

# The Cure for Troubled Times

## Philippians 4:4-7

### Living in Unprecedented Times Series

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

5 Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

**The Bible is Kindle's most highlighted book. And Philippians 4:6-7 is the most highlighted passage.**

A)THE REASON IS - It is a verse that deals with the Subject of Anxiety

B)ANXIETY is something that affects us all!

1)Especially during times. Like this

**So we are going to spend the next few weeks drilling down into these verses and unpacking this subject.**

A)I truly believe that if we pay attention to and seek to apply what the Lord is saying through the apostle Paul – **It will be totally TRANSFORMING**

B)Notice how Paul begins here

**V. 4** 4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

A)Rejoice in the **Lord Always: IN THE LORD!**

B)Rejoice **IN THE LORD!**

**See our tendency is to Rejoice in our circumstances –**

A)Things are good rejoicing – NOT GOOD – no rejoicing

B)Children of Israel at the Red Sea – Boxed in NO REJOICING

C)Complaining – Stone Moses –

Moses declared - <sup>13</sup> And Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD

D)What is interesting is after the Lord – opened up the Red sea and the Children of Israel passed over on dry land

On the other side – they had Hallelujah service – they were praising the Lord !

But how much greater would it have been if they were praising the Lord before the Miracle happened.

**Church – We need to praise him even in the storm We sing that song – storm is here –**

A)Is it going to just be a song that we sing or is it going to be the reality that we walk in

B)But why should we praise him?

1)Many reasons – give you two TODAY

**1<sup>st</sup> Because God is Sovereign! – All Powerful – All knowing!**

A)In the treatment of anxiety, a proper understanding of sovereignty is huge.

B)Anxiety is often the consequence of perceived chaos.

1)If we sense we are victims of unseen, turbulent, random forces, we are troubled.

**Psychologists verified this fact when they studied the impact of combat on soldiers in World War II.**

A)They determined that after 60 days of continuous combat the ground troops became **"emotionally dead."**

B)This reaction is understandable. Soldiers endured a constant threat of bomb blitzes, machine guns, and enemy snipers.

C)They knew that they could be killed in any number of ways on any given day –

1)so anxiety of ground troops was no surprise.

**The comparative calm of fighter pilots, however, was.**

A)Especially since the mortality rate of fighter pilots was the highest in combat.

B) 50% of the fighter pilots were killed in action, yet pilots loved their work.

C) An astounding 93% of them claimed to be happy in their assignments even though the odds of survival were the same as the toss of a coin.

**What made the difference? CONTROL!**

A) Those pilots had their hands on the throttle.

B) They sat in the cockpit. - They felt that their fate was theirs to determine.

C) The Infantrymen, by contrast, could just as easily be killed standing still or running away.

1) They felt helpless.

**D) The formula is simple: Perceived control creates calm. Lack of control gives birth to fear.**

**You don't need a war to prove this formula.**

A) All you need to do is drive in traffic – when traffic is flowing – blood pressure is down - HAPPY

B) But when traffic is heavy, when it is bumper to bumper – when the freeway becomes a parking lot!

1) Anxiety spikes – blood pressure rises – NO CONTROL

C) **Think I am exaggerating?** A team of German researchers found that a traffic jam increases your chances of a **heart attack 3 fold.**

**D) Gridlock is the ultimate loss of control.**

1) Loss of control causes us to stress

E) That's why the most stressed-out people are **control freaks.**

1) They are always battling for Control – anything that challenges control – stresses them out

**SITUATIONS LIKE THIS REMIND US THAT WE ARE NOT IN CONTROL! – RIGHT?**

A) Control freaks like me – say amen

**B) Rather than seeking total control, relinquish it.**

1) You can't run the world, but you can entrust it to God.

C) **And one of the clearest ways that we do that is by rejoicing in the Sovereignty of God!**

1) "Peace is within reach, not for lack of problems, but because of the presence of a sovereign Lord." - ML

**Joy is a personal choice to react to life's uncertainties with faith. - Skip Heitzig**

D) You can Stabilize your soul - By reminding yourself He reigns supreme over every detail of the universe.

**Reminding ourselves of truths and scriptures like. "There is no wisdom, no insight, no plan that can succeed against the LORD" (Proverbs 21:30 NIV).**

**"God does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: 'What have you done?'"**

Daniel 4:35

**God upholds all things by the power of His Word – Hebrews 1:3**

**We see a great example of this truth that God is Sovereign in the Life of the prophet Isaiah.**

A) During the eighth century BC, ancient Judah enjoyed a time of relative peace, **thanks to the steady leadership of King Uzziah.**

B) **Anxiety levels in the Kingdom were low because Uzziah was on the throne and doing such a great job.**

C) **But what if that Changed? What if Uzziah was gone – what if he died?**

D) **Well that is exactly what happened – King Uzziah died and in the aftermath of his death –**  
1) People were wondering NOW WHAT?

E) **That is when Isaiah the prophet was given a vision**

1) A vision that we all need to remember

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said:

**"Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!" (Isa. 6:1–3)**

**Uzziah's throne was empty, but God's was occupied!!**

A) In Your life and my life – this country – this world – God is never off the throne – never surprised –

B) He is never CAUGHT off guard.

C) Question: Is God sovereign in this circumstance.

Is he mightier than the coronavirus

D) According to the Bible the answer is yes, yes, and yes! “God . . . is the blessed controller of all things, the king over all kings and the master of all masters”

(1 Timothy 6:15 PHILLIPS).

E) If he sustains all and controls all, do you think he has authority over this situation you face?

Ok Pastor Rob – I get what you are saying – I know that truth – God is Sovereign – he is in control

A) But How do I know that he is interested in my life – what is going on with me? –

B) I am a little nobody in the big scheme of things!

1) I am sure that all of us have felt that way before – I know I have –

2) God has bigger problems to deal with than MINE

C) This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> reason why we can rejoice in the Lord –

1) not just because He is Sovereign but because HE IS NEAR!

V.5 Let your gentleness be known to all men the Lord is at hand – the Lord is near

JESUS PROMISED Hebrews 13:5 – I will never leave you nor forsake you!

A) His Holy Spirit is inside of us – He is with us in every single situation –

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” John 16:33

He knows the number of hairs on your head – Luke 12:7

B) He is into you – So into you – he knows when you get a haircut how my hairs are left!

“His thoughts for you outnumber the sand.”

Psalm 139:18

C) We have to stop thinking of God in our terms – 1) we are limited most of us can only focus on a few things at once

D) Not God he is intimately interested in every single one of our lives and is able to think about you constantly

1) Big thoughts many thoughts – all at once – He is an incredible being

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. Jeremiah 29:11

The Lord God who is Sovereign – All powerful – Who is holding everything together by his word – No straining

A) He is also Near – He is INTO YOU! – HE IS FOR YOU!

B) His thoughts that outnumber the sand – are thoughts of good to give you a future and a Hope!

C) Application

Knowing that God is Sovereign and that He is near – results in Gentleness!

A) The Greek word translated here as gentleness describes a temperament that is seasoned/ mature.

B) It envisions an attitude that is fitting to the occasion, levelheaded and even tempered.

C) Gentleness is the opposite of Anxiety – Anxious people are not very gentle

D) Gentleness is the opposite of what would be an overreaction or a sense of panic.

1) That is what Happens when we stay focused on the Lord

E) FEAR PANIC AND DISASTER IS WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE focus on the circumstances

If there was ever a time when the world needs to see God's people acting calm – gentle – NOW!

A) LOVING OTHERS

B) CONCERN FOR OTHERS

C) SERVING OTHERS

**KEY CHOICE – Victory over Anxiety!**

A) Turn your attention away from the problem, and for a few minutes celebrate God.

B) It does you no good to obsess yourself with THE trouble. The more you stare at it, the bigger it grows.

C) Yet the more you look to God, the quicker the problem is reduced to its proper size.

**D) This was the strategy of the psalmist.”**

“I will lift up my eyes to the hills—  
From whence comes my help?  
My help comes from the LORD,  
Who made heaven and earth. (Psalm 121:1–2)

**Do you see the intentionality in those words?**

A) “I will lift up my eyes.” Do not meditate on the mess.

B) You gain nothing by setting your eyes on the problem.

1) You gain everything by setting your eyes on the Lord.”

C) Worry divides the mind and heart – Worship focuses the mind!

**D) Today we want to close by doing just that – Focus the mind**

1) God is Sovereign – God is near – God is for you

E) Biggest reminder is the Cross! – His perfect love

1) Your choice