

# THEMES FROM PHILIPPIANS

## *Worry and Anxiety*

*Philippians 4:6-7 – Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

### **1.Go beyond your comfort zone**

No matter how you decide to go beyond your comfort zone, one thing is certain – you will have to face some kind of fear, worry or anxiety.

The more we put ourselves into situations that we feel uncomfortable in, where we are forced to face our fears head on, we grow as individuals and the things we once worried about begin to disappear or decrease in intensity.

You can overcome worry and you can make a positive impact in people's lives when you decide to be courageous and trust in God to carry you through.

***Isaiah 41:10*** – *So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*

***Psalms 16:8*** – *I keep my eyes always on the Lord. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken.*

When we go beyond what we are comfortable with and when we face our fears, worries and anxieties head on, we can be rest assured in the fact that God is there beside us, strengthening us whilst at the same time taking our fears away.

As we continually confront and take control of our worries and anxieties, we are reminded of the fact that we can handle so much more than we previously believed. We experience great growth and positive physical, mental, emotional and spiritual development as individuals.

## **2.Look to the interests of others**

***Philippians 2:3-4*** – *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, <sup>4</sup> not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.*

*1 Corinthians 10:24 – No one should seek their own good, but the good of others.*

The Bible is full of verses and examples in which people look beyond their own wants and needs to the interests of others. The fact that this is a common theme not only throughout the Bible, but in the very life of Jesus, shows us that this value and approach to life is vitally important.

When we allow ourselves to become so entrapped and consumed by our own thoughts, circumstances and emotions, we cannot effectively combat fear, worry and anxiety. Keeping our eyes on God and maintaining a healthy perspective is so vitally important.

Paul is someone who continually displayed a selfless attitude, neglecting his own interests for the betterment of others.

Paul recognised the benefit his imprisonment had in advancing the gospel; he had the ability to focus on the good despite his difficult situations. The fact that other people were filled with confidence because of Paul's influence seemed to fill him with joy. His eyes were so focused on

the advancement of the gospel, whether through his own efforts, or through others who had been touched by his journey.

***Philippians 2:25-30*** – *But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, co-worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs. <sup>26</sup> For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. <sup>27</sup> Indeed he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. <sup>28</sup> Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety. <sup>29</sup> So then, welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor people like him, <sup>30</sup> because he almost died for the work of Christ. He risked his life to make up for the help you yourselves could not give me.*

Paul was sitting in a Roman prison awaiting death. Yet here he was so concerned about Epaphroditus that he put effort into writing this testimonial to silence any possible criticism to make things easier for Epaphroditus when he was unexpectedly compelled to go home. Paul truly embodied the peak of Christian curtesy.

Paul was never so consumed by his own troubles and worries that he had no time to think of the struggles faced by others. He did not allow his own personal needs and concerns to distract him from encouraging and lifting up other people.

When we focus on the interests of others, not only do our worries have a greater opportunity to decrease, we become far more effective in our ministry to others and the plan God has for us.

## **Conclusion**

*1 Peter 5:7 – Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.*

*John 14:27 – Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*

*Philippians 4:7 – And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

The peace of God is something that no man can produce; it can only be given by God. As we let go of our worries and anxieties, and as we

submit our concerns to God through prayer with thanksgiving, His peace will come to us and protect us. For no fear can truly overwhelm those who place their trust in God and keep their eyes focused on Him.

***Luke 12:25*** – *Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life?*