



*And the peace of God,
which surpasses all understanding,
will guard your hearts
and your thoughts
in Christ Jesus.*

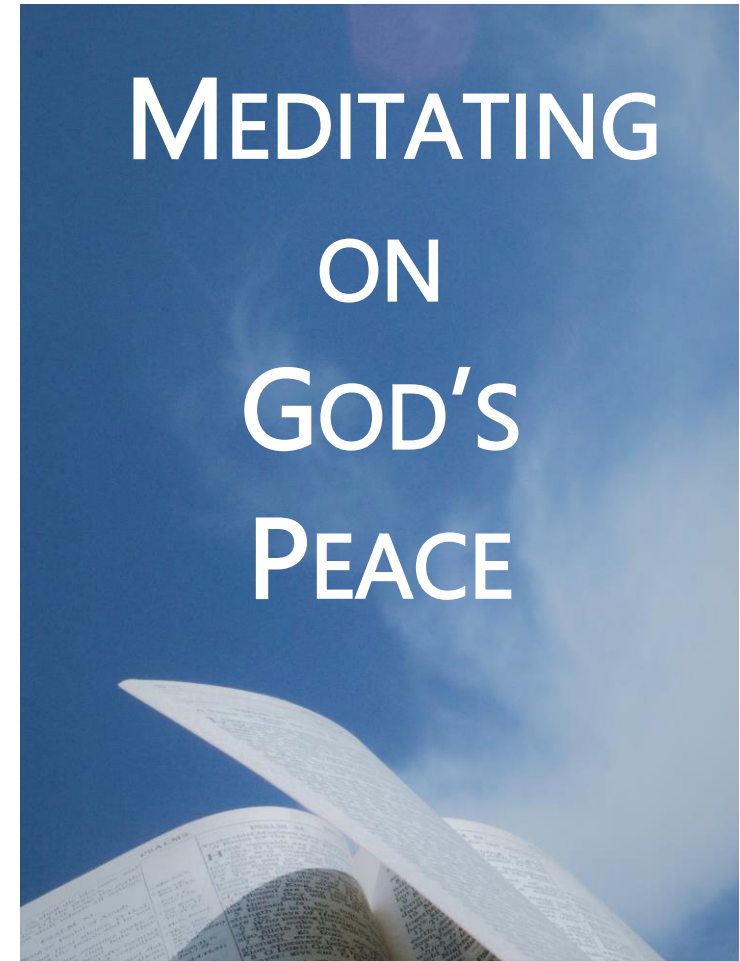
(Ephesians 4:7)



Katherine Hilditch has been teaching in local churches for many years. In 2013 she wrote her first booklet and since then has written many more. She created her website to make all the booklets freely available to everyone. They can be read online or printed out. Katherine's threefold purpose is to help people understand more about Jesus and all He has done and won for them, to encourage them to go deeper in their relationship with God and to provide material to help them share their faith with others. To read her story and find all the booklets go to –

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'Meditating on God's Peace'
by
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but are included to help understanding)

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influence how you live and approach difficulties. Ask God to remind you of His peace when you need it, and choose to focus on Him. Isaiah 26:3 says – ‘*You will keep whoever’s mind is steadfast in perfect peace, because he trusts in you.*’

Being Born-Again

When you acknowledge Jesus as God and decide to follow Him, you make Him your Lord. When you accept His sacrifice on the Cross for yourself personally, you make Him your Saviour. You are then born-again and have a new perfect spirit. God becomes your Father and you His child, and you can start to enjoy your personal love relationship with Him.

Romans 10:9 says – ‘*If you will confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*’ Tell God you are sorry for the wrong things you do, say and think. Choose to believe that Jesus is Lord, that He died for you and is now alive. Accept Him as your Lord and Saviour. Say it with your voice and believe it in your heart.

If you’ve done that sincerely, you are now born-again and Jesus has come to live in you. Everything you’ve ever done wrong or ever will do wrong is forgiven, and after this life is over, you’ll live in peace and joy with your loving Father God for ever.

As a child of God, you now have a whole new family of brothers and sisters. Tell a trusted Christian that you are now born-again so they can help you in your new life in Jesus. And you have the Bible to help you understand and experience more of God’s love for you and all Jesus has done and won for you. It will help you to live your life in the best possible way – His way.

MEDITATING ON GOD’S PEACE

Anxiety, fear and worry all link together. They feed off each other. They are all a form of meditating on negative things which are going to happen or you think might happen. And they all work against peace in your mind and in your heart.

“Do Not Fear”

The Bible says not to fear or worry or be anxious numerous times! God knows it is something that’s so easy to do and He wants you to be free of it. He knows it stops you from doing the things He has planned for you and experiencing the abundant life Jesus came to give you. Jesus said in John 10:10 – “*The thief only comes to steal, kill, and destroy. I came that they may have life and may have it abundantly.*” The thief is the devil and he’s the one who tries to rob you of your peace. He’s the one who wants you to worry and be anxious and fearful, but you don’t have to let him. Jesus is the One who came so that you could have abundant life – a satisfying, fulfilling life full of good things and purposes. It doesn’t mean nothing will ever go wrong, but it does mean that with Jesus you can come through it all. Doesn’t that sound wonderful! You might think it’s impossible not to worry or fear or be anxious, but God never asks anyone to do anything which is impossible, so there must be a way to do it.

Philippians 4:4-7

I’m going to use Philippians 4:4-7 to help you to relax with your Father God, let go of your anxieties and find His peace. First, read the passage right through out loud so you can hear it –

'Rejoice in the Lord always! Again I will say, "Rejoice!"⁵ Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand.⁶ In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition 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 your thoughts in Christ Jesus.'

Meditating on God's Word

Psalm 119:15-16 says – *'I will meditate on your precepts, and consider your ways.¹⁶ I will delight myself in your statutes. I will not forget your word.'* It is good to meditate on God's Word. It helps you to understand more of what the Bible says and its truth will start to settle in your thinking and your emotions so you can draw on it when you face difficulties as well as when things are going well. If you will allow it to, it can start to transform you for the better. Romans 12:2 says – *'Don't be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what is the good, well-pleasing, and perfect will of God.'* You renew your mind by meditating on God's Word and choosing to make it your truth and starting to live by it. That's when it will start to transform you from the inside out.

Start to Meditate

Settle somewhere comfortable and turn your thoughts away from all your problems and onto God who loves you more than you can ever imagine. Jesus gave everything for you – He suffered the punishment for everyone's sins past, present and future, as He died on the Cross. And because of this, you can be born-again and come into a love relationship with God. (To read about being born-again, go to the end of this booklet.)

thoughts and emotions so you can turn them around even in the middle of difficulties and allow God's peace to still fill you and flow through you to others. When anxiety or fear or worry try to start up, God's peace will remind you to say 'No' to them and to hand the problem over to Him. Thank Him that He will take care of you and bring you through. And it is all possible because of all Jesus has done and won for you through His suffering and death.

"Again I will say, "Rejoice!"

Remember how you imagined yourself rejoicing with dancing or singing etc? You may want to get to your feet now and do it for real. Praise and thank God out loud for who He is and what He is and for all He has done and won for you through Jesus. Express it freely with your body as well as with your mind and your heart. God's peace will continue to fill you.

Anxiety or Peace?

Whatever your situation, meditating on this passage can help you because it is God's truth. You can make it a regular thing or something you turn to when it's needed. But try to go to God's Word quickly when you start to feel anxious. As soon as you can, get by yourself with God and allow Him to take your anxieties and give you His peace. Meditating on God's Word and finding His peace can take practice and discipline. Don't beat yourself up if you start feeling anxious or fearful again. Just turn your thoughts onto God and open yourself up to His peace again, rejoicing in who He is and all He has done for you. The more you practise it the easier it will become.

Don't let all you've thought and felt as you have been meditating on God's Word slip away. Make a decision to start to let it

7And the peace of God,

The peace of God is completely different from the world's idea of peace. The world sees peace as the absence of problems, but you can experience God's peace even in the middle of problems. Think about this for a while – wouldn't you love to have that sort of peace – a peace that never went away, a stillness in your mind and in your heart all the time. Choose to start to receive it right now. Let God's peace fill your thinking and your emotions.

... which surpasses all understanding,

It's impossible to understand how you can have peace in the middle of problems, but you can – you can have God's special kind of peace. Any mental thought process or relaxation method that you try cannot give you this kind of peace. It might help you to cope and get through short term, but only God can give you peace no matter what. It really is beyond anything you can understand – it's divine peace. Choose to receive it now and thank God for it as your thinking and emotions settle into peaceful thoughts and feelings.

... will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.

When you have the peace of God, it works for you in every situation you find yourself in by guarding your heart and your mind, if you will let it. Imagine your mind with an armed guard standing at its doorway. In life there will be issues and problems you have to face and deal with, but he is going to warn you about anything which tries to rob you of your peace while you are in those situations. Imagine the same with your heart and your emotions. This is what the peace of God does for you. It guards your heart and mind from accepting anything which would try to rob you of that peace. It will warn you of any negative

As you sit quietly, know that, as a born-again Christian, you are in relationship with your loving Father God – you are His beloved child and all His thoughts towards you are positive and loving. Jeremiah 29:11 says – “*I know the thoughts that I think towards you,*” says the LORD, “*thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you hope and a future.*” That's your perfect Father speaking beautiful, uplifting, affirming words personally to you.

We're going to take Philippians 4:4-7 a bit at a time now. Don't rush, but relax in God's presence and allow His peace to take the place of your worries and anxieties and fears.

4Rejoice in the Lord always! Again I will say, “Rejoice!”

Rejoicing is a wonderful thing to do. It is all to do with expressing the joy you feel. Maybe you aren't feeling joyful; maybe life has dealt you a hard time, but there is always someone you can rejoice in and that's God. God is for you – He's on your side. He didn't send the bad things. He grieves over the stuff that is hurting you even more than you do. He sent Jesus to give you a way through life including the hard parts. He has done and won so much for you through Jesus's death and resurrection. You can rejoice in all of that no matter what is going on in your life.

Rejoicing is the outward expression of joy. Think about how you can rejoice – dancing ... singing ... laughing ... running ... standing with your arms raised to heaven ...

See yourself rejoicing in your imagination.

Spend some time thinking of what God is like – loving ... kind ... generous ... forgiving ... comforting ... compassionate ... Start rejoicing in all He is.

Again, spend some time thinking of all God has done and won for you through Jesus – dying in your place ... taking your punishment ... delivering you from death and hell ... redeeming your life ... winning the victory for you ... winning your healing ...

Start rejoicing in it all.

Just for a moment, think about how rejoicing makes you feel – happy ... free ... excited ... peaceful ... experiencing God's abundant life ...

Keep rejoicing. Focus on God's goodness and the victory He has won for you through Jesus.

⁵Let your gentleness be known to all men.

Gentleness is a word you don't hear much these days. People are all for standing up for their rights and looking after 'me'. When you're caught up in what's happening and who's to blame and what should have happened and what you want to happen, there is no peace – just frustration and anger and anxiety. That's not a nice place to be. But if you cultivate a gentle attitude it will help not only you, but the situation you're dealing with too.

It's not about making yourself a doormat, but it is about being gentle with others and with yourself. It's not about stopping justice from taking its course, but it is about forgiving the hurt that people have caused you personally. It's not about having to have your say, but it is about speaking words which are quiet and peaceful, not loud or strident or demanding. Proverbs 15:1 says – '*A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*' As you sit quietly think gentle thoughts about the people in your life who are difficult.

The Lord is at hand.

God is with you – He's beside you, He's within you, He has promised He will never leave you. Jesus says in Matthew 28:20 – "*I am with you always.*" Choose to believe it's true. Thank Him that He is with you and always will be. See Him sitting next to you, maybe holding your hand, maybe with His arm around you, maybe your head is against His shoulder. Give it time – let the wonder and the truth of His presence soak into you.

⁶In nothing be anxious,

Choose now to stop being anxious about the things that are happening in your life. Gently think of what they are but don't dwell on them – one by one hand them over to God. Psalms 55:22 says – '*Cast your burden on the LORD and he will sustain you.*'

... but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.

Tell God what you need sorting and thank Him that He is going to take care of it all and bring you through. Don't take time telling Him the details. He knows them all and going over them can rob you of your peace again. But He does want you to come to Him with your problems because He wants you to acknowledge that you need Him. As you do this thank God that He will help you and keep you going and bring you through the other side.

Think about all the times God has helped you in the past and thank Him out loud. Think about how He is going to help you with your present difficulties and thank Him aloud for all He is going to do.