confusion. The answer, by the All Wise' design, is for the denizens

of this planet to turn God for help. Only He can provide inner peace, and only on His terms!

- ◆ **Handling anxiety** — The reasons for anxiety are almost infinite. They range from as small as being anxious about an upcoming appointment or a flight that is coming in as large as whether some dear family member is going to live or die. Here is the Holy Spirit's advice to the saint: "Be anxious for nothing." Well, how is that done? The inspired apostle Paul continues, "But in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God" (Philippians 4:6). The saint of God who develops a disciplined prayer life will be able to handle anxiety. When the prayers are systematic, with significant portions devoted to praise and thanksgiving, then the Christian's mind is refocused on things above and he knows his supplications have pull power in the presence of the Almighty. Under these conditions, the disciple of Christ has the Biblical assurance that God has everything handled, and that there is no reason for anxiety.

- ◆ **God's peace** — No one who is separated from Christ by his own personal sin can have God's peace. Until that individual is willing to submit to King Jesus and obey His gospel by being immersed into Christ, he is guaranteed to lack inner peace. When we have "been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1). Once that reconciliation with the Lord of the universe has been accomplished, then prayer can kick in. "And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension," explains Paul, "shall guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7). What mega-words these are! The peace of God surpasses all comprehension!! It cannot be bought, it cannot be mined, it cannot be planted and harvested. This peace only comes from God; it comes first through the initial union with Christ in immersion, then through the follow up of disciplined prayer.

- ◆ **Guarding the heart and mind** — The results of anxiety are a quivering heart and an unsteady mind. God is willing to have His peace stand as a sentry at the entrance to the heart and the gateway to the mind. Peace's job is to ensure that no major or minor perturbations reach the chambers of the heart. It is peace's function to block unsettling messages that would set up tremors in the brain. No wonder it is called "peace that surpasses comprehension." And because this peace is from God, and backed by His unshakeable word, it is guaranteed to accomplish what God said it will.

God's part is certain. So if there is any lack, it is coming from the Christian himself. There is a general tendency on the part of the flesh to want instant results, similar to popping some kind of pill and having peace immediately flood the soul. But it doesn't work that way. God's peace comes when the saint consistently engages in the type of prayer that praises and thanks God. If a brother or sister is inconsistent, or their prayers are not significantly filled with praise and thanksgiving, then the peace of God will not show up to guard their hearts and minds. And the anxiety which remains will not be God's fault. So pray consistently, and let the peace of God roll in!

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JAY WILSON