

My laptop computer at home has been sick for three months. The a drive quit working. That means I cannot easily back up the information I have there. This just invites disaster. They think they can fix it, but the part is on order. Last week disaster struck: one of my programs collapsed. Yesterday I recovered most of the data in that program, and today I lost it again--all while I was working on this talk, the theme of which was supposed to be "overcoming our worries." Quite honestly, I'm not in the proper frame of mind to help people overcome their worries. But here's what I wanted to say.

I wanted to say the main cause of our worries is a desire to be in control. We worry about things over which we have no control, or over which we've lost our control. What we forget is, we were never much in control to begin with. Take health for example. We go day to day congratulating ourselves on how healthy we are, then when we get sick, we're embarrassed, as if we've done something wrong. Well, not necessarily. Bodies get sick; bodies die; we have limited control. When we realize this and accept our weaknesses, we can find peace.

Today is a feast day of happiness. The third Sunday of advent traditionally began with a song inviting people to rejoice. We light the pink candle on the wreath because Christmas is so near. In Paul's letter to the Philippians, we hear the same joyful message: "Rejoice in the Lord always." Paul says if you want peace, don't worry about anything. Instead, tell God your requests in prayer, with thanksgiving. Turn your troubles over to the Lord. Ultimately, you're not in control of them anyway. Accept your limitations, put the worries in God's lap where they belong, and then you'll find peace. A peace which surpasses understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. This doesn't mean ignore our worries, but let's put them someplace where they won't get in the way and where we can derive strength from our faith.

To have happiness, we don't need control, we don't need wealth, we don't need as many toys as the kid across the street. We need Christ. If my computer felt better, I'd have fewer worries. But I'd also have an illusion about my control, and I'd never learn how deep is the peace which comes from trust in God.