

# **ST. ANDREW'S, BLACKROCK & BRAY - 15TH NOVEMBER 2020**

## **DON'T WORRY (PHILIPPIANS 4:2-9)**

### **Welcome and Announcements**

*"Welcome to our 'Church at Home' service transcript for Sunday 15th of November. Today we are continuing our sermon series on the New Testament letter to the Philippians looking at the important topic of what to do with our worries." - Rev. Andrew Gill*

### **Call to Worship - Psalm 28:6-9 (NRSV)**

Blessed be the Lord,

for he has heard the sound of my pleadings.

The Lord is my strength and my shield;

in him my heart trusts;

so I am helped, and my heart exults,

and with my song I give thanks to him.

The Lord is the strength of his people;

he is the saving refuge of his anointed.

O save your people, and bless your heritage;

be their shepherd, and carry them for ever.

## **Opening Prayer**

Almighty God,  
you sent your Son Jesus Christ  
to be the light of the world.  
Free us from all that darkens and ensnares us,  
and bring us to eternal light and joy;  
through the power of him  
who is alive and reigns  
with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever. Amen.

## **Reading - Philippians 4:2-9 (NIV)**

*I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women since they have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.*

*Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

*Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.*

### **Sermon - 'Don't worry'**

Today we are looking at the important topic of worry. We all worry at times, but especially at the moment there is so much that can leave us feeling anxious. Over the last few weeks we have been looking at Paul's letter to the Philippians which is about how we can progress in our faith. One of the things that can prevent us moving forward is our fears, so he writes about what we can do when we are worried. He says to *pray, to trust, and to focus on what is positive*. I believe that through these verses we can have peace.

Let's Begin by looking at verse six, *“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”* Don't worry. This is one of the most repeated commands in the Bible. God is always telling his people not to be afraid and not to worry. In these verses Paul gives us a better alternative, which is to talk to God about our worries. Not that we simply worry at God, but that we ask him for specific things that will help.

Ask for things like wisdom, provision, and protection. Then bring it with thanksgiving, thank God for his promises to be with you, and to keep you safe. Thank him for his good plans for your future, and for his love for you and your family. Worry is an alarm telling you that you that it is time to pray.

Worry by itself achieves nothing, but prayer changes things. I once read somewhere that the average person spends about 100 minutes every day worrying, but only a maximum of 10 minutes praying. I wonder how life would be different if that was the other way around.

Paul says pray and don't worry, and then he encourages us to trust in God. *"And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (v.7)"* There is a promise in these verses. It's not a promise that we will never face problems, but that God will always guard our hearts and minds with peace. The storms of life will come, but he will keep us safe in them.

Imagine if you were to hire a bodyguard to protect you. They couldn't guarantee that you would never be threatened or attacked. But they will guarantee, that no matter what happens, they will do everything they can to keep you safe. Our faith does not imagine a future without troubles, but one in which we have everything we need to meet those problems, and to overcome them.

God's peace is beyond our understanding. I know that there have been times in my life when I should have been falling apart, when everything around me was crumbling. But on the inside, because of my prayers and my faith, I have had a real sense of peace. Nothing can shatter God's peace, or take away the joy we have in Christ; neither problems, troubles, recessions, pandemics, nor even death.

When we have problems we can pray, we can trust, and we focus on what is good. Look at what Paul says in verses 8-9, *“Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me – put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.”*

So often in life we focus on the negative things. We look in the mirror and see that one flaw in our selves, or we have a conversation and hold on to the one criticism and ignore all the compliments. Life is always a mixture of good and bad and we can choose to focus on the bad or we can choose to focus on the good. And with God in our lives there is always more to rejoice than complain about. We know that Christ is true, honourable, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and worthy of our praise. When we are tempted to worry, let us not fix our thoughts on the problem, but on one who has overcome all things and who gives us peace.

Nothing is too big for God's power, and nothing is too small for his care. He loves you, and he is inviting you to pray to him about your worries today. So bring him your anxieties and your concerns, trust in his promises, and look to his Son.

## **Prayer**

God of peace,  
We thank you for your love  
that provides for all our need  
and keeps us safe in times of trouble.  
I bring before you all my  
worries and anxieties...

Holy Spirit, help me to pray,  
to trust in the promises,  
and to think about what is praiseworthy.  
Thank you that you are near.  
Fill me with the peace that transcends all understanding,  
and guard my heart and mind in Christ Jesus. Amen.