

Tim's version of TRAIN for Day 32

Text

4Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 6Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. 8Finally, brothers, 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. 9Whatever 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. 10 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. 11I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. 12I 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. 13I can do everything through him who gives me strength.

Reality

We are to rejoice no matter what. How do we do that? How do we rejoice when 5 people are murdered in the local shopping center? How do we rejoice when someone we love is diagnosed with a terminal illness? Bad marriage? Financial set back? WHY would we rejoice, let alone how.

Because we can – in prayer and petition- present our requests to God and experience the peace that passes all understanding.

I've experienced that Peace, Lord. I capitalized the word, because it's a "Peace" that is from you. I think I experience that Peace daily. But only when I allow you to give it to me. As I come, in thanksgiving for the many things that are right and are good – and present the few things that aren't, to you. That's when I have Peace. I've seen so many people in so many horrible situations. I have letters on my desk from those who have suffered greatly and are thankful and have Peace. It's amazing to me how easily you give it and how little I rely on it.

Paul goes on to exhort us to think about the good stuff and then the "God of Peace" will be with us. I think we usually separate this passage out too much. "Think on these things" is usually something we talk about by its self. But I think it's related to Peace. It's related to Thanksgiving which is the precursor to Peace. Whatever is true and lovely, etc, leads our hearts back to You which gives us Peace.

When we have Peace – we can have contentment. Contentment is something we have to

learn, it's not natural, but we can learn it when we have Peace

Application –

How? Through Christ who gives us the ability to be thankful, peaceful, dwell on the good, or be content.

It's about relying on His Peace and His Power.

Interaction with God

Lord, there are needs within my extended and immediate family for Peace. Hey, I need it. We all do. I pray for those who are wrestling with things that can only through your Peace be peaceful in any way. Some of them are in the hardest situation in their life. I pray that you will give them strength to be able to have the Peace that passes understanding. Give it to Rachel in England, to my girls here, to my wife and our entire house – bathe it in your Peace. Thank you for ability to dwell on the good. I am so thankful for all the good. I'm so thankful for my amazing family, for my marriage, for this church. I am so blessed beyond measure. Thank you for Peace.

Next Step

I need to demonstrate the ability to “think on that which is noble and good.” I'm a pretty positive person, but it's so much easier to dwell on the negative. Which brings nothing close to peace.

I'm going to rejoice.

Oh yeah, gentleness is in this passage also...