

MY CATCH CRY IS

The last couple of months we have been looking at the subject of worry, and our catch cry has been to *worry about nothing and pray about everything*.

We started with the point of right praying which involved four key words: **prayer, passion, petition and praise**. Now we follow what Paul tells us about the outcome of right praying?

Peace: The word used for peace is the sense of rest and contentment. This does not mean it is a peace that removes conflict, concern or difficult times. Rather it is a peace despite our situation or circumstances. What we need to understand as Christians is that we might have times of the most profound witnessing when we go through trials and struggles. People wonder how you can exhibit such rest and peace in such dire circumstances.

A number of years ago one of our staff and her husband got the worst phone call you could imagine. The call was from the police informing them of the tragic death of their son. He was returning home when quite unexpectedly a tyre blew, resulting in the vehicle rolling and killing their son, and severely injuring his boss. The thing that spoke to me was their peace through all of their grief and sorrow. As they and many others prayed, they experienced God's peace. They were a classic example of Colossians 3:15 - *"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts."*

PRAISE the Lord for:

- ★ Kenya (Paul Dondoh) - reaching vulnerable families with the gospel has seen 15 families give their lives to Jesus through the Challenge newspaper
- ★ No health issues with our team here in the Perth office
- ★ A number of churches seeing the outreach possibilities and increasing their orders
- ★ Our prayer warriors who continue to pray regularly for the ministry
- ★ The paper being produced this month for USA distribution

Can I hit the pause button here in relation to the peace of God? We need to understand something that is very important if we are to experience this peace of God. We cannot have the peace of God unless we have first experienced peace with God. Paul expressed it this way in Romans 5:1 - *"Having been justified by faith, we now have peace with God."*

We were born spiritually separated from God, because of the inherited sin of Adam and Eve. Literally we were at war with God and had no means of making peace with God, until Jesus came and died on the cross and rose again on the third day. As we accept this by faith, we are brought into a right relationship with God and peace reigns. Thus, being at peace *with* God means we can have access to the peace *of* God. Ephesians 2:14 puts it well; *"For He (Christ) Himself is our peace."*

Both forms of peace emerge out of our relationship with the Lord. Okay, hit the play button again.

There is an interesting quality to this peace of God – it *surpasses all understanding*.

Continued over

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The Amplified Bible describes it as *surpassing all human understanding*. This is not to suggest that it cannot be understood from a comprehension point of view, but rather it cannot be manufactured by human intellectual endeavour or some sort of formula or works endeavour. Therefore, by implication this is telling us that this sort of peace can only come from a divine origin. It is a peace that cannot be explained other than God's divine intervention in our lives. Another encouraging quality of the peace of God is that it guards our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, i.e. in the context of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. *It guards our thinking from sinking into worry, stress, morbid introspection and self-pity.*

Isaiah 26:3 affirms this by saying; *"You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed (focussed) on You, because he trusts in You."*

So it also guards our hearts i.e. our emotions, our feelings. This sort of peace then stops us from becoming bitter and resentful. All of this is made even more amazing when you remember Paul was dictating all this while chained to two Roman soldiers, and looking at a death sentence. If anyone could legitimise why he should be filled with self-pity, anger and bitterness, Paul could.

We also remember the peace of God does not mean the absence of trials and tribulation, but the rest and enabling grace to see us through them. The lives of Joseph and Daniel are great examples. In Daniel chapter 6 we are told that officials wanted to trap Daniel, as they had been unsuccessful in finding anything wrong in his life or service to the king. They cleverly devised a scheme to use the fact that Daniel was faithful to God in his devotional life and in particular his prayer life. No one was allowed to pray to any other god other than king Darius for 30 days.

We read these telling words in v.10 that illustrate Daniel's peace in trying times. "When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open towards Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously."

The word 'previously' has the thought of something that was done from early days. This was something he had done as a young man. His response to the threat was not worry or anxiety but prayer and rest, and what a difference it made. So remember our catch cry is to **worry about nothing and pray about everything.**

{ CARL CARMODY
EDITOR CHALLENGE }

PRAYER needed for:

- ★ Our partner organisations around the world – Multi Ministries and World Hope Prison Ministries (South Africa), Challenge USA, Goodnews UK
- ★ Our directors around the world – Andrew & Karen Trezona (USA), Cobus & Christa Britz (South Africa), Andrew & Mandy Halloway (UK)
- ★ Testimonies for all the editions of Challenge
- ★ Current editions as paper is sent out far and wide. Pray each paper will be a blessing to readers



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