

The Guard

“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.” (Phil 4:6-7, NIV)

The Greek word translated as “will guard” in this passage is “phroueo.” It is a military term. W. E. Vine in his word studies defines it as “to keep under guard, as with a garrison.” It is the same word used in 2 Cor. 11:32 to describe the careful watch made by soldiers in Damascus when Aretas was seeking for Saul.

Notice how logically and beautifully this passage unfolds.

- First, the recognition of God’s presence is followed by the appropriate admonition not to worry. Why should we worry as long as God is near?
- Next, we are encouraged to take everything to God in prayer. Nothing is too insignificant, or too great for God. Two different Greek words are used to describe our prayers. First, “prosucho” is translated as “prayer.” Then “deesis” is translated as “petition.” Thayer distinguishes the two by saying that the first deals with devotional thought while the second involves personal need. The first we say in chapel, and the second by the bedside of a dying friend.
(Note that our “prayers” and “petitions” are to always be accompanied by thanksgiving.)
- Finally, the peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

This simple recipe will work. First, don’t worry. Second, always pray with thanksgiving. Finally the peace of God will guard our hearts and mind in Christ Jesus.

The Philippian letter is evidence that Paul practiced what he preached. It was one of four letters by Paul written from prison. The others are Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon. The Philippian letter, however, is not a letter about suffering, it is a letter about rejoicing. The Greek noun for “joy” is “Xara.” It is found five times in Philippians: (1:4; 25; 2:2, 29; 4:1) The Greek verb for “joy” is “Xarein,” and it is found 11 times in the letter (1:18, 18; 2:17, 17, 18, 18, 28; 3:1; 4:4, 4, 10.)

The late J. Paul Getty was a billionaire, but lived in constant fear. His fears were intensified after his grandson, J. Paul Getty III, was kidnapped and held for ransom. To prove their cruelty the kidnappers cut off the young man’s ear and mailed it to his grandfather. The older Getty then had his bedroom door removed and fitted with a steel plate. When he layed down to sleep there was an armed man standing guard outside the door with an Alsatian attack dog.

Paul had a far better protection system than J. Paul Getty. The Lord Himself stood by Paul because he always offered his prayers and petitions with thanksgiving. Because Paul remembered to be thankful, God protected him both mentally and emotionally. He will guarded his heart and his mind in Christ Jesus.

Note how boldly Paul encourages us to follow his example: **“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.” (Phil. 4:9 NIV)**

May we also follow his godly example and put into practice what we learn, receive, hear, and see in his life. Especially, let us always offer our prayers and petitions with thanksgiving.