

The Peace of God; Philippians 4:4-7

- I. Peace
 - a. Most everyone, if asked, will tell you they want peace
 - b. World peace is a common answer
 - c. A state of tranquility or quiet: as
 - i. Freedom from civil disturbance
 - ii. A state of security or order within a community provided for by law or custom ¹
 - d. John 14:27 (ESV); Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.
 - e. If we are expecting a lack of conflict, freedom from civil disturbance, or a state of security or order within our community we are sadly mistaken
 - f. The 3 R's that lead to the peace of God; Rejoice, Reasonableness; and Request
- II. Rejoice
 - a. Philippians 4:4 (ESV); Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.
 - b. To be in a state of happiness and well-being, rejoice, be glad ²
 - c. That does not mean you have only one emotion – God gave us all our emotions and we cycle through them regularly
 - d. Rejoicing is not an emotion
 - e. Paul tells the church at Ephesus, “be angry and do not sin” Ephesians 4:26
 - f. We rejoice because of our hope
 - i. Romans 5:2 (ESV); Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.
 - ii. Romans 12:12 (ESV); Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.
 - iii. And remember, our hope is a confident expectation in the resurrection of Jesus
 - iv. And since we know He was resurrected, we know He is coming back to get us
 - v. John 14:1–3 (ESV); ¹ “Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. ² In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.
 - vi. We rejoice because of the knowledge of our salvation in Jesus – because we know that no matter what happens in this world (which is full of strife and evil), if we remain steadfast in Jesus we will receive the crown of life
 - vii. Colossians 1:21–23 (ESV); ²¹ And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ²² he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his

¹ Inc Merriam-Webster, [Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary](#). (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003).

² William Arndt et al., [A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1074.

death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him,²³ if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

- g. Therefore, we rejoice in the hope of Jesus' resurrection and the expectation of His return

III. Reasonableness

- a. Philippians 4:5 (ESV); Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand;
- b. Reasonableness – not insisting on every right of letter of law or custom, yielding, gentle, kind, courteous, tolerant³
 - i. I've been in many conversations about whether or not the government (federal, state, or local) can tell the church we cannot meet
 - ii. "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."
 - iii. If we stick to the letter of the law, then no part of the government can keep us from meeting together
 - iv. When I was asked about my stance on meeting during this time, I said, "I want to honor God and benefit our community"
 - v. Just because the constitution says we can meet, it doesn't mean we should.
 - vi. I can use my 'reasonableness' and come to the conclusion that meeting together might endanger members of our congregation and our city
 - vii. Even though I have the right to freely gather together to worship God doesn't mean I have to exercise that right
- c. I've used one example here, but this applies to all aspects of our lives
- d. 1 Corinthians 8:9 (ESV); But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.
- e. God's people should be known for their reasonableness – their ability to forego their rights in the best interest of the Body of Christ and the community they live in

IV. Request

- a. Philippians 4:6 (ESV); do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.
- b. Supplication – urgent request to meet a need, exclusively addressed to God, prayer⁴
 - i. James 4:2–3 (ESV);² You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask.³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.

³ William Arndt et al., [*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*](#) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 371.

⁴ Ibid, 213.

- ii. God knows what we need and wants us to seek Him first (Matthew 6:32)
 - iii. He also wants us to ask Him for what we need
 - iv. We are encouraged to make our requests known to God many times throughout the New Testament
 - v. We are to be constantly in prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:17; Romans 12:12)
 - vi. Prayer is not a position; it is a mindset
 - vii. We are constantly, without ceasing, talking to God about every aspect of our lives
 - viii. We thank, we petition, we persuade God
 - ix. God met Abraham (along with two angels) at the oaks of Mamre in Genesis 18:1ff – Abraham bargains with God (God starts at 50 and ends at 10)
 - c. Our constant prayers, our unceasing petitions can change God's mind!
- V. Guard
- a. Philippians 4:7 (ESV); And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
 - b. Our rejoicing, our reasonableness, our requesting – our faith in the Creator and His Son gives us this peace
 - c. Not the absence of conflict – but the presence of God