

Prayerful Joy

Scripture Reading — Philippians 4:6-7

*In everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.
Philippians 4:6 —*

The great hymn “Amazing Grace” summarizes biblical faith well: “Grace hath brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.” If grace reveals that joy is a gift, then prayer is the Lord’s gracious means through which he daily sustains that joy.

We sometimes believe we are independent, self-sufficient people. Our tired minds, aching backs, and callous hands that produced a successful career and a comfortable home seem to affirm that myth. But what if corporate restructuring takes away the paycheck, or terminal illness robs our strength and vitality? Anxiety, worry, and fear set in, taking the place of our pride.

Life comes from the Lord, and so does daily help. We come to the Lord through prayer, and the fruit of prayer is peace. Yet prayer is not a mantra, and we can’t use it to try to manipulate God. Prayer is a divine gift to strengthen the bonds of love between us and God. The act of prayer itself affirms our dependence on him for peace and joy.

Peace is knowing that death is overcome by resurrection, falsehood by truth, confusion by wisdom, hatred by love. This is the joyful fruit of believers who seek the Lord! Then, when all else has failed, we can still say, “I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior” (Habakkuk 3:18).

Prayer

Dear Lord, I rejoice in you. “I will be joyful in God my Savior.” Thank you for this gift of prayer, for listening to my heart, for speaking to me of your grace. In Jesus, Amen.

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