

How You Can Hold Onto Peace in an Out-of-Control World

God tells us in His Word, "If it is possible, as much as it depends on you, live peaceably with all men" (Rom. 12:18). In other words, live as peacefully as possible with other people.

This can be a challenge, especially if we have daily contact with very stressful people. Seriously, how do we set out to accomplish such a goal? How do we stay at peace when our boss is unrealistic with his or her demands? Or our neighbor is so over the top, emotionally speaking? Or our spouse or child is sick and suffering? How do we hold our peace when life around us is out of control? Let's look to the Scriptures for realistic daily steps to put into practice in our everyday lives to maintain our peace.

1. One way to maintain our peace is to guard our hearts and minds. And Philippians 4:6-7 tells us how to guard them. It says, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication with gratitude, make your requests known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will protect your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." We guard our hearts and minds by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving. While we remember to pray and supplicate, we often forget to do so with thanksgiving on our tongues. And forgetting to be thankful can lead us into whining and complaining, or even into the realm of fear, a stressful mode. On the other hand, being thankful is a positive attribute, and it does add to our level of peace by helping us focus on the right things. Let's look to step No. 2 to find out why it is important to have our hearts and minds filled with positive things.

2. "Finally, brothers, whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are just, whatever things

are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue, and if there is any praise, think on these things. ... And the God of peace will be with you" (Phil. 4:8-9). Allowing our minds to wander into ungodly thoughts and conversations zaps our peace. Our souls, minds and emotions get bent out of shape. These ungodly thoughts and conversations create an atmosphere that is uninviting for the Holy Spirit, our Comforter, to inhabit. Knowing this we all ought to guard our thoughts and conversations with all sincerity and focus on things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy. If we will do this, the God of peace will be with us.

Peace is important to our everyday lives. And God desires us to have His peace, spiritually, emotionally, mentally and physically too. Since He provides us with these keys to maintaining our peace, He obviously holds us responsible to guard our hearts and minds by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving on our minds and tongues. And even tells us what to think about so we can maintain our level of peace.

And let's end today's message of peace with these words of Jesus from John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." {eo}

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