

A Great Life
11-20-16AM

How would you describe life at this moment? Many people focus in on the things that cause them anxiety or fear or sorrow. Maybe it is a recent election. Maybe they have concerns about the direction of the world, in things such as the environment or losing liberties. Maybe their fears are for the church or their own souls. Often we focus on the negative and lose sight of the good blessing we do have.

Our carnal blessings:

1. Food has never been cheaper
2. Education has never been more available
3. Crime has never been lower
4. Clothing has never been more abundant

Our spiritual blessings

1. Never been easier to study the bible
2. Never been easier to share the truth
 - Opportunities for evangelism
3. Assembling has never been easier

So why is it that so many of us are so anxious? Perhaps it is because sometimes the better we have it, the more afraid we are of losing it.

Enter Paul's letter to the Philippian church. Particularly, Philippians 4:1-8. There Paul seeks to encourage brethren who are striving over things they ought not to be concerned about.

First, Paul makes it clear that our real joy ought to be in things that are spiritual. Even if our carnal lives our blessed, it is not where our real joy is found. When Job was stripped of these blessings, he was unperturbed because he had not put his hope in that life; instead, his hope was in the next world (Job 19:25-29). Where is your treasure and hope? Jesus said in Matthew 6:18-19 it should be in heaven, the only place it is safe.

Second, Paul makes a command of joy when he says "rejoice in the Lord always". It means that our joy is not just something we want, but God wants (and demands) too.

Third, our joy is what people see in Christ. We are supposed to have a different mind than the world around us. They have no hope; we do (1 Thes. 4:13). We are supposed to be a people who reflect hope to the degree that the world takes note of it and wants to find out more about it (1 Peter 3:15).

Fourth, when we turn to God, there is a special gift that He imparts to the believer: the peace that surpasses understanding. We typically view the blessings of Christ as being totally through understanding. However, this blessing is different; it is a peace that is greater than our understanding. If we turn to God with our anxieties, He can give us this peace.

Finally, Paul concludes by telling the Saints to dwell on the correct things. These are not all spiritual things, but things with spiritual virtues. Our lives are like a cabinet with only a limited amount of room inside. If we fill it with worthless things, it takes away the room for the useful. Paul is telling us to fill ourselves with good things.