

# WHERE DOES GOD WANT US TO BE ?

## PHILIPPIANS 4:4-13

*The following are resource questions that you can use with your Care Group for discussion. They are based on the sermon preached on Sunday, November 7 2010, by Rev Richard Hugoniot at the Grace Baptist Church, Singapore. The sermon is available online at <http://www.gracebap.org.sg/worship/series.html>.*

**NOVEMBER 7, 2010**

### INTRODUCTION

#### Peace in the Midst of Today's Turbulent World

Death was walking towards a man who stopped him and asked, "What are you going to do?"

"I'm going to kill ten thousand people", said Death.

The man replied, "That's horrible!"

Death said, "That's the way it is; that is what I do."

As the day passed, the man warned everyone he met of Death's plan. At the end of that day, he met Death again and he said, "You said you were going to kill ten thousand people, and yet one hundred thousand people died!"

Death explained, "I only killed ten thousand. Worry and fear killed the others!"

Worry is one of the biggest problems we face in life, and it tends to get worse as we get older. Its destruction is sure. "*Worry affects the circulation, the heart, the glands, the whole nervous system, and profoundly affects the health.*" (Charles W. Mayo). Corrie Ten Boom knew the destructive force of worry when she said, "*Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow; it empties today of its strength.*"

Do you ever engage in imaginary "what if" thinking? Do you ever blow things up in your mind by jumping to a conclusion or making a mountain out of a molehill? Have you ever looked at a dilemma and imagined the worse-case scenario? If you engage in any of these draining, negative mind games, then you need to know God's plan for you is peace and joy, not worry. God's plan for you is rest, not stress, peace not turmoil.

Paul's fellow workers (and by implication all the Philippians) are named in the 'book of life'. That is, they are known to God, and belong to Him, enrolled in His membership list. Salvation is assured, not because the Philippians, or Paul, have worked hard in the cause of the gospel, but because God has marked them as His own.

Therefore, rejoice (v.4)! Paul's double call to joy is not a bland 'keep on smiling'; it is a reminder that in the Lord, in that deep-seated relationship with Christ which is the bedrock of Christian living, there is a certainty of love and hope that will not allow despair or disillusionment.

#### Wherever God places us in...what are our attitudes and our actions?

1. Rejoicing – no matter what comes in this life, ultimately reality is the eternal life found in Jesus Christ, whose presence is close at hand...
  - Emotion is natural in human beings; one is happy or sad depends very much on one's circumstances. How can we encourage ourselves and one another when we are in terrible and difficult situations? Share some real-life examples...
2. Outflow of gentleness – the world we live in can be very unforgiving and impatient...we tend to view and accept people and things from the point of "merit"...
  - When others do not meet the expectations expected of them, or they have failed us, how can we demonstrate gentleness that is needed at that point while not forgetting the important role of helping the person change and improve? Share your experiences from both the "Receiving" and the "Giving" end of the equation...

3. Anxiety-Free – let God know what troubles you and what your needs are. Those who trust God need not fear or worry. We ought to see prayer as handing our own concerns over to God, to do as He will, in the certain faith that whatever God does with them will ultimately be the best...
  - God is to be approached as a loving Father, eager to hear what we want but always tempering His reply with what He knows to be the best. Do we really believe that in our life? Do others see that in our life, including our family and friends? Share what are the obstacles as well as the solutions...
  
4. Mind of Christ – those with the mind of Christ will be focusing on the best and most desirable things (whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is righteous). In short, things of “excellence” and “worthy of praise” ...
  - Do we let the mind of Christ govern our life and works? How does it look like at home?... at work?... in school?...
  
5. Contentment – *“I can do all things through Him who strengthens me,”* (Phil 4:13) Paul does not say that he can leap tall buildings in a single mighty leap, or even produce miracles to order. Paul learnt to cope with need and with plenty because he had come to know and trust and depend on Christ alone...
  - Trust only exists when it is put to use. Is there a truth that we should ask God to help us to trust Him in small things so that in great difficulties, we may still keep sight of Him? ...so, when was the last time you exercised your faith / trust / hope in God? Be honest...

**APPLICATION:**

1. Trust God with your greatest worry.
2. Start finding contentment, not in material things, but in Christ.
3. Share with a friend (outside of church) what God has taught you concerning joy.

**PRAYER:**

*Lord Jesus, the struggles of life constantly rob me of peace. Too often, I fret and fidget with worry. I feel the stress and strain of anxiety. I ask for grace to live at peace. Remind me to pray in faith and not to worry in unbelief. Amen.*