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# Doomscrolling or Practicing the Presence of God

At the SBCV Annual Homecoming, one of our preachers cautioned us to beware of “doomscrolling.” I did a little research on this concept. According to Merriam-Webster, doomscrolling (or doomsurfing) refers to the tendency to continue to surf or scroll through bad news even though that news is saddening, disheartening, or depressing.

WebMD describes some reasons we may doomscroll:

- We feel upset about something in the news, so we look for information that confirms how we feel.
- While searching for positive or upbeat news, we get caught up in a sea of negative stories.
- We try to stay on top of the news so much that our minds go into autopilot mode, and we start scrolling out of habit.
- We feel down, so we spend more time online than usual to try to lift our mood. (In reality, this could make us feel worse in the long term.)

Instead of doomscrolling, we need to practice the presence of God. The Bible teaches us to draw near to God (James 4:8), seek the face of God (1 Chronicles 16:11), and experience the peace of God (Philippians 4:7).

God’s Word teaches us that we can have the peace of God and that we have the presence of the God of peace. Philippians 4:7 is a promise of peace. It promises that God’s peace will guard the heart and mind of the believer who prays instead

of worrying. Philippians 4:9 is also a promise of peace. It promises that the God of peace Himself will be with the believer.

How can we enjoy the presence of the God of peace? Philippians 4:8-9 teaches three principles that will help us live with assurance that God is with us.

1. **Feed our minds with godly concepts.** Philippians 4:8 (ESV) says, “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”
2. **Follow the example of godly companions.** Philippians 4:9 says, “What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.” The premise of the command in verse 9 is that we need to follow the example of godly companions.
3. **Fortify our lives with godly conduct.** Verse 9 commands us to practice these things. Instead of doomscrolling, we need to rejoice in the Lord (Philippians 4:7). Instead of worrying, we can be praying (Philippians 4:6).

As you read this edition of the *Proclaimer*, we hope you will see God’s gracious presence is with us as we keep pressing on as God’s people. The Lord is with us!