

Peace obtained through prayer (Quality: Good)

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Preacher: Warboys, Ralph (1927-2008)

[0 : 00] I ask your prayerful attention to the Epistle to the Philippians, chapter 4, and especially verses 6 and 7.

Philippians 4, verses 6 and 7. Be careful for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God, and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4, verses 6 and 7. I mentioned in our remarks this morning how that if the word of God dwells in our hearts with fruit, that will be brought forth in our lives.

Not for our own honour or glory, but for our saviors. You will remember in many instances in the Old Testament, there are women that longed for a son especially, whether Sarah, Hannah, Manoah's wife, or others.

And why did they desire a son? Not for themselves, but for their husband's name and tribe, that they should continue, and his tribe should prosper.

[2 : 18] And if you and I are spiritually the bride of Christ, we should desire spiritual fruit for our heavenly husband's glory.

This epistle to the Philippians shows much love from the apostle to the church at Philippi.

When I was young, I thought most of the epistles were similar, but there is, of course, much difference between one and another.

There is a special work for him at Philippi. The man of Macedonia appeared in a vision, saying, come over and help us. And they entered into the city of Philippi.

There they had trouble, were cast into prison, but even in prison the Lord had a work for them. And so it was to those he writes and describes them as, my brethren, dearly beloved and longed for.

[3 : 57] My joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. He writes in the 15th verse that the Philippians were the only church that communicated to him concerning giving and receiving, and they sent once and again unto his necessity.

Well, coming to the church, be careful for nothing.

Does that mean we are then to be careless, indifferent, lazy, idle?

Paul writes to Timothy, if a man provide not for his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an infant.

The scriptures never condone laziness in any shape or form. Go to the ant thou sluggard and so on. How then are we to look at this word?

[5 : 13] I think if we look at it in this way, be full of care for nothing. Be full of care for nothing.

I'm a simple man, and often in the morning, filling the milk jug before making a cup of tea for my wife, I fill the jug with milk, and I've thought of this, when it's full of milk, you can't put any water in if you wanted to.

It's full. And if you and I are full of care, there's no room for spiritual things. Be full of care for nothing.

In that chapter that I read from in Luke chapter 10, We read there of those two dear ladies, Mary and Martha.

At the grave of Lazarus, it would seem Martha's faith was stronger than that of Mary's. But here, Mary showed the most grace.

[6 : 27] She sat at Jesus' feet and heard his word. His word was to her more than her necessary food. Some of our dear friends at Oakington often have to come to the weeknight service, not having been home to see their children or families, not having had any meal in order to get to the place of worship.

But Martha was comforted about my service. And I mentioned in prayer how that verse from Hebrews 12, that we are to lay aside every weight, as well as things that are directly sinful, if those weights hinder us in our heavenly race.

Martha was comforted about my service. When our grandchildren ran races at school, they didn't run in Wellington boots and overcoats. Nothing wrong with Wellington boots and overcoats, but they would have hindered them in the race.

And so we have to lay those things aside. We know this from painful experience. Martha was comforted about my service.

Lord, Lord, does not I or not care? My sister hath left me to serve alone. Bid her therefore that she help me. Martha, Martha, thou art careful, full of care, and troubled about many things, but one thing is need.

[8 : 18] And Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Be full of care for nothing, but in everything, by prayer.

I sometimes tell our dear children at Oakington, that nothing is too small to play about, and nothing is too great.

From the smallest providential matter, that difficult homework, that bullying at school, or whatever it may be, nothing from the smallest providential thing to the greatest spiritual thing.

Bring it to the Lord in prayer. How often, and I speak from painful experience, we scheme this, we plan that, we consult so and so, and so and so, and so and so, and not until we are at our wit's end, like those in the psalm, do we pray to the Lord in our travels.

[9 : 44] Next time we resolve, we will take it to the Lord immediately. But do we? Do we? Ah, sadly often that is not the case.

Everything by prayer. Well, prayer itself is of course a great subject. I think the best definition of prayer is that given by the poet, the soul's sincere desire, uttered or unexpressed.

The motion of the hidden fire that trembles in the breast, describes it as the upward glancing of an eye when none but God is near.

By prayer. Now in that eleventh chapter of Luke, the disciples made their prayers a subject of prayer.

And so should you and I. prayer. That we may pray with right motives for right things. We can solemnly pray for right things but with wrong motives.

[11 : 13] if you were praying for example for every seat in this chapel to be occupied to help the collection or for your pride, the right desire would have a wrong motive.

prayer. It must be for God's glory and his people's spiritual good. We read of Israel of old how they asked amiss to consume upon their lusts and solemnly God gave them their request but sent leanness into their souls.

Oh, how we need to make our prayers the subject of prayer. And then again, I remind you of the Lord's words when ye pray, believe that ye shall receive and ye shall have.

I often have to ask for forgiveness for being surprised when my prayers are answered.

Do you plead guilty or not guilty? Praying for something and then surprised when you get an answer. And we have examples in the scriptures.

[12 : 40] You read of Zacharias. He was praying for a son. But he wasn't expecting an answer. When the angel said, Thy wife shall bear thee a son, whereby shall I know this?

For I am an old man and my wife, well stricken in years, thou shalt be done because thou believest not my words. We shall be fulfilled in their season.

But Zacharias' unbelief and your unbelief and mine did not stop God fulfilling his word. His wife Elizabeth did bear her son.

If ye have faith, ye shall say unto this mountain, be thou removed and cast into the sea and it shall be done.

Do we not have to pray, Lord, increase our faith, increase our faith. But the Lord, in this so-called Lord's Prayer, though I feel that is a misnomer, he did not need to pray for sins to be forgiven.

[14 : 05] The Lord's Prayer is really that one in John when he lifted up his eyes to heaven and prayed concerning his people. But we should pray after this man.

Notice the first three requests in this prayer do not ask for anything for the person who is praying.

The first three requests seek for God's glory. Hallowed be thy name, thy name treated with love and respect.

Thy kingdom come, thy gospel kingdom come, thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven. And that should be first and foremost in your prayers and mine.

The two great commandments in a gospel sense. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy strength, with all thy might, and him only shalt thou serve.

[15 : 12] And the second is like unto him. Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Give us day by day our daily bread.

We touched upon bread in our text this morning as it sets forth Jesus Christ. Do you desire daily spiritual fare?

Food and to feed upon Christ. If we only fed naturally on the Lord's day how hungry we would be by the next one if we were not fainting or even alive.

We should desire daily spiritual food and to feed upon Christ and forgive us our sins.

How great they are like a mountain upon us as we also forgive everyone that is indebted to us and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

[16 : 29] much more might be said on that prayer that we cannot dwell upon now but it is followed by this parable that the man within his house and his friend in the journey came to him and he had nothing to set before him.

How often that is the case with those who preach the gospel. perhaps well on our journeys and we feel we have nothing to set before the people.

But then this man came to him and noticed what he said friend lend me three loaves.

Two is not sufficient if you give me four one will be wise. It's what I think I need. And then he from within says trouble me not my children are with me in bed I cannot rise and give thee.

I say unto you though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend he said he said concerning spiritual blessings that we have to feel our need before we ask except for the first spiritual blessing which is the new birth.

[18 : 14] but after that spiritual blessings will have to be prayed for. Providential blessings all mankind receive.

We receive them in our unregeneracy. Food and drink, shelter, loved ones, health and strength and so on. but spiritual blessings will have to be prayed for.

And he gives it because of his importunity, his urgent, pressing, pleading.

He will rise and lend him three loaves? No. He will give him as many as he needed.

As many as he needed. That is an all important thing about him. It may have been three, but I think it most unlikely it might have been one, it might have been thirty, but it was as many as he needed.

[19 : 32] And then that encouragement as concerning a natural father. If ye then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him, to them that ask him, in all things by prayer, just as in a natural family.

The father will know generally speaking what the child needs before the child does. But if rightly brought up, they will have to ask, and to ask piously.

Sometimes my children would forget themselves and say, I want this or I want that, and I say, I want doesn't get. Please may I have.

Please may I have. And our heavenly father knows our need. But it is appointed that by prayer we are to make those wishes known as it were, though he knows them already better than we do.

In everything. I should say, of course, that this sixth verse applies to both providential and spiritual things.

[21 : 27] The next verse which we want to come to applies purely to spiritual things. There are many prayers in the scripture that apply to both providential and spiritual.

God be merciful to me, the sinner.

Blot out mine iniquities, wash me thoroughly from my sins, and so in everything by prayer and supplication.

Supplication speaks of humility and a humble spirit. To this man will I look, we read, that is of a humble and a contrite spirit and that trembles at my word.

That trembles at my word. But I think especially of that which we read in the prophecy of Zechariah.

[23 : 01] I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace of free unmerited favour and of supplications and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son and shall be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for his first man.

Pour upon the house of James. Not just sprinkle as it were a few drops of water. I remember in the army with a lot of others we were as they say larking about and somebody took a bucket of water and poured it over my head.

I was soaked to the skin and that's what we want here don't we not? Pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication and oh what an infinite mercy John quotes this of course in the 19th chapter of his gospel they shall look upon him whom they have pierced his the soldier pierced his side his true but we have pierced him through and through in passing have you considered the importance that it was the side of the Lord Jesus that was pierced with the spear remembering he was crucified between two things one thief would have seen for they were still alive when the side was pierced one thief could have seen that side pierced but it would be hidden from the side of the other we cannot say that the repenting one was literally on the side that was pierced but in a spiritual sense he was we cannot dwell now upon the sufferings of

Christ though it is a delightful thing though we oft feel how short we come in considering those things that one sin deserves eternal wrath and he bore all the punishment due for all his people's sins in a few finite hours eternal and infinite punishment compressed to few hours mathematically it could not be done but faith believes it was done of his suffering so intense angels have no perfect sense and if we believe our sins were laid upon him and have a love to the Lord then shall we not weep over those sins for causing his sufferings shall we not indeed supplicate and beg for mercy through that sin atoning sacrifice in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving with thanksgiving I remind you of Daniel in the sixth chapter when he knew that the writing was signed he went into his house and the windows of his chamber being opened towards your person he kneeled upon his knees and prayed he could have kneeled and not prayed but he kneeled and prayed and gave thanks before his

God as he did afford to you could understand him giving thanks when he was brought unharmed out of the den of lions but he gave thanks before he was cast in and I remind you Paul and Silas at midnight they prayed and sang praises unto God and the prisoners heard you could understand and praising God after the earthquake when everyone's bands were loosed and the prison doors opened what is the secret Daniel knew Paul and Silas knew that whatever the outcome of their trial it would be for God's glory and their soul's good so they could give thanks for their trial

[29 : 02] Paul writes concerning this in the epistle to the Romans we glory we praise God and give thanks for tribulations also knowing that tribulation worketh patience and patience experience and experience hope and hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts and 300 is one of my favorite hymns for patience when I raised a cry fresh burdens may be brought my foolish heart would then reply for patience play no more I fancied patience would be brought before my troubles rose and by such granted help

I thought to triumph all my ways but Christ has cleared my misty side and taught by him I find that tribulations working right produce a patient mind years ago I was introduced in the north of England to a dear lady who was crippled up with rheumatoid arthritis her hands knotted into peculiar shapes unable to walk properly and so on and I expressed sympathy with her in her affliction but she interrupted me and she said I wouldn't be without this trial I wouldn't be without it I quoted that word from Romans glorying in tribulations also but do you and do

I I think I said this morning Charles give new life to prayer lay us low and keep us there in everything by prayer and supplication with thanks hearing but in spiritual things especially what thanks we should give to God for sending his only begotten son into the world to save sinners the apostle expresses it thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift unspeakable gift cannot be fully described will take eternity but to praise God for him with thanks hearing let your requests be made known unto

God he will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do these things for them now I said this sixth verse was applicable to providential and spiritual thing but now coming to this seventh verse the peace of God how beautiful are those words of the Lord to his eleven before his sufferings began in the world ye shall have tribulation but in me ye shall have peace peace peace by his cross as

Jesus made the church is everlasting hand for hell and sin as victory won and with a shout to glory God in this first chapter of Colossians we read together it pleased the father that in him in Christ should all fullness dwell and having made peace through the blood of his cross the Lord demands a mighty debt and not a single might will but gospel sings of Jesus blood and says I'll make the payment good we all have sinned we all have come short of the glory of

[34 : 53] God we all have that debt we cannot pay some teach that by reformation of the life and by good deeds they will atone for past sins away with such error if you take a simple parable I might enter the built up area perhaps a limit of 30 miles an hour for some reason I'm unaware of it and I continue at 40 but then I see a repeat signal that it is a 30 mile an hour limit I'm convicted I'm breaking the law I slow down to 30 but I might continue the next 10,000 miles at 30 miles an hour but that will not atone for having broken it in the past if we were brought before a judge and charged with exceeding it in that first part of the journey it would be no defence to say well for the next thousands of miles

I kept to the limit you broke it in the past you are guilty you are guilty we are all guilty we have incurred a debt we can never pay the Lord Jesus has many sweet names but I think one of the sweetest is that of the Redeemer the Redeemer a hundred years ago when poverty stalked the land when a man the husband the breadwinner was disabled or could not work his wife might take a ring or watch to the pawn broker who would advance a sum of money using that precious article as a surety then when the breadwinner could work again a sum of money would be taken and the precious article redeemed bought back otherwise it was sold and lost forever is

Christ your Redeemer one that pays your debts that you can never never never pay yourself dear Job in the midst of his affliction I know at times he became very self righteous but he was able to say this I know that my Redeemer lived he did not say he will live in another thousand years he clearly believed in the eternal sonship of Christ my Redeemer liveth now as it were and though after my skin worms destroy this body yet in my flesh shall I see God whom I shall see for myself and not another you cannot see for someone else one of my dear children was saying to me look granddad at that bird in that bush in the garden

I'm sure there was a bush there I'm sure he could see it I'm sure there was a bird there and I'm sure he could see it but he couldn't make me see it and I never did see it you cannot see for anyone else however near and dear we have to see him by faith suffering in our room and place to have that peace that passeth understanding we may mention our own experience of this I believe the Lord cut me down in my sins on June the 21st 1941 at a senior school where I have now four grandchildren and weeping and mourning over my sins on the Lord's day morning just over two weeks later the

Lord suddenly broke in and said with such power to my soul thy sins which are many are all forgiven I leapt out of bed and fell on my knees and wept to the mercy I found and such peace peace flowed into my soul that passes understanding and we foolishly thought it would last the rest of our pilgrimish journey but within few days it was gone but oh the memory of it is still sweet more the poet said more frequent let thy visits be or let them longer last but I change his words more frequent let thy visits be and and let them longer last that peace of

[40 : 52] God in Psalm 37 we read mark the perfect man and behold the upper line for the end of that man is peace he doesn't say he will have much peace in his pilgrimage journey but does that matter if the end is peace that peace throughout eternity in heaven above but peace of God that blessing we have often written it upon a Bible when we have taken weddings for made the scriptures a gift to someone the

Lord bless thee and keep thee the Lord lift up make his face shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee the Lord lift up his countenance upon and give thee peace peace and the peace of God which passeth understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus this is not tautology which means saying the same thing with different words the heart in scripture for the most part sets forth our affections and our desires the mind sets forth our understanding we need both to be counted keep your hearts set your affections on things above and not on things on the earth how easily our affections get drawn away we may raise idols up we cannot cast down we sometimes sing that hymn perhaps someone here feels they cannot sing it as a prayer but sing it that the

Lord will give you that desire the dearest idol I have known what e'er that idol be help me to tear it from thy throne and worship only thee keep your hearts and minds if the mind of our understanding is not kept we shall fall into error and not understand his word of thy we read how in the eighth chapter of Hebrew this is the covenant the new covenant by the way the old covenant is described that if it had not been faultless there was nothing sinful with the old covenant

God gave it but it was not complete in that there was no way I know the types and shadows but on the covenant there was no way of redemption the soul that sineth it shall die it was not complete the old covenant was not without fault if it had been there would be no place found for the second and this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days saith the Lord I will put my laws into their mind and write them in their hearts in their understanding and in their affections and I will be to them a God and they shall be to me a

Peter and they shall not teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother saying know the Lord for all shall know me from the least of them to the greatest so keep your hearts and mind through Christ Jesus means the anointed one the promised Messiah Jesus means Savior thou shall call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins well we leave these thoughts with you be full of care for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving including thanking for your trials let your request be made known unto

[47 : 25] God and the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus may those blessings be your portion and mine Amen the notices this evening are as follows God willing there will be a prayer meeting on

Wednesday evening and our pastor will be with us next Lord's Day let us conclude by singing hymn 1133 through may the power that brings salvation salvation now exerted in the word by its quickening operation life in part and joy afford life to sinners joy to those who know the

Lord hymn 1133 through I We love all the salvation Now exalted in the world By each waking of the nation Life in health and joy But Lord, life to sin Life in sin

Joy to the children Now the whole Love the voice of the pervading But in good Shamed us alone Baby, baby■

Tis the gospel, tis the gospel, My spirit, my spirit, my spirit, my spirit, my spirit.

[52 : 09] To cry, O Lord, for thy gospel, to be blessed to our souls. Forgive anything amiss, may we be like Ruth of old, who beat out that which she had cleaned and left the chaff behind, but to hone the good groin to share with another.

Amen. Do forgive our sins of thought, word and deed. Take us to our destinations in safety, if it is for thy glory in our souls.

And now may the grace, free unmerited favoring of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with us.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[53 : 38] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.