

WHERE TO FIND PEACE**Gospel of Mark – 4:35-41****Rev. David Blakely – August 7, 2016****Starter:**

The quest for peace has always been part of the human experience. It has taken various forms depending on the generation. The 60's was an era where people were greeted with "Peace, Man!" Today "peace of mind" is used as an incentive for home security systems and banking proposals. But the reality is usually far from the goal in this world. Anne Graham Lotz (Billy Graham's daughter) once said that *"In every pew there is a broken heart"*. Do you think that this statement lines up with what you have observed as you walk through life?

Discussion points:

1. In a world where technology makes life a lot simpler than ever before, we seem to be more exhausted than ever before. We are prompted to get up an hour earlier to get more done; an hour earlier to exercise; an hour earlier to pray and read our Bibles (added up, this is three hours earlier!) **How** do you establish priorities in order to remain strong in your walk with God?
2. **Read Mk. 4:35-41.** Jesus is our ultimate example. Even though in His humanity He was exhausted as we are at times, He was able to sleep in a boat that was in the midst of a great storm. Perhaps we can find Jesus' "secret" to peace in the words of Paul as he wrote to the Philippian Church—**read Phil. 4:6-9.** Based on this Scripture, can we **attempt to answer Jesus' question:** "Why are you so fearful?"
3. In his message, Rev. Blakely suggests a two-part *Action Plan for Peace*. In the first part we are exhorted to "Tell God what we Need". We know that God is omniscient (all-knowing) and so we may tend to think that we are not required to tell Him what we need; however, nothing can be further from the truth! James 4:2 says: *"You do not have because you do not ask God"*. **How can we do better in this area?**
4. The second part of Rev. Blakely's *Action Plan for Peace* is to "Thank Him for All He has Done". This exhortation relates to the second part of the text in Philippians. It is not enough to get rid of the negative, but we must fill our minds with something that is good! **How can we make this practice part of our spiritual DNA?** [HINT: It is not just a state of mind (the "glass-half-full" thinking), but rather a discipline of mind and thought.]
5. Along with filling our minds with good thoughts, we must let go of personal hurts. This is sometimes a very difficult thing to do, and we will likely have to do it more than once; we may have to do it over and over. **Can someone share a personal hurt** that was difficult to deal with? (You don't have to go into details if you are not comfortable to do so.) And what did you do to get over it?

Diving Deeper:

Do you feel that you are falling short of what God has called you to do for Him? Is this perhaps due to the stress of life that has made us exhausted? There is a fulfillment in God that comes from doing his will for our lives. We are not all the same. Rev. Blakely said: *"You can polish an apple, but you cannot change an apple into an orange"*. Perhaps God is polishing us right now; preparing us to be more effective for Him. *"For we all stumble in many things"* (James 3:2a) and God knows our weaknesses. Let us complete this statement: "If you really knew me you would know that I..." It may be too difficult to complete this statement out loud in the company of others, but it would be helpful if we completed it in our own minds and spirits, thereby bringing our weaknesses and laments to the One who can identify with us in all things: the Lord Jesus Christ. *"And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus"* (Phil. 4:7).