

## Free to Have Peace

### Philippians 4:4-9

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#### “Group Check-In”:

- Begin by checking in with everyone and sharing stories of how you “lived out” true freedom in the past week. Did anyone complete the “Live It Out” Mission Challenge? Share the following:
  - What about the message convicted you this week?
  - What did you do, and what was the outcome? How did it affect you personally; what was the impact on others?

#### “Current Status” Questions:

**Begin by reading this definition of peace: Peace is the opposite of Anxiety.** *Anxiety is defined as a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease, typically about an imminent event or something with an uncertain outcome.*

1. Have you ever thought of joylessness, sleeplessness, harsh reactions, or increased dependence on a substance or person as signs of anxiety? Did you squirm a little when Pastor Dave brought these signs of anxiety to light? Which “prisons” may be leading (or which prison has lead) to any of these “signs of anxiety?”
2. Can you picture your prison walls with an open door or window of light, or perhaps with a glimmer of hope, of God’s goodness? If so, share how.

**“The Most Important Choices are Open to Us to OVERCOME Anxiety.”** *Pastor Dave*

#### Read Philippians 4:4-9

#### Choose 3-4 of the following CHOICES to discuss:

3. **Reference Verse 4 “Choose Joy:”** **How and when does Paul encourage us to find joy?**  
Pastor Rick Warren stated in an interview after his son’s suicide, “God doesn’t expect me to be thankful FOR all circumstances, but IN all circumstances. There’s a huge difference. The first attitude is masochism. The second shows maturity. I’m thankful that God sees all I go through. He cares. He grieves with me. I’m thankful that even though I don’t have all the answers, God does. I’m thankful that God can bring good even out of the bad in my life, when I give him the pieces. It’s his specialty. “  
**How can you model and walk with others to discover and know this joy?**
4. **Reference verse 5, read 1 Peter 2:23 “Choose Gentleness:”** In 1 Peter 2:23, we see Jesus respond with gentleness and self-control. Why? Because he knew God could handle it. He didn’t have to take matters into his own hand. When we get stressed out, we have to ask ourselves: Do we believe that our Father is in control? Do you?  
**In what area do you find it easy to lose self-control & peace? How can you reinforce this reminder to become a gentle person?**
5. **Reference verse 6, “Choose Prayer:”** Pastor Dave states “Communication is the glue that holds relationships together. There is not a single part of your life that God is not interested in. Healthy Christians pray all the time..specifically... gratefully for God’s answer and timing.” Tim Keller said, “God will either give us what we ask or give us what we would have asked if we knew everything he knows.” So if we believe that God is infinitely wiser than we are, and that he loves us, I we can be thankful even before we get an answer.

**How has this type of prayer affected anxiety you may have experienced in a personal situation? Have you considered praying with someone else to mentor or learn this discipline? How long have you waited for God’s answer to a problem, and was it what you expected, or did your prayers change—and how?**

**6. Reference verse 8, “Choose Beauty:” things that are noble and right and pure and lovely.** Feeding our souls is a necessity. We have the authority to feed them through what we observe, think about, or spend our time on.

**What noble, right, pure, and lovely activities do you incorporate into your life, which brings nourishment to your soul? How does it bring peace? If you can think of destructive choices God is challenging you to change, jot down a plan to choose beauty instead.**

**7. Reference verse 8, “Choose Action:”** Pastor Dave shared that one of the wisest things we can do is to *put into practice* the things we know are right – things that are good and healthy and honoring to God. We have to refuse to just sit there and be a passive victim of anxiety. Obedience to God gets us moving in the right direction.

**What obstacles are keeping you from practicing good, healthy, and God-honoring action steps? What action steps is God calling you to take?**

**8. Reference verses 7 & 9 “Choose Relationship with Christ--Peace is a Person:”** The Bible is not a self-help manual. Peace is not just a psychological state that you can talk yourself into. True peace—the kind we really want—is a *relationship* with a *person*, with Christ, The Prince of Peace. It’s a peace that **transcends all understanding**. It doesn’t make sense. It defies logic.

**Have you noticed increased peace in your life, as a result of your relationship with Christ? Share some specific examples, including when you’ve felt “peace that transcends all understanding.” Discuss ways you can continue to develop and deepen that relationship, and help others do the same.**

**“LIVE IT OUT”:** Encourage your group members to complete the “Live It Out” Mission (found on The Chapel’s Small Groups page). Next time you meet, check-in and hold each other accountable by sharing your stories!

End your group time by praying together. Pray over any concerns that may be weighing on your hearts and minds. Be specific, and thankful, trusting God for the answers, strength & peace.