

GOD'S PLAN & YOU (Pt 5 of 9): "PRAY & PONDER"

THESIS: Pray & Ponder

TEXT: Philippians 4:2-13

OPEN: (*A farmer's prayer and peace amidst a "hurricane" chain reaction of troubles*)

Farmer's Prayer & Peace Amidst "Hurricane" Chain Reaction Of Troubles

A man's barn blew away when a hurricane came and he lost six cows in a poker game...Then an earthquake came along and swallowed the ground his house was on...Tax-collector, he came around and charged him up for a hole in the ground...street tax-collector came by and said he wanted his back street tax...The man got up on a hill where he had standing room left yet and said, "Lord, I reckon its time to get, but I ain't had the measles yet!"

In **Philippians 4:2-13** let's discover God's plan for how you may be peaceful and pleased despite troubles.

Philippians 4:2-3 "I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to agree with each other in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you, loyal yokefellow, help these women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life."

1. PRAY GOD FOR PEACE.

A. **Philippians 4:5-7** "Let your gentleness be evident to all. *The Lord is near.* Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, 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."

1. **Petition** (Greek: *deesis*) signifies a request arising from a specific need or want.

a. **Deuteronomy 4:8** "What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the Lord our *God is near us whenever we pray to Him?*"

2. **Application:** A.C.T.S – a prayer model & praying the Scriptures:

a. **Adoration** (Speaking well of who God is and what He does)

1. **Deuteronomy 32:3b-4** "Oh, praise the greatness of our God! He is the Rock, His works are perfect, and all His ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is He."

b. **Confession** (Admitting our wrongdoing to God and agreeing with the truth of His Word)

1. **Psalms 32:5** "I acknowledged my sin to You and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord'—and You forgave the guilt of my sin."

c. **Thanksgiving** (Appreciation for what the Lord has done and is doing)

1. **Psalms 107:1, 8-9** "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His love endures forever...Let them give thanks to the Lord for His unfailing love and His wonderful deeds for men, for He satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things."

d. **Supplication** (Specific requests for self and others)

1. **Colossians 1:9-10** "Praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of His will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God..."

2. PONDER GOD FOR PEACE.

A. **Philippians 4:8** "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."

1. **Think** (Greek: *logizomai*) means to consider, count, or reason.

a. **Proverbs 23:7a (KJV)** "For as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."

1. **Insight from The Catalyst Team:** “An often overlooked choice we have to make is where to take our thoughts. We have the opportunity to direct them towards life or anything less than life, and our decisions actually shape the landscape of our minds” (*catalystleader.com* 04/23/18)
 - b. **Matthew 6:22-23; 12:35** “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness...The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him.”
 - c. **Colossians 3:1-2** “Set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things...”
 1. **Illustration:** Submarines are equipped with a periscope to seek things which are above. It travels in the water, but the well-being of those in it depends on a knowledge of what's above. We live down here in this world, but we must set our minds on the things of God above to live up to our heavenly calling.
3. **PRACTICE GOD FOR PEACE.**
- A. **Philippians 4:9** “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.” (1 Corinthians 11:1 “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.”)
 1. **Practice** (Greek: *prasso*) means to act, to do, committing to something.
 - a. **John 8:29** “The One who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do what pleases Him.”
 - b. **James 1:22-25** “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.”
 1. **Insight from John Maxwell:** “The smallest obedient act is better than the greatest intention. You seldom change until you change something you do daily. The secret of your success is in your daily routine.”
4. **PRAISE GOD FOR PEACE.**
- A. **Philippians 4:4, 10-11** “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!...I rejoice greatly in the Lord that at last you have renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you have been concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances.”
 1. **Rejoice** (Greek: *chairō*) means delight, joyful exuberance, or to be glad.
 - a. **Habakkuk 3:17-19a** “Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior. The Sovereign Lord is my strength...”
 1. We’re to take delight in God—who He is, in what He does, and the blessings associated with belonging to Him. He’s our strength and the Great Redeemer.
 - a. **Romans 8:28** “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.”
 2. Is rejoicing in the Lord to be taken as a suggestion and only when we feel like it?
 - a. The verb “rejoice” in Greek (*Php* 4:4) is in present tense, active voice, & imperative mood.
 1. The *present tense* means that our rejoicing in the Lord Himself is to be an on-going, continuous habit.
 2. The *active voice* means that rejoicing in the Lord is something every believer is to do, not depending on someone else to do it for him or herself.

3. The *imperative mood* means that our rejoicing in the Lord is not to be taken as a suggestion, a “take it or leave it” proposition, but a commandment or determination.

CONCLUSION: How may we have the strength to rejoice in the Lord always?

Philippians 4:12-13 “I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through Him *who gives me strength.*”

Illustration: (*dailycaller.com* “Jeb Bush Reveals What His Mom Told Him Before She Passed Away”)

Jeb Bush Reveals What His Mom Told Him Before She Passed Away

(By Benny Johnson, *dailycaller.com* 04/22/18)

Former first lady Barbara Bush died last week at the age of 92. Some of the most powerful families in the country showed up to honor her legacy and hear tributes. One of the eulogies was from her son Jeb Bush. He recalled one of the last things his mother told him. Jeb said, “The last time I was with her I asked her about dying—was she ready to go? Was she sad? Without missing a beat, she told me: “I believe in Jesus. He is my Savior. I don’t want to leave your dad, but I know I will be in a beautiful place.”

2 Timothy 4:7-8 “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for His appearing.”

CLOSE: Pray, ponder, practice, praise the Lord for peace and be pleased—it’s God’s plan for you.