

Accepting the Things You Cannot Change (Phil. 4:6-9)

Feb. 7th 2016

Summary: Although it may be hard to admit, just know there are many things that we cannot change. No matter how hard you try some people resist change; some organizations refuse to admit problems and some leaders refuse to listen to advice. Instead, of consistently beating one's proverbial head up against a wall, Christians have a better option.

Paul wrote, (Phil. 4:6,7) *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, 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.* The following are few guiding principles for seizing that powerful promise.

1. Remember your primary responsibility is to obey God's will.

EAGLES are known for soaring. They glide in the air. The amazing thing about eagles is that they don't work that hard to hang in the air like they do. Eagles depend on wind gust and updrafts.

When an eagle catches the wind, he can soar for a long time, just pausing ever now and then to flap his wings a bit. An eagle doesn't fly, furiously beating the air with his wings. If it did, many of them would probably get weary and fall from the air... because... their wings are too heavy to do that for any length of time. They rest on the power of the wind.

Many people are tired of furiously fighting their way through life, trying to do the best they can. God would have us to catch the wind. He wants us to link into HIS WILL so that we don't have to struggle unnecessarily where HE's provided a way. His commandments are not burdensome.

Jeremiah wrote, *"For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."* (Jer. 29:11) Ask the Lord for the wisdom. Seek the Lord's continued grace and calm to learn and accept and obey His primary will for your life. Do not try to run ahead of the Lord's plans for your life. BE like the eagles!

2. Remember Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus accomplished 100% of the will of God even though He did not heal everyone. Jesus did not even spend time trying to change the political climate of Roman oppressors. Instead, Jesus said, *"The kingdom of God is like a mustard seed which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds of the air can perch in its shade."* (Mark 4:31,32) Look at life through the eyes of Jesus and see what can become through your efforts.

3. Remember the promises of God. Paul writes, *"For no matter how many promises of God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ."* (2 Cor. 1:20,21) Take an inventory of all the precious promises you have in Christ and confidently know that He will fulfill everyone.

4. Remember the priorities of God.

A FAIRLY wealthy man one day was driving his BMW and had an accident—a very bad accident. The car was totaled. A policeman came on the scene and got the man out of the car.

As the man came to, he said, "My BMW, oh my BMW!"

The policeman said, "Sir, I'm sorry but you don't have time to worry about your BMW. It's just a car. We've got to rush you to the hospital because your arm has been severed at the elbow."

The wealthy man said, "Oh, my Rolex, Oh my Rolex!" He had mixed-up priorities!

There are many good things we can do, **but ask the Lord for wisdom in being able to contribute to His priority ministries.**

There are many activities that are not essential. However, Remember the **priorities** of God...

God's priorities include worship, evangelism, disciple-making and planting and growing churches. When you are seeking first His interests, other problems seem to take care of themselves. The Lord is eager to fight your battles for you.

Remember God's training program for your life. The Lord allows many things to come into your life for purposes that are greater than our minds can comprehend.

Remember the words of Isaiah: **"His ways are higher than our ways and His thoughts higher than our thoughts."** (Isa. 55:8,9)

Remain open, teachable and flexible to allow the Lord to mold your character into the image of Christ.

He is the potter and we are the clay. The clay has no right to say to the Potter, **"Why did you make me like this?"**

5. Remember Godly men and women who have endured much worse.

The writer of Hebrews 11: 36-40 recalls, **"Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword.**

They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated- the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.

These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect."

Not all heroes of the faith experienced immediate fulfillment. Some fell victims to their circumstances in the will of God. Yet, all of them were blessed of God.

6. Remember God's grace is sufficient for any problem. Paul writes, **"Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take the thorn in the flesh away from me. But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.'**

Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me." (2 Cor. 12:9,10)

Grace is a force... it is like a tailwind that pushes us toward the will of God...

A **FOCUS** on **grace** can change one's perspective. **For a little bit of joy in our life, wake up in the morning, and rather than complaining about what you don't have, start with the grace of God, start with what HE's already done that you don't deserve in the first place.**

As the song says:

Count your blessings, Name them one by one, Count your blessings, See what God has done

Count your blessings, Name them one by one, And it will surprise you What the Lord has done.

When we let the grace of God be our competence & capability, we will enjoy sweet rest of mind, body, and emotions!