
SPARKLING GEMS
FROM THE GREEK

**365 Greek Word Studies for Every Day of the Year
To Sharpen Your Understanding of God's Word**

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JANUARY 1



Let God's Peace Serve as an Umpire For Your Mind and Emotions!

And let the peace of God rule in your hearts,
to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

— Colossians 3:15

Have you ever had one of those days when there was so much confusion whirling around your head that you felt like screaming, “STOP”?

From time to time, everyone has that kind of a day. And when you do, your temptation is probably either to get in the flesh and react to someone in an ugly way or to get depressed, go to bed, and forget about it all. However, you know that neither choice will help you solve the problems you are facing.

Rather than throw in the towel and give way to these emotions that want to get the best of you, why not stop right now and make a decision to let the Word of God rule you today? When I say “rule” you, I’m talking about God’s supernatural peace *dominating* and *governing* every emotion and situation that confronts you. If you don’t make this decision and follow through with it, worry, fear, insecurity, doubt, and a whole host of other emotions will assuredly try to take control. And there is no worse roller-coaster ride than when you are being knocked all over the place by emotions that are out of control!

Instead, let the peace of God rule in your heart, as Paul wrote in Colossians 3:15. He said, “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.” I especially want you to notice the word “rule” in this verse. It is from the Greek word *brabeuo*, which in ancient times was used to describe the *umpire* or *referee* who moderated and judged the athletic competitions that were so popular in the ancient world.

Paul uses this word to tell us that the peace of God can work like an umpire or referee in our hearts, minds, and emotions. When detrimental emotions attempt to exert control over us or try to throw us into an emotional frenzy, we can stop it from happening by making the choice to let God’s peace rise up from deep inside us like an umpire or referee to moderate our emotions. As we do, we will be kept under the control of that divine peace as it rules in our hearts. When this divine umpire called “peace” steps into the game, it suddenly begins to call the shots and make all the decisions instead of fretfulness, anxiety, and worry.

Colossians 3:15 could be translated:

“Let the peace of God call the shots in your life...”

“Let the peace of God be the umpire in your life and actions...”

“Let the peace of God act as referee in your emotions and your decisions...”

Even though it’s true that everyone has hard days and difficult weeks, you don’t have to surrender to those emotions that try to steal your joy, disturb your relationships, and rob you of your victory. When you feel overwhelmed by problems or emotions that are hitting you from every direction, just stop a moment and deliberately set your heart and mind on Jesus and the Word of God. *As you do this, the wonderful, conquering, dominating, supernatural peace of God will rise up from your spirit and take control!*

MY PRAYER FOR TODAY

Lord, I don't want to let my emotions get the best of me today, so I ask that Your peace would rise up like a mighty umpire and referee in my heart, mind, and emotions. Help me recognize those moments when unhelpful emotions try to sneak up on me. I ask You to teach me how to put those emotions aside and release Your supernatural peace that is resident in my heart — the peace that is always ready at every moment to moderate every thought and emotion that tries to pass into my life!

I pray this in Jesus' name!

MY CONFESSION FOR TODAY

I confess that God's supernatural peace dominates me. When I am tempted to get upset and my emotions try to take control of me, I put these emotions aside and allow the Spirit of God to release a supernatural, dominating, moderating peace to rule my heart, mind, and emotions!

I declare this by faith in Jesus' name!

QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO CONSIDER

1. Do you recognize moments when your emotions try to throw you into an emotional tizzy and steal your peace and joy?
2. Have you asked God to help you overcome these moments?
3. What steps can you take to quiet yourself so you can focus on God's Word and allow the peace of God to rise up and referee what is going on inside your heart, mind, and emotions?

JANUARY 2



Could You Use a Little Extra Strength To Make It Through Your Day?

For I know that this shall turn to my salvation
through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.
— Philippians 1:19

At times everyone gets physically tired and mentally exhausted. However, some believers, regardless of how long or how hard they work, seem to have the knack, fortitude, determination, and will to keep going strong, even when everyone else can barely take one more step.

Have you ever met someone like this? Have you wondered, *How in the world can that person keep going the way he does?*

Could it be that this person has learned how to tap into a supernatural Source of power? Well, the same inexhaustible supply of power is available to you! In Philippians 1:19, Paul talked about this kind of power: “For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and *the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.*”

I especially want you to notice the word “supply” in this verse. It is the Greek word *epichoregeo*. To those who read Greek, this word seems like a strange choice for Paul. However, after reflecting on the original usage of this word, it makes this verse very exciting! The word *epichoregeo* is an old word that literally means *on behalf of the choir*. I know this sounds peculiar, so let me explain where this word came from and why Paul uses it here.

Thousands of years ago in classical Greece, a huge choral and dramatic company practiced endlessly for a huge, important theatrical performance. After they put in a great amount of time, effort, energy, and practice, it was finally time for the show to go on the road. But there was one major problem — they ran out of money!

These people had given their lives to this production. They had committed all their resources to making sure the performance succeeded. But because they ran out of financing, it meant the show was over — *finished!* They were washed up before the show ever officially got started. From all appearances, it was the end of the road for them and their dream.

At that exact moment, a wealthy man heard of their crisis, stepped into the middle of their situation, and made a huge financial contribution *on behalf of the choir*. This contribution “supplied” all they needed to get back in business again! In fact, the gift the man gave was so enormous that it was more than they needed or knew how to spend! This man’s contribution was excessively large, abundant, overflowing, and overwhelming.

This is where we get the word “supply” in Philippians 1:19 that now describes the enormous contribution of the Spirit that Jesus Christ wants to give to you and me!

In light of this, Philippians 1:19 could be taken to mean:

“I am certain that this situation will ultimately turn around and result in my deliverance. I’m sure of it — first, because you are praying for me; and second, because of the special contribution of the Spirit that Jesus Christ is donating for my present cause.”

This means when you’ve run out of steam; when you’ve given your best effort and you don’t feel like you have another ounce of energy left to give; when it looks like your resources are drained and you are unable to take one more step unless someone steps in to help you — that is exactly the moment when Jesus Christ becomes your personal Benefactor! Like the wealthy man in the story above, Jesus steps into your life at that moment to donate a massive, overwhelming, generous contribution of the Spirit’s grace and power for your cause!

Jesus is your wealthy Benefactor. He has more strength and power to give you than you’ll ever be able to use! If you are weak, He has precisely what you need to get up, get recharged, and get going again! If you’ll open your heart to Him right now, Jesus will give you a brand-new contribution of the Spirit’s power — and it will be more than enough to get you on your feet and back on the road again!

So when your natural human will is too tired to keep going and you’ve exhausted all your resources, let Jesus reinforce you with a new “supply of the Spirit” that will give you all the strength you will ever need. *Just open your heart to the Holy Spirit’s help today. Allow Him to fill you with a supply of power so large, you could never even begin to use it all!*

MY PRAYER FOR TODAY

Lord, I realize I don't have enough strength by myself to do what You have asked me to do. Today I'm asking You to donate a new supply of Your Spirit into my life. Right now, I open my heart and ask You to fill every nook and cranny of my life with the power of the Holy Spirit so I can get back on my feet again and fulfill what You have told me to do!

I pray this in Jesus' name!

MY CONFESSION FOR TODAY

I declare by faith that I am refilled and recharged with the Spirit of God. There is no lack of strength in me because Jesus continuously provides a huge supply of the Spirit in my life that empowers me to achieve everything I need to do. There is no excuse for me to fail or to stop short of the goals God has given me for my life, because in the Spirit of God there is enough supernatural strength and power to energize me to finish my divine assignment!

I declare this by faith in Jesus' name!

QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO CONSIDER

1. Do you ever run into times in your life when you feel like you've hit a wall and you can't go any further?
2. How do you normally respond to times like these?
3. Compare the results of your past responses to these difficult times to what would happen if you took the time to talk to Jesus about your need for supernatural strength.

JANUARY 3



Isn't It Time for You To Hit the Rewind Button?

Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God,
which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

— 2 Timothy 1:6

Have you ever experienced the delivering and rescuing power of God? I'm talking about those moments when your situation looks completely hopeless — but suddenly God's amazing grace intervenes and your situation is miraculously changed! Can you think of moments like this in your past?

It's amazing that when we are confronted with a new challenge, we often fail to remember God's faithfulness in the past. Our perspective gets blurry because of the problems we are currently facing, and we forget that we've gone through similar or worse circumstances before. The looming mountain of problems before us looks so big that we momentarily fail to remember all the other mountains we've already faced and overcome with the help of God.

When Paul wrote his second letter to Timothy, the younger man was facing the biggest mountain of his life. Nero had become the emperor of the Roman Empire. Because of his tyrannical rule, believers were being persecuted and were even dying for their faith. In the midst of all the panic, Timothy was tempted to fear for his life and his future. He must have wondered, *Is God going to be faithful to me in this terrible hour?*

So in Second Timothy 1:5, Paul tells Timothy, "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice, and I am persuaded that in thee also." Paul wanted to remind Timothy about something very important!

God's faithfulness was a part of Timothy's family heritage. His grandmother trusted the Lord — *and the Lord had never failed her or let her down*. His mother trusted the Lord — *and the Lord had never failed her or let her down either*. Because Timothy was dealing with great stress and difficulty, Paul took the opportunity to remind him that just as God had never failed his grandmother or mother, neither would He abandon Timothy in his difficult hour.

Then Paul told him, "...I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" (2 Timothy 1:6). I want you to particularly focus on the phrase, "I put thee in remembrance." It is taken from the Greek word *anamimnesko*, a compound of the words *ana* and *mimnesko*. Pay close attention, because this is very important! The word *ana* means *again* or *to repeat something*. The second part of the word *mimnesko* means *to be reminded of something*, such as memories.

When these two words are joined together as in this verse, it means *to regather* or *to recollect memories*. The little prefix *ana* carries the idea of *replaying* these memories over and over again in your mind, the way you would hit the rewind button on your video player so you can back up and watch one part of a movie over and over again.

This means there are some memories we should never forget! For example, we should constantly hit the rewind button in our minds and "replay" the times that God has been faithful to us in the past — delivering us, healing us, and rescuing us time and time again. We should "replay" those scenes in our minds until we never forget His faithfulness to us!

You could translate Second Timothy 1:6 in the following way:

"I am putting you in memory of all these things, so that by your remembering them, you might stir up the gift of God that is in you..."

Paul reminds Timothy (and us) to take our eyes off these times of trouble or the present crisis and to *remember* God's delivering and rescuing power in the past. If we really looked at our past, we'd find that we have faced other moments more severe than the one we're facing right now — and God never failed us or let us down. In fact, He delivered us and turned those situations around!

Don't ever forget what God has already done for you, for those memories will stir you up and encourage you to face your present dilemma with faith. Just as God has always been faithful to you in the past, He will be faithful to you right now.

Never forget how:

- ◆ God has *healed* you.
- ◆ God has *delivered* you.
- ◆ God has *saved* you.
- ◆ God has *guided* and *directed* you.
- ◆ God has *brought you through* difficult trials.
- ◆ God has *provided* for you during hard financial times.
- ◆ God has *protected* you from the snare of the enemy.

These kinds of memories are powerful and will stir up your faith today!

So the next time the devil tells you there is no way you'll survive what you're facing, take the time to get alone with the Lord. Then hit the rewind button, and ask the Holy Spirit to help you regather and recollect all those past events when God came through for you! As you replay those memories over and over in your mind, your faith will rise to a new level of confidence. You'll be able to look your problems right in the face and say, "God's record with me has always been faithfulness, and I know He'll be faithful to me now as well!"

MY PRAYER FOR TODAY

Lord, You have always been faithful. I thank You that even in my present situation, You are going to be faithful again. Please help me recall all the times in the past when You delivered and rescued me from other situations that also looked hopeless. Thank You for helping me keep those awesome experiences alive and fresh in my mind and heart. I thank You for always being faithful to me!

I pray this in Jesus' name!

MY CONFESSION FOR TODAY

I confess that God has never failed me or let me down. He has always delivered me from difficult times, and He will rescue and deliver me now as well. Today I will dwell on those past moments when God did for me what everyone thought was impossible! Just as He intervened on my behalf in the past, He will intervene on my behalf again! I will not succumb to fear, doubt, or failure. With God's help, I will conquer what the enemy meant for my downfall and defeat!

I declare this by faith in Jesus' name!

QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO CONSIDER

1. As you think about God's faithfulness in your life, how does it affect the way you perceive the problems you are dealing with right now?
2. What are some of the seemingly impossible situations you faced in the past that God delivered you from?
3. What steps can you take to trust God more fully to deliver you from your present situation as He has done for you in the past?