
Sermon Text Discussion Notes 07/05/2020

Philippians 4:4-9 – “Peace” by Eric Bobbitt

Overview

The fruit of the Spirit are a composite picture of King Jesus, and he transforms us to bear the same fruit in our own lives. *Philippians 4:4-9* shows us that the God of peace guards us with the very peace of God.

This means that we can rest with confidence in the wisdom and control of God, rather than in our own, replacing all anxiety and worry. This reality does not make light of our burdens and concerns. Rather, this reality helps us know where to place our burdens – off of ourselves and onto God.

Quotations

“Anxiety is a thief. It can steal our confidence, hope, joy, and trust. Then, we can become listless, vacant, preoccupied, fearful, isolated, negative, irritable, or even harsh.” – Eric Bobbitt

“What about your character is easily evident to others? When they walk by your tree, what fruit is hanging there? We want it to be the fruit of the Spirit: the radiant character of Christ.” -Eric Bobbitt

“If you saw a small child in an airport, tripping and falling as he struggled to carry an oversized backpack, what solution would come to your mind? Have someone who could handle it, carry the burden. We are that child... [but] the solution to the problem of a burden too heavy to bear is to transfer it to the shoulders of the One who is able to bear it.” -Eric Bobbitt

Six Common Attempts at Manufacturing Peace

- 1) **By seeking distractions.** Escape means dodging the pain and confusion of reality by entering the numbing pleasure and forgetfulness of a distraction.
- 2) **By relying on circumstances.** This happens when you fashion your personal peace based on how well your life is unfolding or how well you are doing personally.
- 3) **By adding anger to anxiety.** To fix blame, seek justice, or divert oneself from uncomfortable anxiety, we can move to anger because it feels powerful and gives us a sense of control.
- 4) **By denying that it matters.** Rather than engaging in the hard work of investing yourself in seemingly insolvable solutions, it is easier to check out and stop caring.
- 5) **By depending on vague, unfounded optimism.** Reassurances can be made that have no basis in reality, such as glib pronouncements that everything will be okay.
- 6) **By confronting anxiety with self-sufficient pride.** This is what happens when we refuse to share burdens that we were not intended to bear alone. We are not meant to be lone-rangers.

Understanding & Application

- 1) What is one way you recently felt something that is the opposite of peace (i.e. anxious, fearful, etc.)? Share with your group why you think you responded that way.
- 2) Now, read *Philippians 4:4-9* and discuss what this Scripture calls you to (in contrast to #1).
- 3) What is your game plan to bring your heart into greater alignment with *Philippians 4* for the next time you experience the opposite of peace?
- 4) Consider doing the following activity by yourself or with partner(s). Take two minutes to think about the list of your current burdens. Consider writing them down one by one. Next, spend a few minutes praying for these burdens (perhaps silently or out loud as a group). Lastly, help each other find ways to thank God for aspects of each of the dynamics and situations that are shared. Help identify evidences of God’s grace in the midst of each burdensome issue.
- 5) Read Eric’s list of six common attempts at manufacturing peace shown above. Then read *Philippians 4:4-9* again. Take turns sharing which way you tend to try to manufacture peace, and identify how you hope to find real peace the next time you are confronted with anxiety.