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2026 ANNUAL THEME: “HOPE IN MOVEMENT”
January Theme: The Power of Walking in Peace

BIBLE STUDY
January 21, 2026/January 28, 2026
“Finding Peace: Inner Peace” (Philippians 4:6-9)

Topics

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- Reflection Questions
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Scripture Reference:

⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and pleading with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. ⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹ As for the things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. (Philippians 4:6-9 NASB)

Reflection Questions

- A. What spiritual disciplines can we practice to help alleviate anxiety and bring inner peace in our life?

- B. What is the primary difference between peace in the world and peace in Christ?

C. Briefly share a personal experience where prayer helped you find peace.

IMPORTANT EMPHASIS

What are you thinking about?

What does your thoughts and or mind communicate to you daily? There are 50,000 to 70,000 thoughts that we have in our minds daily. There are those that have estimated that 85% of those thoughts are negative based on things that will never happen. WOW!

According to Tommy Newberry in his text the 4:8 principle he gives us this wonderful observation “Each thought moves us either toward our God given potential or away from it.”

Mark E Crawford wrote these thought-provoking words “self-destructive patterns of thinking not only lead to a variety of personal and relational problems but also severely limit our full potential.” **2 Corinthians 10:5**

How can we combat these thoughts? **Romans 12:1-2** Renew your mind/Reprogram your mind.

Origin of forfeiting our inner peace

As I scanned the scriptures to identify the intruder which comes to steal kill and destroy our peace. I discovered that in Genesis 3 dubbed by theologians as “*the fall of mankind*” (or humankind) gives us hints of how our peace has possibly been disrupted.

Lens- When Adam and Eve decided to do what was contrary to the will of God it effected their lens or the way they saw things. **Genesis 3:7** Charles Koller stated that “the eyes are the entry way to the soul.” Their eyes were opened. What was already present they saw it in a different way. They were ashamed of what God called astounding.

Leaves- The next indicator that there was a disruption in their peace was that they created a covering from fig leaves. **Genesis 3:7b** This was to disguise the deeds that they had already done. This is a representation of attempting to fix things in our own strength oppose to the strength of God.

Location- The Third important element of this story is found in **Genesis 3:9** God asked the question Where are you? They didn’t know where they were in a spiritual sense they were lost and empty. This question that the Lord has asked them, we need to ask ourselves where are you?

Lay the Blame- There is something that is interesting that transpires here, and that is there is a laying of blame on each other for the actions of sin. **Genesis 3:12-15** (Listening to the Serpent) This represents the other individuals we have accused for the disruption in our peace. We must embrace our own failures that contributed to the agitation that you are currently manifesting.

We will never live a Conflict free life. Paul highlights the internal warring that we must contend with in **Romans 7:15-25**

Overcoming our Fears

Many of our stressful thoughts are based on false assumptions- when we wrongly assume something to be true. You could end up wasting time by worrying over nothing.

Try not to spend your time pondering the “what if” that may or may not come true – research has found that 85 percent of our worries never actually happen anyway! Anna Barnes

Disruption in the mind can manifest itself in a number of ways

- Stress- Feeling under pressure in a present moment
- Anxiety- not specifically under threat it involves concerns about the future. Worrying thoughts of what might happen
- Depression- suffering persistent feelings of low moods

Memory can work for us as an Ally, or it can become our greatest adversary.

Philippians 4:8 and Philippians 3:13-14

What do we Fear?

- The Unknown **Luke 1:30**
- Our insufficiencies **2 Timothy 1:7**
- Absence of Support **Isaiah 41:4-10**
- Fear of the Opposition **Psalms 23:4**
- Anxious Thoughts **Psalms 94:18-19**
- Old Age **Psalms 37:25**

Augustine gave precision to the concept of peace on the basis of his definition of the two cities- the city of God and the earthly city, or the city of the devil, he distinguished strictly between the this-worldly sphere, in which peace is safeguarded by power and government in the cause of “just war,” and the sphere of the transcendent, eschatological expectation of peace which God alone will fulfill.

Obtaining a Flow

Managing Emotions, Gill Hasson

Knowing when to respond immediately and when to stop and think **James 1:19**

Knowing when to rein in your emotions, when to engage or detach from an emotion **Ephesians 4:26**

Knowing what is, any one situation, an appropriate or inappropriate expression of emotion in yourself and in other people **1 Corinthians 14:40, Ecclesiastes 3:1-8**

Know how to draw on emotions to develop empathy and rapport with others. **Philippians 2:3**

What individual Christians do or refrain from doing in their own place integrates with what God is doing in the world. **Wolf Gang Lienemann**

Peace has been understood in different ways at various times and in various contexts.

Key Words and Terms

Active Effort
Anticipate
Assurance
Calmness
Community
Christian Eschatology
Divine Gift
Guard
God
Harmony
Heart
Jesus Christ
Keep
Lord

Mind
Peace
Peacemakers
Prayer
Reconciliation
Relationships
Restoration
Security
Serenity
Steadfast
Transformative
Tranquility
Trust

OUTLINE

- I. Prayerful Petition (Philippians 4:6)
- II. Peaceful Presence (Philippians 4:7)
- III. Positive Pondering (Philippians 4:8-9)

INTRODUCTION

The first lesson in this series on “Finding Peace,” was a general introduction to the topic. We learned that Eleanor Roosevelt emphasized that peace requires **belief** and **active effort**. Many people live in difficult circumstances, but the peace of God offers solace [comfort, support, and help]. Peace, especially in religious contexts, involves a right relationship with God, forgiveness, and reconciliation through Jesus Christ. The Hebrew concept of "shalom" [peace] signifies **wholeness** and well-being, reflecting God's ideal creation. In the Old Testament, peace is the opposite of conflict, while in the New Testament, "**Eirene**" describes a state of **reconciliation** and wholeness, with God and Christ as central figures of peace.

We also learned that peace is deeply connected to **God and human relationships**, appearing frequently in biblical texts. The New Testament emphasizes peace as a social reality and a **divine gift**, with **Jesus as a peacemaker**. Classical concepts like "Galena" and "Homonoia" describe peace as **calmness** and **community harmony**. **Isaiah 26:3** highlights **God's protection** and **faithfulness**, leading to **perfect peace**. These ideas collectively underscore the spiritual and **communal** dimensions of peace, encouraging trust and **unity**.

Key Themes in today's Bible Study Lesson include:

- Inner Peace through Faith
- Prayer as a Remedy for Anxiety
- Peace in Christ vs. Peace in the World
- Positive Thinking and Virtuous Living
- Role of Spiritual Disciplines in achieving inner peace

- God's Peace as Protection
- Application of Teachings in our daily lives.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Apostle Paul wrote to believers about the ability to have inner peace under circumstances of adversity and persecution. In his letters, particularly in Philippians, Paul emphasizes finding peace through faith in Christ despite external challenges. He encourages believers to focus on prayer, gratitude, and the presence of God to experience peace that surpasses understanding, even while he himself was imprisoned. This message was intended to provide comfort and guidance to early Christians facing trials.

EXPLORE THE TEXT

I. Prayerful Petition (Philippians 4:6)

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. (Philippians 4:6)

A. Pray Persistently

Paul emphasizes the importance of prayer as a remedy for worry. By praying about everything, believers can find peace and reassurance. **1 Thessalonians 5:17** encourages us to "pray without ceasing," highlighting the need for constant communication with God.

To pray without ceasing means to maintain a continuous, ongoing conversation with God throughout your daily life. It involves being in a constant state of awareness and connection with God, where prayer becomes a natural and integral part of your thoughts and actions. This doesn't mean you are always verbally praying, but rather that you have a persistent attitude of prayerfulness, gratitude, and reliance on God in every situation.

B. Prayerful Peace: Replace worry with prayer, presenting all concerns to God. Through prayer, believers find peace that surpasses understanding, guarding their hearts and minds (Philippians 4:6-7).

To guard your hearts and minds means to protect your emotional and mental well-being from negative influences and stress. In the context of Philippians 4:6-7, it suggests that through prayer and reliance on God, believers can achieve a state of peace that shields them from anxiety and worry, maintaining a sense of calm and stability.

- C. **Faithful Focus:** Focus on fulfilling responsibilities with faith, trusting God to meet your needs. Avoid worry by relying on God's care and provision, demonstrating trust in His sovereignty (**Matthew 6:25-34**).

It is important to bring all concerns to God through prayer, trusting in His care and provision for several reasons. **Firstly**, it fosters a personal relationship with God, allowing individuals to express their thoughts and emotions openly. **Secondly**, prayer provides comfort and peace, helping to alleviate anxiety and stress by entrusting worries to a higher power. **Thirdly**, it encourages reflection and self-awareness, offering clarity and perspective on life's challenges. **Lastly**, prayer can strengthen faith and trust in God's plan, promoting spiritual growth and resilience.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. What does it mean to pray without ceasing? (4:6)

2. Why is it important to bring all our concerns to God in prayer? (4:6)

EXPLORE THE TEXT

II. Peaceful Presence (Philippians 4:7)

"And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

- A. **Prayer and Peace:** By turning from anxiety to prayer, believers are filled with God's peace. This peace surpasses worldly understanding and is a divine gift that guards hearts and minds.

God guards our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus by providing a sense of peace that surpasses human understanding. This divine peace acts as a protective barrier, helping us to remain calm and centered even in the middle of life's challenges. God also guides our thoughts and emotions moving us towards trust and faith in Christ.

- B. Promise of Peace:** Jesus promised a unique peace to His followers, distinct from the world's peace (**John 14:27**). This peace is rooted in the assurance that God is in control, not in the absence of conflict or mere positive thinking.

Peace in the world often depends on external circumstances, such as the absence of conflict or favorable conditions.

Peace in Christ is an internal state of tranquility and assurance that perseveres or continues regardless of external situations.

Peace in Christ is rooted in faith and spiritual connection, offering a sense of calm and stability that transcends worldly challenges.

- C. Protection through Peace:** God's peace acts as a protective guard over believers' emotions and thoughts. This divine peace is a testament to God's love and serves as a safeguard against external threats.

God's peace, beyond human comprehension, protects and calms our hearts and minds.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

3. How does God guard our hearts and minds? (4:7)

4. How is peace in the world different than peace in Christ? (4:7)

EXPLORE THE TEXT

III. Positive Pondering (Philippians 4:8-9)

"Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you" (Philippians 4:8-9)

Paul advises the Philippians to focus on virtuous and praiseworthy thoughts to achieve peace and godliness, emphasizing the importance of managing one's thoughts to maintain inner peace and a worry-free life. This virtues list in Philippians 4:8-9, describes what should saturate believers' minds. Believers should **fix their thoughts on** things that are:

- A. **Truthful Thinking:** Believers should focus on thoughts that are true, sincere, and reliable, reflecting God's nature. This aligns with **Philippians 4:8**, which encourages thinking on things that are **true** and **noble**.
- B. **Pure Pursuits:** Maintaining moral purity in thoughts is essential, avoiding contamination and focusing on what is wholesome. This is supported by **Psalms 24:4**, which speaks of having clean hands and a pure heart; and **Romans 12:2** where the Apostle Paul exhorts believers to avoid being conformed to the world, but rather to be transformed by the renewing of their minds.
- C. **Praiseworthy Practices:** Engage in thoughts and actions that are admirable and worthy of praise, following the example of Christ. In **Colossians 3:2**, Paul urges believers to think heavenward. **Colossians 3:17** emphasizes doing everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God.

Paul had lived out and was continuing to live out his words, so he could urge the believers to put **into practice** what they had **learned** from him (from his teaching and training). The Scriptures were not compiled into a Bible until later, so the standards of belief and behavior were embodied in the teachings and example of those in authority. Paul could speak confidently; people could follow his example because he was following Christ's example (**1 Corinthians 11:1**). If the believers would keep on practicing the virtues that Paul cited above, they would experience **the God of peace**. God is the source of peace for all believers.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

5. What did Paul advise the Philippians to do to achieve peace and godliness? (4:8)

6. How were the Philippian believers to learn to live godly and peaceful lives? (4:9)

LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Think about it!

- In what ways can you apply the teachings and examples you have learned to experience the inner peace of God in your life?

- How can you incorporate gratitude and positive thinking into your daily routine to enhance your sense of peace and well-being?

Resources:

Adult Questions for LESSONMaker, LOGOS Bible Software

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