

Be Anxious for ...Nothing!

By Kimberly Sowell

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.
(Philippians 4:6-7 NKJV)

Nervous...anxious...hesitant...do these words describe your mind's reaction to the possibility of a witnessing encounter? Open your heart and let God change your mind. Paul wrote, *Be anxious for nothing, BUT....* What follows is the directive of what to do INSTEAD OF being anxious:

Tell God about your concerns. As soon as you feel the anxiousness well up in your stomach and begin to climb up your chest, start talking to God. What makes you nervous about witnessing? What would you request of God in order to relieve any stress from sharing Christ with this person? Would you feel more at ease to be reminded that the Lord is always with you (Matt. 28:20)? Ask Him to heighten your awareness of Him. Do you need to request wisdom and fruitful conversation (Luke 12:11b-12)? Request that the Lord grant you spiritual ears to hear the whispers of the Holy Spirit. And make your requests with thanksgiving; when has God ever let you down? Praise His name, for He alone is faithful!

And now what can you expect? The precious, powerful, inspiring, settling peace of God will replace that nagging anxiousness. Jesus is the agent of our peace. God's peace will:

- **Guard your heart.** When the time arises to obey God in witnessing to others, we need a guard on our heart. Our heart is deceitfully wicked (Jer. 17:9), and will try to convince us to act upon our emotions. The wicked heart says to protect your pride; the guarded heart says to let go of pride and love the lost more than yourself. The wicked heart says that your feelings of fear are a sign that witnessing is not for you; the guarded heart says that your feelings of fear are a sign that it's time to pray for the Lord's help. The wicked hearts says to love people enough to respect their privacy; the guarded heart says to love people enough to respect their soul's need for salvation. The wicked heart seeks political correctness; the guarded heart seeks spiritual obedience. Praise God for doing a work so great that it's beyond our understanding; God's peace can turn a selfish heart into a giving heart, the heart of Christ, centered on honoring God through serving others.
- **Guard your mind.** Our thoughts are too small to measure in relation to the thoughts of God. What our minds perceive to be right is always subject to the authority of Christ. When we stand to speak the mighty name of Jesus, we will need God's peace to prevail against a racing mind filled with self-doubt, or rote mechanical canned messages, or any other thought that sets itself up as the enemy to our clear communication of God's love.

God's peace does not mean the absence of problems or difficulties in our circumstances, but it does mean the absence of anxiety in our hearts and minds. Feeling anxious? Bow your head and invite the peace of God to do a work beyond your understanding.