

Live in God's Peace

Our joy and peace come as a result of our relationship with the Lord.

In today's world there seems to be plenty going on to cause concern and anxiety. The events reported on the evening news and in daily newspapers can make us shake our heads and wonder what is going to happen next. Closer to home, we face the daily challenges of earning a living, raising a family and dealing with personal issues, all of which can bring on anxiety. But there is a remedy.

God tells us in His Word that as believers in Jesus Christ, we are to "be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let [our] requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard [our] hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6-7, NKJV).

The normal state of a Christian is to be at peace, but I'm sure you've noticed that not all Christians enjoy peace on a regular basis. I know there was a time when I didn't. I lived in a continual state of turmoil and anxiety, not realizing it was abnormal. I was intense about everything, making mountains out of molehills.

I created problems for myself where none really existed. After a while, the Lord let me know that it was time for me to stop making a big deal out of nothing. He assured me that even though trials will always be a part of life, I can be of good cheer.

That kind of direction was just what I needed. It helped me

learn that I had to let some things go—to forget them and move on.

I learned that our joy and peace come as a result of our relationship with the Lord. Psalm 16:11 tells us that fullness of joy is to be found in His presence. If we have received Jesus as our Savior and Lord, He lives inside us. We can experience peace in His presence, receiving from Him and acting in response to His direction.

Salvation doesn't guarantee us trouble-free lives. We will still encounter problems. All of us go through seasons when things don't work out the way we would like, and during these times, we feel the weight of anxiety trying to settle on us. But we can choose to live in peace and be happy because the One who lives inside us gives us plenty of reason to calm down and cheer up!

After I understood this, it seemed to me that every time I became upset about something that wasn't important, the Lord said: "Calm down and cheer up! Lighten up. Don't be so intense! Enjoy life!"

Then I'd think: That's right. I am supposed to enjoy my life. I have joy in my salvation. And the Prince of Peace, who has overcome the world, lives inside me!

That doesn't mean I go around with my head in the clouds, acting giddy all the time. The Bible says we are to be sober-minded, vigilant and cautious, on guard against our enemy, the devil, who is out to devour us (see 1 Pet. 5:8).

As I mentioned earlier, many serious things are going on in

this world, and we need to be aware of them and be prepared for them. But at the same time, we need to learn to relax and take things as they come, trusting God instead of getting nervous and upset.

We need to learn how to enjoy the good life God has provided for us through the death and resurrection of His Son, Jesus Christ. If we will enlist God's help, lighten up and laugh a little more, we will discover the joyful, abundant life that is His plan for us. Yes, there will always be worrisome situations, but we can choose to be happy in spite of them.

I made that choice, and I have never been sorry. I genuinely love, enjoy and appreciate the peace God provides in every area of my life today. You can make that choice too.

God cares about everything that concerns us. You can make a decision, like I did, to stop ruining today by worrying about yesterday or tomorrow, and say: "This is the day the Lord has made. I choose to rejoice and be glad in it!"

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