

Notes: We live in a world filled with stress and worry. God does not intend for us to live that way. Paul gives us some powerful suggestions in Philippians about how we can live a life filled with peace and contentment. **Life Recovery Bible** *Serenity is having an inner calm in the midst of the ups and downs of life. It involves learning to be content with things in our life that cannot be changed.* Both are peace and serenity are possible through applying Biblical principles.

I. Allow yourself to experience joy in your relationship with God. (4) Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice. There is joy when know you are in God's presence. At this church people love fellowship dinners and concerts. They are aids to worship. Rejoicing is celebrating. You may have many problems you are dealing with but when you celebrate Jesus blessing in your life they are laid aside. You stop focusing on the problem. *Peace and joy comes when we focus on the Lord.*

II. Live your life as if you know Jesus is always present. (5) Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. The word moderation usually is translated as self-control. I've learned that moderation for me is only possible if it my actions are Spirit controlled. When folks look at us **1 Peter 3:13-16** *And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.* That says when men look at us they need to see a hope which they want for themselves. This gives us the opportunity to witness for Christ. The good conscience comes from repenting after we have sinned. We can be happy we are counted worthy to suffer for Christ.

III. We must approach our problems through prayer. (6) Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

1. We must understand the danger of worry. Be careful for nothing It's a little unrealistic to think we are not going to worry. It's our nature to try to solve our problems ourselves. **Life Recovery Bible** *Some of us have never accepted the hurtful circumstances of our life. We may be living in denial to avoid the pain. We continue to struggle against the painful realities, to rebel against who we are or what has happened to us. Others have accepted the bad, even to the point of feeling that it is normal and comfortable.* Worry is a mind that is stuck on focusing on the problem. Grief is especially tough when the person left behind can't accept the part of their life shared with their loved ones is over. Often they think "if only" thoughts. People who are codependents with addicts think what am I going to try next. It is impossible to have peace and serenity if your focus is not on Christ and His provision for you to overcome your trial. The greatest application of the power of prayer I have experienced comes from my time in the hospital. *When I woke up I was in a lot of pain and it took days to realize what had happened. In addition to the pain I was struggling to breath. My focus was on getting home. I was having trouble sleeping because I kept trying to figure out how to get home. The pain medicine along with lack of sleep was causing hallucinations..... December 18, 2015 was day 2 of my consciousness in intensive care. I was experiencing multiple bouts of being unable to breathe, could not talk, read or write and was in considerable pain. Thoughts of God were not part of my mind.* It's clear fear and worry dominated my thoughts.

2. We are to surrender everything to God through prayer. in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. Prayer and supplication is a surrender of the problem to God. Again from my journal; *"I remember being scared continually that I would never get home. One night I cried myself to sleep as in my spirit I was crying out to God I need you. I don't know what is happening; I don't know what day it is, or even whether it is day or night. That night God allowed me to rest peacefully that night God allowed me to rest peacefully. I don't remember exactly what day this occurred but the nurses stopped tying me to the bed and I no longer needed an attendant to stay with me. Folks started saying things like you are doing so much better and I began physical therapy. My focus was on Jesus and not on situations I was powerless over. The idea of thanksgiving is important here; first I am thankful that God is interested in my problem, has the power to solve it, and always has my best interest in mind. I can be thankful for the weakness I have because the weakness provides the opportunity for me to experience his grace.*

IV. Peace comes from walking with Jesus. (7, 11-13) And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.....Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. This is an excerpt from my journal written on December 5; *Lord I am learning that my peace only occurs when my focus is on you and not on the things I can't control. I have always struggled with this. Thank you for teaching me what I need to know for me to have the rest for my soul promised by Jesus in **Matthew 11:28-30**. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.* **Life Recovery Bible** Taking on a yoke implies being united to another in order to work together. Those who are yoked together must go in the same direction; by doing so their work is made considerably easier. When we finally decide to submit our life and our will to God's direction, our burdens will become manageable. When we let him do the driving, we will find rest for our soul. Jesus invites all who are burdened and heavy laden to come to Him, take His yoke which leads to Him bearing the bulk of your burdens. The yoke leads to the rest. Dr J.Gordon Henry said to me when I got home from the hospital God has worked a miracle in your life and now you have got to tell everybody. I wasn't quite sure what I was supposed to tell. I told you there were days when I **wondered if** I was ever coming home **not when** but my Christ was faithful even when I was afraid to trust Him. As I reflect on this experience one truth that I learned is God is faithful and his word is true. Peace does come when you take your will out of God's way and allow Him to fill you with His presence. That will always bring peace.