

- There are many things to paralyse us with worry
- 1. The Context of the Command**
- Don't unconsciously write off this command as a simple platitude
  - This is pastoral concern in a pressing situation
    - Pressure from Roman world – Caesar as Lord
    - Pressure of making ends meet – 2 Cor 8:1-2
    - Pressure of false teachers – Phil 3:1-3
    - Pressure of church problems – 4:2-3
  - Paul has concerns – imprisoned, the churches, the lost
  - Sometimes we look for loopholes in God's promises
  - Sometimes we assume that they don't work in the real world
- 2. The Content of the Command**
- a) The Negative Part**
- *“Do not be anxious about anything”*
  - Paul is NOT saying that we aren't to have concerns
  - Concern is natural – anxiety is concern controlling us
  - The scope – *“anything”*
- b) The Positive Part**
- Paul uses 3 words for prayer – *“prayer... petitions... requests”*
  - We are to do something with our worries – pray
  - The scope – *“in everything”*
  - Nothing is too small – you have a Heavenly Father who cares about the things that trouble you
  - *“Your heavenly Father knows”* – Matt 6:32
- c) The Essential Part**
- *“with thanksgiving”*
  - This re-orientes our focus: from the need God must meet, to the God who has met needs
  - This helps with bitterness and reminds us of his goodness
  - We are not good interpreters of the present. Thanksgiving helps us to trust until we have enough hindsight or insight.
- 3. The Consequence of the Command**
- *“And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”* – v7
  - Problems don't instantly disappear – God does the harder thing: He enables us to live in the problem with peace

- *“peace of God”* =the peace God himself possesses
  - *“transcends understanding”* - A peace that doesn't make sense humanly speaking.
  - Our lives should only make sense when people factor in the supernatural
  - Transcends the whys, and the fears with something much bigger – Himself
  - *“will guard your heart”* – God stations himself outside your heart to ensure your peace
- 4. The Cost of the Command**
- *“and he began to be sorrowful and troubled”* – Matt 26:37
  - Our peace was purchased at a great cost
  - He left peace, suffered Hell, to bring us to peace.
  - He died to free us from sin and also from the control of worry
  - Jesus has won for us the care of his heavenly Father
  - The cost to us is trust - will we trust him with our worries?