

# THINGS TO STOP AND START

## Stop Worrying and Start Trusting

Philippians 4:4–9

# SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

STUDY



### LET'S BEGIN HERE

**Worry.** The nagging sense that your world is spinning out of control. Feeling hopeless and powerless to overcome. Oppressed by circumstances, addicted to anxiety, and running on empty.

Our world is filled with addictions. Unfortunately, they are not limited to those outside the family of God. Many within the church struggle with the nagging, relentless habit of worry that defies quick and easy solutions. We seek help and share our worry addiction with a few close friends, hoping that bringing it into the light will help us break free, but that doesn't happen. There are rare occasions when we find a measure of relief, but it isn't long before the battle returns, leaving us discouraged and defeated. Curiously, this most common addiction is not labeled as one. Thanks to our creative ability to rationalize our way around it, we pass worry off as a natural consequence to living life at breakneck speed. But the truth is that worrying is antithetical to trusting in God. It's time we stopped our habit of worrying and replaced it with the God-given solution: trusting.



### Preparing Your Message

One of the best ways to learn a topic is to teach it to someone else. And what better topic to learn than what it means to replace worry with trust in God? Philippians 4:4–9 has a lot to say about worry. Seek out an opportunity to share Paul's message in this passage with a few close friends, a family member, or your kids. But before you teach others, you must first research and internalize the truth you seek to share with others.

As you prepare to teach Philippians 4:4–9, it's essential to identify your audience. Will you be speaking to exhausted mothers with young children, lonely empty nesters, single adults trying to find contentment, or someone else?

## Quotable

*Worry doesn't  
empty tomorrow  
of its sorrow;  
it empties today  
of its strength.<sup>1</sup>*

—Corrie ten Boom



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Once you identify your audience, take some time to think about their needs, their struggles, what their daily life might look like. Write down your thoughts and keep them in mind as you craft your message.

Before we dig into the Scripture, here's a bit of background on Paul's letter to the Philippians. As Paul sat down to write—a letter overflowing with joy, freedom, and contentment—he lived under house arrest in Rome as he awaited trial before Caesar (Acts 28:16, 30). Chained, day and night, to a rotating cohort of Roman soldiers, Paul had limited freedom and every reason to feel depressed. Paul celebrated his house imprisonment because it allowed him to present the gospel to the elite soldiers of the Praetorian Guard and to encourage others to preach the gospel with boldness (Philippians 1:7, 12–14). In Christ, Paul found limitless joy and freedom that confinement could not suppress. In his letter, he wanted to share his joy with the Philippians, and as part of God's inspired Word, with us today.

Before we look at Philippians 4:4–9, let's get acquainted with its broader context by observing Philippians 4:1–13. Write down some observations about the entire context.

Now take some time to focus your observation on Philippians 4:4–9. Write down any repeated words, commands, questions, emphatic statements, and images or figures of speech. How do verses four through nine fit into the context of Philippians 4:1–13?



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Based on your observations, write a sentence explaining what this passage meant for Paul's audience. *This is your expository statement*—This is your main idea that comes from your study of the text, for instance, an expository statement from Psalm 23 might be: “The Lord Himself shepherds our lives in preparation for spending eternity with Him.”

In Chuck Swindoll's sermon, he summarized Paul's message in Philippians 4:4–9 with four phrases: *rejoice* in the Lord every day; *release* your burden every day; *relax* in God's peace every day; and *respond* by focusing on the right things. With your audience in mind, think of three or four phrases to connect Paul's point with their specific needs.

When you think about worry, what other Scriptures come to mind? Look up these verses and write down your observations, keeping your mind focused on your audience. If you need some help with this step of correlating Scripture, write down some of the verses Chuck Swindoll used to make his point. (HINT: What does Jesus say about worry in Matthew 6:25–34?)



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In his sermon, Chuck explained how faith in Christ should bring *freedom* from worry. Chuck highlighted Jesus' commission in Luke 4:16–22, in which Jesus claimed His ministry to be the fulfillment of Isaiah 61:1. Read and reflect on Luke 4:16–22. How can you connect the purpose of Jesus' ministry, to impart *freedom* from worry, to the needs of your audience?

Before you develop the big idea (homiletical statement) that you want to communicate to your audience, think about what Philippians 4:4–9 says about God. NOTE: Your homiletical statement is more application in nature than your expositional statement. Write one sentence explaining what Paul wanted his audience to know about God. ***This is your theological statement.***

As you prepare to teach this passage, what do you think is its main theme? Based on your knowledge of your audience, as well as your observations and interpretation of Philippians 4:4–9, write a sentence that connects the theme of this passage with your audience. ***This is your homiletical statement.***

As you share Paul's message in Philippians 4:4–9 with your audience, it's helpful to use stories or illustrations to bring your point to life. Think of one or two illustrations from your life, current events, or Scripture. Briefly write these illustrations below. You might want to script your illustrations before your teaching engagement.



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As you prepare your teaching outline, remember to provide a clear call to action for your audience. To apply God's Word simply means that we take it personally and find specific ways to put it into practice. Think of at least one specific way for your listeners to apply Philippians 4:4–9 to their lives, keeping the following questions in mind:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is there an example to follow?</li><li>• Is there a prayer we need to offer?</li><li>• Is there a sin we need to confess?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is there a command we need to obey?</li><li>• Is there a habit we need to break?</li></ul>
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Before teaching this passage to others, take time to apply it to yourself. Pray for your audience, that they will be receptive to the message and the prompting of the Spirit in their lives. Write down your thoughts as you apply and pray through Philippians 4:4–9.



### A FINAL PRAYER

Write out your final prayer to close your time of teaching.

#### Endnote

1. Corrie ten Boom, *Quotable Quotations*, compiled by Lloyd Cory (Wheaton, Ill.: Scripture Press, Victor Books, 1985), 446–47.



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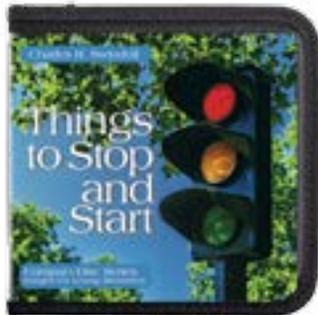
*Philippians 4:4–9*

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For the 2017 broadcast, this Searching the Scriptures study was developed by the Pastoral Ministries Department in collaboration with Mark Tobey, based upon the original outlines, charts, and sermon transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages.



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