

TOO BLEST TO BE STRESSED!

Philippians 4:4-9

INTRODUCTION: When I used to work at plant 5 Saginaw Steering Gear I had a black Christian brother named Joe Bady. I would say: "How are you doing Joe and he always said "I am too blest to be stressed. Our Lord tells each of His children that we are not to be anxious or stressed about anything: Philippians 4:6-7. Living with stress has many side effects on our thoughts, feelings, and on our behavior. Stress that last for a long time can lead to many health problems such as high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, obesity and diabetes. If you had to describe your life in one word, would that word be stressed, busy, hectic, overwhelmed or crazy. I wonder how many would use the words peaceful or centered? John 16:33. Today we will learn how to have God's peace and strength in the middle of the stresses God allows into our lives. The apostle Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit will teach us how to have God's strength and peace in the difficult circumstances of this life. Here is doctor Paul's prescription: Philippians 4:6-7.

I. DON'T BE ANXIOUS ABOUT ANYTHING!

This prescription is a deep principle that can go way down into your heart and change your life forever. First, Paul says "Don't worry about anything" Philippians 4:6. When Paul says "anything" we need to learn that worry is useless in our lives. All worry does is mess up our lives at the present moment. Worry is really a side effect of not allowing God to be at the center of our lives. When we become "me-centered or others-centered we begin to worry. Worry is trying to control something we have no ability to control. When we try to control our circumstances or to control others it brings more stress to our lives. Romans 8:35-39. When we cannot see what God is up to in our lives we can always trust His heart. Isaiah 55:8-11.

II. PRAY ABOUT EVERYTHING!

In this life we will have stress, problems, pain and many heavy burdens; but we have Someone who can carry that stress and those burdens. We don't have to carry those things alone: Philippians 4:6. If you are a great worrier, you can become a great prayer! As we trust in our God He gives us His peace that passes all understanding. 1 Peter 5:7-11.

III. ALWAYS GIVE THANKS!

We are told to not worry about anything. Pray about everything, and then always give thanks in every situation. If we desire to have God's peace in the middle of our stress, we must develop an attitude of gratitude: Philippians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. We don't give thanks for all circumstances or after the circumstances are taken away. We are told to give thanks "in" every circumstance not "for" every circumstance. The apostle Paul also went through very difficult times and he learned to give God thanks "in" the trials: 2 Corinthians 1:8-11. In those times we learn that God is all we have and God is all we need! The God we serve can work a miracle in the middle of our mess: Romans 8:28-29. Our problem with worry is we want God to do our good purpose, not His. We want joy and peace every day of our lives but God wants us to be transformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Isaiah 26:3-4 gives us one of God's most blessed promises. As we learn to keep our minds focused on our God and His promises He gives us His peace: Philippians 4:7. God at the center of our lives and our lives centered in our God will give us that peace that passes all understanding. God is still on His throne, God is still in control. God's purpose will stand because God cannot be derailed. As we turn to our God in prayer and set our hearts on His purpose for our lives and for this world God will strengthen our

hearts and bless us with His peace: 2 Chronicles 16:9. We cannot have the peace of God in our hearts until we have the God of peace controlling our lives. We need to learn to lean on our Lord with all our concerns and give Him thanks and His peace will flood our souls.