



[Philippians 4:6-9](#)

(6) Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; (7) and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (8) Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. (9) The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

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We need to pay careful attention to this sequence of instructions because it contains much that can help us attain both good spiritual and physical health. In the past fifty years, men have come to understand how deteriorating and destructive stress is to life. Paul's counsel, written nearly two thousand years ago, tells us not to be driven by anxiety or fearfulness about life. Even earlier, in the [Sermon on the Mount](#), Jesus admonishes us to "take no anxious thought." The stress of anxiety is wearying, setting us up for multiple afflictions. If we really "see" [God](#), we should know that He is with us. Should we not feel great assurance in His promise never to allow us to be tempted above what we can bear? [Faith](#) is a prime solution for anxiety.

Paul continues, urging us to let God know our needs in every matter of life. As Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, He already knows our needs, but He wants *us* to recognize, evaluate, and communicate them to Him, accompanied by thoughtful expressions of thanksgiving for what He has already given, as well as His promises of blessings in the future. Do we see what this process achieves? It disciplines us to think within certain well-defined parameters that have Him and His way at the center of our life.

Paul then asserts that one benefit of this is tranquility of mind, respite from the

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restlessness so common to the carnal mind, which is constantly searching for new stimulation to satisfy its insatiable longings. This [peace](#) of God will stand guard over our minds like a sentinel, allowing us to meet and cope with the problems of life.

Verse 8 begins with the word "finally." While not technically wrong, it does not adequately convey Paul's intent. We can understand it better as "in this connection" or "in this regard as I close this letter." In relation to anxiety, the peace of God, and coping with the problems of life, our minds should be occupied with things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous, and praiseworthy. Through this discipline, we program our minds with the right things; what goes into the mind determines what comes out in words, actions, and attitudes.

This is a biblical version of the "garbage in, garbage out; wholesome in, wholesome out" cliché. It specifically expands on Jesus' statement, "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" ([Matthew 12:34](#)). We could take this further and say that out of the abundance of the heart the mind thinks and feels, and the body acts.

In verse 9, Paul defines what is wholesome specifically as what they had learned, received, heard, and seen in him. He is indirectly telling them to eat [Jesus Christ](#) because he, Paul, as His apostle to the Gentiles, was His agent to them and their teacher of His way of life.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:
[Eating: How Good It Is! \(Part Five\)](#)

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