

SEEK THE LORD

“Formula for Peace of Mind”

A pastor once asked a little girl, “Do you go to Sunday School?” She said with a bright smile, “O yes, every Sunday.” The pastor then asked, “Do you know the Bible?” Again she smiled and said, “Of course I do. I know everything in it.” The pastor was surprised at her confident reply and asked, “tell me then what all is in the Bible.” She promptly replied, “Well, there’s a lock of hair cut off when I was a baby, my mom’s recipe for banana cake, sister’s snapshots of her boyfriend and the pawnshop ticket for my dad’s watch. That’s everything in our Bible.

If we look a little more we can find other great treasures in the Bible. I ran across a formula for having peace of mind in the book of Philippians, chapter four, verses four through seven. Dr. Dale Galloway wrote the formula like this: $R + L - W + P\ddagger = \text{Peace of Mind}$. If we look at these Bible verses we find the first element of peace of mind (R) stands for rejoicing.

Rejoicing is a tried and true way to help find peace of mind. How is it possible to rejoice when everything around us seems to be falling apart? It is possible to rejoice because it doesn’t mean we have to be glad we are having a bad situation. Rejoicing doesn’t mean we have to be glad we are having problems. On the other hand we can rejoice that God is with us through the dark times. We can rejoice because the love of other people who care for us. Rejoicing gives our spirit buoyancy so we do not sink in the spiritual quicksand. Psalm 37:4 says, “Rejoice in the Lord and he will give the desires of the heart.”

The second element in the formula (L) stands for Love. Loving others and serving others in the kind of love referred in Philippians 4:5. Showing love to

others is a critical element in good mental health. I heard a story about how some people show their love. Two brothers were visiting. One who lived in a big city was visiting his brother in the small quiet town where he lived. The brother in the small town was explaining what a great town he lived in, no violence, no vandalism, & no crime. When they drove downtown however, the brother suggested they lock the car when they left it. The other brother said, "Lock the car? I thought you have no crime here." The other brother said, "Yes, but if you don't lock the car when we come back it will probably be full of zucchini." love needs to be expressed in many different ways.

The third element of peace of mind is found in verse 6, "Do not worry about anything." Try to subtract as much worry as possible. (- W). We do not really subtract worry but we can give it away. Give it into God's hands. God can handle our worry. We can not handle it alone.

Instead of spending our time I worry, the Bible suggests we spend our time in prayer (P†). Not just any prayer, but pray with thanksgiving. What is the difference between a prayer with thanksgiving and a prayer without thanksgiving? Thanksgiving puts us in the best attitude we can for prayer.

Try the formula and I know you will find greater peace of mind.

Prayer: Our Lord, may your very practical and powerful word guide us to pastures of peace. Amen

Rev. Dan Safarik is Pastor of St. Luke United Methodist Church in Lincoln.