

Sermon Discussion

8 November 2020

Read Philippians 4:2-9 together.

Dig Deeper

In Philippians 2:20, Paul commended Timothy for being anxious over the welfare of the church. Here he said we should not be anxious about anything. The same word appears in both places. The resolution of this problem probably lies in viewing anxiety as concern that may become fretful and inappropriate if taken too far. Paul's point here was that rather than becoming distraught over a particular situation we should take it to the Lord in prayer (see Matthew 6:25-34).

Paul used several different words for prayer in this verse. **"Prayer"** (*proseuche*) is the most general term for our communications to God. **"Supplication"** or "petition" (NIV, *deesis*) refers to requests for particular benefits. **"Thanksgiving"** (*eucharistias*) is grateful acknowledgment of past mercies. **"Requests"** (*aitemata*) looks at individual requests of God that form part of the whole prayer.

Paul offered strong encouragement to seek release from anxiety in prayer and more prayer.

1. What was Paul's solution to the dispute between Euodia and Syntyche? Why is division in the body of Christ so dangerous? How might you encourage unity rather than division?
2. What would happen if you and others in your church lived lives of constant rejoicing? How does the reminder that "The Lord is near" in v. 5 help with that?
3. What does anxiety do to you? How does it affect others around you? What is Paul's encouragement in dealing with anxiety?
4. What does Paul mean when he says to think about praiseworthy things? Practically, how is this done?

Application & Prayer

- Do you need to take any decisive steps to make peace with a fellow believer? Pause and ask the Lord for wisdom on how to do that.
- Consider the ways you will apply the cure for anxiety and worry that Paul lays out in these verses. Ask someone to check in on your progress over the next month to evaluate how you are doing.