

Philippians 4 (Part 1)

The 1993 film *Cool Runnings* tells the story of a bunch of Jamaican sprinters who form a bobsled team and travel to Calgary to compete in the winter Olympics. The team is mocked throughout the competition but slowly proves their worth by hard work, earning the respect of all of those around them as they progress through the rounds. The movie closes with the Jamaican team on their final run of the day, the possibility of a medal is within their reach, "Feel the rhythm, feel the rhyme, Get on up, its bobsledding time...cool runnings" they take off down the run. This time looks to be their fastest yet until tragedy strikes, the old bobsled breaks apart and the team comes to a crashing halt only meters from the line...there is silence, as heat rises from the ice, people strain to see if the athletes are ok, your left with a feeling of tragedy, what heartbreak, what crushing disappointment, how could it all turn out like this.

Finally the silence is broken by the sound of the athletes crawling out of the sled, they struggle to pick it up and put it on their shoulders, they limp across the line..to the deafening roar of the crowd and their fellow supporters. What looks like utter failure receives applause and congratulations. What looks like loss is actually gain. Because there is something bigger happening. There is a victory happening that overshadows the circumstances you see before your eyes. It doesn't matter that they didn't medal, they've proved their worth. Sometimes the cause we're apart of captures us, and those around us so that our personal circumstances only matter inasmuch as they fit into the greater picture.

That's what's happening in the book of Philippians. Paul's imprisoned in Rome. This isn't a western jail with 3 meals a day, a gym, a free education and flush toilets. This is the count of Montichristo stuff, most likely a dark dungeon cell. Who can imagine what they were eating and how they survived. He doesn't know whether he will live or die. It's all lost as you read His story. Its coming to an end. But in a contradiction that hits you like a fish in the face, bizarrely, that's not the sense you get from Paul's letter. He's rejoicing. He's gotta be angry, he's gotta be depressed or anxious, but He's not.

He's rejoicing in a way that seems detached. He knows there's something bigger happening. The gospel has penetrated to the heart of Rome, the kingdom of God is spreading out from its time as a mustard seed in a backwater town of Israel to a tree, reaching to the very corners of the known world and setting the world on fire.

How do you rejoice when five times you've been whipped with the forty lashes less one. ²⁵ Three times you've been beaten with rods. You've been stoned. Three times you've been shipwrecked; a night and a day you were floating in the sea; you've been on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my Jews, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger

at sea, danger from false brothers; ²⁷ in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, ^[b] in cold and exposure.

We all know people who seem able to stand up against immense pressure and we want to be them. But how?

That's the question I've been asking from this letter. How can you stand let alone rejoice when so much is going against you? How does this unstoppable gospel change us? And getting to chapter 4 Paul's going to give us some answers, or some particulars to how the gospel changes you. Chapter four is a spitfire of exhortation and encouragement and it just had too many golden nuggets for me to get through in one week so we're going to be looking at chapter 4 over two separate sermons.

Let me start week one with these questions to get us primed. What does the gospel do in our hearts and minds, how does it work its way out in our lives. What does it do in you and how does it act on your?

Specifically, **How can we find unity in a world that's divided? and how can we find peace when inside and out we're at war? (Write that question down, of that your thing)**

Chapter 4's answers to those questions is our outline for tonight.
(Here are the answers to those questions)

1)Gods antidote for disunity is gospel joy

2)Gods antidote for anxiety is Gospel nearness

Gods antidote for disunity is gospel joy

Philippians 4:2-23 Sermon

4:2-5

I remember 8 years ago going for my job at the PAH ICU. It's a funny thing actually but I had put in an old resume by accident or something. And while most people

strain to put their heart and soul into their resume my work history on the resume said this. Work experience: I delivered junk mail advertisement to 267 houses in the greater ashgrove area. Here I am going for a grown up Job and I'm listing a paper run from year 6 that really my parents and grandparents used to do most of... Well obviously the panel recognized the value of my hard working history and I got an interview, I'm sitting in a room surrounded by 3 people. Im praying they havnt really read my resume and one of the first questions I get asked is a question on conflict management. A common question in most interviews. The question was: How would you go about resolving conflict with a fellow staff member.

It's not hard to understand why this kind of a question would be asked. I hope it easy for you to see that we live in a world at war. Most of us have never fiered a bullet, but all of us live in perpetual state of war. A world of conflict. Wars and rumors of wars are at play continually. Relationships are breaking down everywhere. Paris accords are being broken, peace treaties are being betrayed, political parties are imploding. Political spheres are being polarized. Jails are full. **Unity is not a characteristic of this world.**

So I wasn't surprised When I was asked this question. I gave my best answer which was somewhere along the line of, I'de try to speak with the staff member directly first, then, if they wouldn't listen I would have to escalate it. That was the gist of my answer anyway.

Most workplaces strive to have conflict dealt with at a grass roots level. That's not uncommon in the church either, when you think of the commands of Matthew 16 where we're instructed to first go to our brother to resolve conflict. But its an uncomfortable thing isn't is to try and deal with conflict on the spot.

Most of us know proverbs 17:14. Or at least vaguely remember it. "The beginning of strife is like letting out water, so quit before the quarrel breaks out." Someone does something to us, and inside of our minds we hear, don't say it, don't, stop, hold it in....uh uh uh....oh what the heck! And we blurt out a jabbing attack, a quick remark, or a harsh owrd and what was a smoldering ember burst into flames and we're in full fight mode. Mortal kombat style.

And animosity has a way of festering. We know we should deal with things before they get out of hand. But its uncomfortable/our hearts are hard/we want to be ever right. At the beginning of Chapter 4 Paul Has to have this uncomfortable conversation or exhortation with two women He obviously believes are true sisters in Christ. Two female friends who where likely there from the beginning when He first travelled through philipi.

Not over a theological issue but over personal differences that are obviously leading to public opposition and disunity. Quite possibly this is one of the main reasons Paul wrote the letter. As you read through Philippians you get a sence He's leading up to this exhortation to Euodia and synteche. He wants to break it to them gently though. He keeps coming back to the subject of unity and love. Listen to His Hinting.

In Ch1:9 he writes about His hope that their love abound more and more, in 1:27 he says 'Only let your manner of life be worthy^[h] of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in **one** spirit, with **one** mind striving **side by side** for the faith of the gospel," Unity. IN chapter 2 1-5 he says "if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ²complete my joy by being of the **same mind**, having the **same love**, being in **full accord and of one mind**. ³Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus.

IN chapter 4:2-4 he gets to the issue he's been unfolding. That uncomfortable conversation that He wouldn't have to have if Euodia and Syntyche had already had it.

"I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. ³Yes, I ask you also, true companion,^[b] help these women, who have labored^[c] side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life."

Imagine the shock of seeing yourself publically identified in a letter everyone was going to read. Its like me standing up here tonight and looking Luke and Dave in the eye and saying Luke and Dave, agree in the Lord, your petty differences aren't working themselves out in private. Your bickering is breaking down our unity. STOP IT!

It's got to be a shock, but Paul has to do it. That's the only way He can communicate, He needs to set an example that disunity is a toxic thing. He loves them too much to not say anything. And He wants others to love them well to by helping them too. He says "Yes, I ask you also, true companion,^[b] help these women".

Why bring is up though? Why the need to say such an uncomfortable thing? He does this because:

Conflict does more than break relationship between two people. It tells a lie about the peace that God brings and the unity that He brings. Christ humbled Himself for others at His own expense. That's Pauls example in chapter 2. And we need to do the same. Our common love for Christ and inheritance in Him is greater than the petty things that divide us. And really aren't so many of our difference so very petty.

1)We don't like the way some of the ministries are run, we don't really want to run them ourselves, we're far too busy but "have you heard what's being done",

- 2) those things that surfer Bill wears to church are an abomination to the Lord.
- 3) We're judging people on whether they're schooled at home or by the state. And we're making sure to let others know our feeling on the matter.
- 4) We're weighing people in the balance because of their body weight. And it's petty.

We all have these natural infirmities which cause us to feel differently about things to others, cause us to act in different ways, set different priorities. There are things about others that will inevitably annoy us, just as there are things in us that will inevitably annoy others. On top of that we're all still sinners and there are things we do that ain't right and need the forgiveness of our brothers and sisters.

The closer we live in proximity to others the more chance that we'll discover these differences in seeing the world and the more the microscope is turned on our sin and the temptation is to elevate our own preferences and desires over others, and to take the perceived sin that we see in others and use it to condemn them, or isolate them or shun them, or step on them as we make our way up the ladder towards heaven. Paul says to Euodia and Syntyche, NOOOO PLEASESSE AGREE IN THE LORD!!!

We've got a common goal to glorify Christ. We've been forgiven far more than we're asked to forgive. Our love for Christ overflows to our brothers and sisters.

I see that utopia sometimes here at GBC, but it's hard.. When we're Christ we've gotta have a mind to see His Kingdom come and His kingdom grow and this works its way out of us in actions that want to lay down personal preference for God's glory. Why?

Because God doesn't get the glory when two believers go to court with one another,

God doesn't get the glory when Christian families are a conflict zone and bitterness and unforgiveness reign.

When I met my wife and was invited back to her parents for dinner aka so the parents could check me out. I was attracted by so many things in that house, other than just that is, these people wanted to talk about Christ, they were loving each other, Jos' mum was loving on me and her children so much so that I could swear she was an angel. They sat around the table after dinner and read the bible and it was amazing to me....

God doesn't get the glory when Church's split, and denominations split. God doesn't get the glory when we gossip about one another. **Often your gossiping says more about who you are to the person listening than it does about the person your gossiping about.**

Non-Christians revel in the disunity of the church, because to them it exposes the claim the God brings peace as a so called lie.

Conflict in our Families and Conflict in our churches only exposes the pride of the people in them.

C.J Mahaney in His book humility says about pride that “Pride...undermines unity and can ultimately divide a church. Show me a church where there’s division, where there’s quarreling, and I’ll show you a church where there’s pride”. That’s what was happening in Philippi between Synteché and Euodia. Paul wants them to agree for the greater good of Christ’s witness.

What’s our take away though? How does this exhortation to agree in the Lord meet the different demographics of Grace Bible Church.

Young siblings, and old, what do you need to lay down so that Christ will look great when people look at your Christian family.

Young adults, can’t you humble yourself and consider other better than yourself so that others will see your love and give God glory, so that they won’t look at our youth groups and see the same cliques that exist in our schools and in other places that young people congregate.

Danny Hindle, your not always going to get your own way and people aren’t always going to agree with the way you want to do things around here. What are you going to do, are you going to be a servant and do you want to be great in God’s sight or are you going to want to be served and have others serve your desires.

Brother and sisters, what is that thing that you don’t like about the church and its people that’s been festering inside of you, is it worth more than God’s glory, can you live with our imperfection, and our natural flaws, can you forgive us, so that we can agree in the Lord. So that we can make Him look great. That’s part of the reason we bicker, bite. Our eyes aren’t on the LORD! We’re more concerned with worldly affairs than heavenly ones.

Unity’s only possible when we focus on Christ and not on ourselves. As the old hymn goes, turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face, and the things of earth will go strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace. A pitchfork used to be the way to tune a piano, when one hundred pianos are all tuned to the same pitchfork they are much more intune than if they’d tried to tune themselves one off another. Its good to look at others but Christ is our goal and people are only worth imitating in as much as they are imitating Him.

When we fix our eyes on Christ and are listening to Him, its as if we walk around with one blind eye to controversy and one deaf ear to conflict. God’s antidote for disunity

if gospel joy because the joy of Christ takes our eyes off of ourselves and the petty things that divide us.

Paul bridges His exhortation to Euodia and Syntyche here with encouragement again for the Phillipians to rejoice, Because rejoicing in the Lord helps us to get along in the Lord. If Christ is small in our lives then we are great and disunity is shown. If Christ is great and we are small our joy in Him brings gospel unity.

This brings us to our second portions of our text verse 6-9 and our second point for tonight.

2. God's antidote for anxiety is Gospel nearness

Many of us have probably read Jesus teaching on worry or anxiety in Matthew 6. Remember the passage that starts:

Matthew 6:25-34 English Standard Version (ESV)

Do Not Be Anxious

²⁵ "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? ²⁸ And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹ yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? ³¹ ...

Have you ever asked How does Matthew 6 help us with our anxiety? I think it teaches us this...it helps us realize that there are things in life that are going to tempt us to worry and be anxious. But over and above these things there's a God who's bigger, and more powerful than the things that cause us to worry.. The Jesus who meets our needs is greater than the things that cause us to feel anxious.

Jesus said these words for a reason, and that reason was that He knows we worry!

And Paul's just the right person to bring it back up, who has more reason to be anxious than him at the time he's writing. He's in prison, He's facing death. If these aren't things to worry about I don't know what are. But for Paul anxiety isn't the answer to those things that put pressure on you in life. It's a reason for us to run to

God in prayer, because He says, we. Don't need. To be anxious. We don't need to worry.

You know with two kids, travelling can be quite stressful these days, It brings anxiety. We recently flew to Melbourne and although Jo, my wife tried as hard as she could to minimise all of our luggage there was still a lot of stuff to carry!

There was a double pram, a big piece of check in luggage, my backpack, the baby bag, a carry on, & on top of that there are still two kids to carry (I'M a cyclist..no upper body)....i was walking in to the airport and that stuff was waying me down....i kept saying to jo, the hardest part of the trip is the to and from the airport sections with all the luggage. When we got to the airline counter and checked that double pram in and the big suit case, I felt like a load was off my back, I was free to start enjoying the holiday! The baggage handlers can take it from here! Not my problem!

You and I carry so much baggage around sometimes don't we? It ways you down...Paul says what Jesus says! DON'T DO IT! STOP IT! You can bring it to God, you can speak with Him, and ask Him to take it and at the same time be thankful you have a God who hears and answers and and takes away your anxiety and **gives peace!!**

Its that extraordinary thing he gives so that even if your circumstances don't change, your still swimming in hot water...you feel ok because you know this:

- 1)You know Gods working all things for your good so...
- 2)Although you cant understand it this thing your going through has to be a blessing for you and is working to prosper you, so
- 3)You have hope you will stand up to the trial because the God of the universe knows whats going on even, and is in control, even when your totally in the dark...
- 4)and He gives you peace inside...He calms the emotional storm that raging on the sea of your heart...
- 5)HE quites the wind and the waves of your emotions
- 6)He causes you to be joyful and thankful for what He's done and is doing for you
- 7)It's unexplainable isn't it...but that's the peace God brings.

The catch is you have to wrestle with God to make it your own, Your act of faith in this area is the act of opening your mouth or heart to God for Help...you have to come with prayers and partitions, requests, pleading...You have to wrestle like Jacob wrestled with God for the blessing.

Do you know though that there are actually times where God promises not to hear your prayers. Not to answer them, And we've got to be careful of this, and know, so that we can be confident that when we go to him HE WILL HEAR US.

The first one is this..

1) You can only go to God in prayer if you're his child... Romans 5:2 makes plain...only those who come through Christ have access to the father in prayer...You have to make Christ your own and HE gives you the key to the throne room (Paul is writing to the saints in Phillipi) its to them the topic of prayer is addressed)....

God won't hear all prayers...there are millions of prayers being lifted towards the sky every day that will never find a hearing in Gods throne room...(They're as good as chucking a stone into the air and watching it crash straight away to the ground..or blowing hot air and watching it disappear into the atmosphere)...they don't have access because they don't go through Christ...what do I mean by go through Christ... I mean you have to see that you're a sinner and understand your lost without a hope of being perfect or good enough in God sight...that standard is perfection....you need something..you need salvation from the condemned state you find yourself in...you need a substitute..Christ is that substitute and if you will admit your sin, cry out to Him with sorrow over your sin and trust that He can take it away your...prayers will be heard...You'll be good enough for God because when He looks at you He will see Jesus perfect life death and resurrection and your requests will be heard! SO 1)Your prayers will only be heard if you are in Christ.

2) God doesn't hear the prayers of those who are holding onto their sin...

We've been talking about the fact that God doesn't hear the prayers of those who don't come through Christ, who aren't Christian. But its also true that God does not hear the prayers of those who know him but are holding onto their sin.

Psalm 66:18 David realises this when he writes:

"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me"

Isaiah understood that when he wrote "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear."

Its not that God doesn't have the power to save and bring peace, its that He wont.

In some of our cases. The reasons we're not finding peace isn't that we're not Gods child. It that we're holding onto sin and don't want to let it go. Its too precious to us to have this one vice. Its more important that our bellies are full, or that we have the glory we desire, or that we're thought of well by the citizens of this world, like paul was saying in Chapter 3. I want to come to you God, I want peace but I just can't let go of it. We're in big trouble... we need to loose what we cannot keep to gain what we will not loose!

What is that sin your not letting go of friends? That bitterness toward another? That sin you only admit to yourself and in private, that argument you swear your right about and you can't apologise because although you said some bad stuff, you were

ultimately in the right on that one. That sexual sin your sharing with another. Your rank pride.

God will not hear the prayer of those who want to hang on onto their sin.

3rdly, its important that our prayer and partitions contain thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving is nothing more than acknowledging what is **reality** in the midst of our uncertainty. God is good, He's done a multitude of good things for us, He has done us the greatest good in sending His son to die for us, there is always reason to be thankful for something. His track record in delivering us is 100%. Whatever our circumstance we need to acknowledge that our position in Christ is a good one and be thankful. What examples do we see of this in scripture? Besides Pauls rejoicing in Philipians? Think of David's disposition in the Psalms.

Nearly every psalm, no matter how deep in despair, and sorrow, and regret, escapes into exclamation of thanksgiving and praise and worship.

Why is thankfulness important? God is glorified when we are thankful to Him, and we are comforted by our remembering His goodness to us. **Its important that our prayer and partitions contain thanksgiving.**

4thly What we fill out minds with matters to the God of peace.

Paul writes in Phil 4:8-9. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹What you have learned^[e] and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

In His book Holywar John Bunyan tells the story of the great metropolis of Mansoul. King Shaddai's most prized city in all of His creation. Diabolous the great dragon and His evil companions devise a plan to capture the town of mansoul But to get in they have to go through one of their gates. The names of 2 of the gates are eyes gate, ear gate and mouth gate. ITS THROUGH THESE GATES THAT THE EVIL band find their way into the town and turns it against the great King shaddia.

There are so many hours in the day aren't there. And every second, minute, hour we've got things flowing through our minds. Have you ever asked the question. How do the images that role through my mind get there? Where do they come from? Why did I just think the things I just though? And how did it get there?

John Bunyan is spot on by pointing out that its through our eyes and ears that the world and the devil gain access to this mans soul, and to your soul.

I remember watching something on tv about how juvenile detention centre are growing and it can be directly traced back to the fact that children are learning about violence and crime through what they see on Tv from an earlier age. Before the age of TV a child might not be exposed to theft unless it happened to them or someone they knew. They were never exposed to nudity until they grew up and could gain access in their mature age. But theyre not equipped to handle the barrage of evil that hits them when their parents are clicking the switch and walking away to leave their children in front of the tv.

Friends, we cannot underestimate how we manipulate our minds and corrupt our hearts by allowing evil in our gates. What you see leaves a mental imprint in your brain, that transforms into thoughts and actions, runs down to your inner man and will inevitably come back out in your words and actions.

John Macarthur is write (again) when he says Garbage in Garbage out. Don't think you've got the immense power needed to allow whatever you want into your heart and mind, and not be transformed by it. What we meditate on matters.

That's why David says in Psalm 1 that when a person meditates on the word of God day and night He's going to be blessed. He's like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit...and whose leaf does not wither. That means their spiritual fruit grows and grows. Filling our mind with the law of the Lord is our greatest act, and the most praiseworthy way to conduct you spiritual life. And Paul is saying its also a way to have peace. Because God brings peace to those who are abiding in him, tucking into him, thinking on him. Why? Because when your filling your mind up with good things, theirs not time or room for the nasty stuff to get in. Your brains booked out all of its appointments to Mr goodness and has no room left in the day to sneak in Mr badness.

Paul adds on to that (idea of filling your mind with the law of God) in Phil 4 this list. whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

This list is meant to point us toward Gods word, his law, but this list is more than that. This list is not a biblical list of virtues persay like the fruits of the spirit, love joy peace, etc..they are more of a catalogue of the ethical standards of Pauls day.

There are things in God created order that are good and beneficial for us to think of. Things that, when we pondered them, will point us back to our creator God. Things like the magnificent of nature, when was the last time you looked up, or around you and marvelled at how spectacular this thing we call earth is? Its too much for us to handle when we think about it, and when we do we're filled with this peace.

How often do we marvel at People with extraordinary talent? Athletic skill, genius...That kind of thing is supposed to make us think of God and say wow..who is this creator God who reaches down and puts such magnificent into his creation? If creation is this good and this complex? How much more is God? Its incomprehensible...its like Romeo and Juliet trying to understand who sheakspear is?

The beauty of music and song should pointing us to the God who taught the angels to sing as he created the heavens the and earth. That same God will sit on His throne room one day to the sound of His saints singing worthy is the lamb who was slain, to receive honour and glory and domination and power!

IN a banner of truth article titled "A reformed Guide to Western Classical Music" a well known German compser says this "Who teaches angels, the redeemed and the unglodly' the noble art of science and music? God, he replies, the 'greatest of all composers". It is God who created the harmony of the spheres, who places the 'stuff of music' within mans reach, and who bestowed on certain indivoiduals the ability to compose, perform and appreciate music.

Paul is saying that there are things in this world that will not corrupt the soul to think about but uplift it, and if you feeding your body a steady diet of true and excellent and praiseworthy and just things then the God of peace is going to be with you.

It's the other side to escaping anxiety. ON one side is prayer and partitons with thanksgiving. ON the other is a life and mind that lives near to God.

I like to go Gold to the gold coast with the family sometimes but when I'm standing at the beach I often worry what I would do if the water suddenly receded and I knew there was tsunami on its way...I don't want to trigger anyones phobia but its something I think about.

So at the waters edge, with my wife and children laughing and playing around me I take a little look around and Identify the nearest mountain.. the nearest emergency exit. SO that Im ready at a moments notice to pack the kids up under my arms and flee towards the mountain. I want to be on that mountain because I picture myself standing on that mountain when the tsunami steamrolls over the beaches and apartment complexes near the water and I feel safe that it wont be able to get to me, and it brings me peace. Im standing on this huge rock and im safe from the destruction happening below. I'm confident in the The ability of the rock to resist the desutruction of the tsunami and I feel secure. Jesus and Paul invite us here to stand on God antidote for anxiety. Run to the rock who's might and power is able to overcome the destruction that the waves of this life can bring on us...The key to anxiety is not to deny that it exists, but to realise that Gods antidote to anxiety is His greater power and love and peace. He overcomes our worry by working peace in our hearts despite our circumstances.

And so we're left with the question tonight from Ch 4 6-9. What are you going to do with your anxiety? The things that tempt you toward worry. The things that rob you of your piece? Those things that keep you up at night? Those things that stop you doing for Christ and the gospel the things you know you should?

The old Hymn goes do thy friends despise forsake thee, is their trouble anywhere, we should never be discouraged, take it to the Lord in prayer. Oh what peace we often forfeit, oh what needless pain we bear, all because we will not carry everything to God in prayer. The fire'y darts that cause us Anxiety are our invitation to run for refuge, when it feels like where standing in the quicksand of life and where nervous about it God invites us to step onto the solid ground of His promises and He gives us His peace.

In finishing tonight I want to bring us back to the questions I asked to kick us off for tonight.

How can we find unity in a world that's divided? and how can we find peace when inside and out we're at war?

I hope that we've seen tonight that :

1)**Gods antidote for disunity is gospel joy**-Because our Joy in Christ leads a Christian to lay down his life for others and forgive tohers freely even as we've been forgiven, because the joy of Christ leads a Christian to seek Gods glory and Gods kingdom and He seeks the manifest the unity He sees in the father son and holy spirit and He seeks to hour other abouve himself...al for the glory and His kingdom.

2)**Gods antidote for anxiety is Gospel nearness**-Because The gospel drives us to a God who hears and answers our requests and brings us peace. Because God has freed us from a life inslaved to sinful thoughts and desires. His holy spirit breaks the chains that held our minds captive to hatred and evil and offers to fill them with the things that are good and holy and just and right and that attracts the God of peace.

Questions:

- 1) We live in a world at war. How does Christ unify us?
- 2) How can we help those we're called to minister to, agree in the Lord?
- 3) Is stress something that comes from within, or without, or both?
- 4) Read Matthew 6:25-34. What kinds of things cause us to worry or feel anxious? How does God overcome our worry and bring us peace?
- 5) What can we do to attract the God of peace from verses 8 & 9?