

ANXIETY – BE NOT ANXIOUS

INTRODUCTION:

1. Our study is entitled “**Be Not Anxious About Anything.**”
2. There was a lot of interest two years ago in our Vacation Bible School in the adult class I taught on this subject.
3. There is no way anyone can do a thorough study on any topic in one lesson so I will just do a basic study on the subject.
4. I will define **Anxiety** as it is used in **Philippians 4:6** and bring out the meaning from the immediate text.
5. My wife and I sit down each day and we (each of us individually) make our commitment for the day to each other and to God.
6. For over a year we centered on **Ephesians 4:29-32: (Centering on verse 29 especially!) Ephesians 4:29 (NASB) 29 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear.**
Ephesians 4:29-32 (NIV)–²⁹ Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.
7. The last year we have emphasized **total trust in God and not being anxious about anything!**
8. What does the word **anxious** mean in this text?
 - a. 1. MERIMNAŌ (μεριμνάω, (3309)), akin to A,^{No. 1}, signifies **to be anxious about, to have a distracting care,** ^{e.g.,} **Matt. 6:25, 28,** ^{R.V.,} “**be anxious,**” for ^{A.V.,} “take thought;” 10:19; Luke 10:41 (R.V., “anxious,” for A.V., “careful”); 12:11 (R.V., “anxious”); to be careful for, 1^Cor. 7:32, 33, 34; to have a care for, 1 Cor. 12:25; to care for, Phil. 2:20; “be anxious,” Phil. 4:6, R.V. See THOUGHT (TO TAKE). Please read the scriptures mentioned to get a better feel of what God is trying to teach us.
Matthew 6:25 (NASB) 25 “For this reason I say to you, do not be anxious for your life, as to what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, as to what you shall put on (wear). Is not life more than food, and the body than clothing?

Matthew 6:28-34 (NASB) 28 “And why are you anxious about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, 29

Matt. 12:34; Eph. 5:4; Col. 3:8

No. number

e.g. *exempli gratia*, for example

R.V. *Revised Version*, 1881—1885

A.V. *Authorized Version (King James')*, 1611

Cor. Corinthians

yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory did not clothe himself like one of these. 30 “But if God so arrays the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more do so for you, O men of little faith?” 31 “Do not be **anxious** then, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘With what shall we clothe ourselves?’ 32 “For all these things the Gentiles eagerly seek; **for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.** 33 “But seek **first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.** 34 “Therefore do not be **anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.**” He’s saying, “Don’t borrow trouble; All the trouble you can handle will find you!

9. Have I been anxious since we started this daily commitment time? Yes! Will I be anxious in the future? Yes! Do I know better than to be anxious? Yes!
10. Some of the ways this effort has helped us:
 - a. It has made us trust God more because God is our loving Father.
 - b. It has caused us to be **more conscience of when anxiety starts to creep in so we can change our thought pattern.**
 - c. **We are more at ease, trusting that God will work to take care of things.** Think about it – God either tells us the truth or He does not! Do you think He tells us the truth? How can we know? Try doing what He says!
 - d. We are happier, less tense about things, even when we can’t see how they can be worked out.
 - e. We try not to anticipate trouble that will probably never happen anyway.
 - f. All this makes for a more joyful, peaceful, faith building life!
 - g. This takes away the concern, (the “what ifs,” etc.) of life that makes us up tight.
 - h. It gives us more time to focus on the positives, on the Scripture and on application of the Scripture in our lives.

I. TWO TEXTS THAT DEAL DIRECTLY WITH OUR SUBJECT ARE:

- A. Hebrews 11:6 (NASB) 6 And **without faith it is impossible to please Him. for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who (diligently KJV; earnestly, NIV) seek Him.** Diligence and earnestness reveal working at something sincerely without giving up easily!
 1. Unless we **believe – truly believe**, in the almighty, all powerful, loving God, we will not trust in what He says and promises.
 - a. **God is love** 1 John 4:16 (NASB) 16 And **we have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.**
 2. If we believe that we can go to God, ask His help and receive the rewards He promises to those who diligently seek Him, we will experience the joy of receiving the promises when God works **for the people (you and me). He loves!**
- B. Philippians 4:4-9 (NASB) 4 **Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!** 5 Let your forbearing *spirit* (gentleness *NIV*) be known to all men. **The Lord is near.** 6 **Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.** 7

And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. 8 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, **let your mind dwell on these things.** 9 The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things; and the God of peace shall be with you.

1. **Rejoice in the Lord always** – again I say **rejoice!** How can you rejoice if you are not sure (do not have faith) that God is near; is with you and working for you? Rejoice means be extremely joyful (In this case – because God is near. He hears our prayers so, rejoice!!)
2. **Let your gentleness** (ἐπιεικῆς, (1933) be known to all men – Showing the Spirit of God dwelling in you – A reason to rejoice!
3. **Be anxious for nothing** – but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God!
 - a. In doing this we surrender our cares and concerns to God and trust Him with them.
 - b. Can He handle it? Or do I think I can do a better job?
 - c. If I trust God, then I don't need to be anxious about anything!
4. **And (The promise of obeying what God has instructed) the peace of God,** which **surpasses all comprehension (transcends all understanding [NIV] shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**
 - a. The peace of God is actually the peace from God – the peace He gives you – This peace surpasses all comprehension.
 - b. This peace from God shall guard our hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus!
 - 1). Guard in the Greek (**Guard (phroureōsei, also used in I Peter 1:5 (KJV) ⁵ (Speaking of the inheritance of Christians) Who are kept (KJV) protected (NASB) are shielded [NIV] by the power of God through **faith** unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. (Greek for kept or guard - 5432 φρουρέω [phroureo /froo·reh·o/] ^v. “keep with a garrison;” to guard, protect by a military guard, either to prevent hostile invasion, or to keep the inhabitants of a besieged city from flight.**
 - a). Jesus said of His disciples in **John 10:27-30 (NASB)** 27 “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; 28 and **I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. 29 “My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. 30 “I and the Father are one.”**

- 2). When we totally trust in God after having been saved by Him in Christ, there is nothing to fear – we have peace because Christ has made peace with God for us through His blood. **Revelation 1:5-6 (NASB) 5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood, 6 and He has made us to be a kingdom, priests to His God and Father; to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.**
5. Why then is there any reason for anxiety? There is not!
 - a. He has saved us with His blood.
 - b. Made us a kingdom of priests who now have the right to approach God the Father through prayer.
 - c. We are in Christ’s hand and in God’s hand where no one can snatch us out of the Father’s hand. **(John 10:28-29)**
 - d. We are **purchased by Christ, loved and guarded by God. We are His sons and daughters, made to be a kingdom and priests.**
 - 1). Is this not reason enough to **REJOICE**?
 - 2). Is this not reason enough **not** to be **ANXIOUS**?
 - d. There is nothing that we need that God does not know about and if He provides the needs of the lilies and the grass – are we not of much more value to God than they? **(Luke 12:27).**

II. WHY DON'T WE CHOOSE TO TRUST GOD AND AVOID ANXIETY?

A. Simple – We Either Believe God Or We Don't

1. If we believe Him we will, through prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let our requests be made known to God in everything. **(Philippians 4:4-7).**
2. If we don't believe God, we will try to manage everything ourselves (usually to suit our own purposes), and we will not only fail, but we will also be miserable and anxious in the process.
3. If we choose to work out things by ourselves this leaves God and His wisdom, power and might out of the picture and it all depends upon our decisions and actions rather than having God's help.
 - a. **Jeremiah 10:23 (NASB) 23 I know, O Lord, that a man's way is not in himself; Nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps. Jeremiah 10:23 (KJV) 23 O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.**

B. We believe that God somehow works to answer our prayers – don't we?

1. I really don't know any Christian who would deny that God still works in our lives today.
 - a. However, by the time many Christians who claim to believe that God still works, get through telling you what God and the Holy Spirit do not do today, one comes away thinking that their answer “Yes God still works,” – is really a “No, God Himself doesn't

work any more – it’s all up to us to work things out.” Yet, we still pray to God to help us!

2. We pray to God to help the one who is to speak to us to be able to “**Remember what he has prepared**” – **Are we really asking God to help the speaker**, or are we just mouthing words that we have heard others pray? *I have been hearing this prayer for sixty years – pretty much the same words!*

a. I’m not judging the ones who pray this prayer; I just think we need to ask ourselves if we believe that **GOD** really works to bring about an answer to our prayer!

b. Since God’s instructions for us is.. “**Do not be anxious about anything**,” and since He gives us the answer as to how to avoid being anxious ... “**But in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God and the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**” – If we are sincerely following God, don’t you think we should follow His instructions and have faith that He will take care of us so that we won’t be anxious?

3. We may not know how God works to bring about the answer to our prayers, but this shouldn’t stop us from praying for God’s intervention!

4. Sometimes we pray for the sick and by the end of the prayer anyone listening might get the idea that it is only through the training of the doctors and nurses that the one we are praying for is helped in some way.

Where does God fit into the picture here?

a. I believe in praying for the doctors and nurses, but sometimes it may be beyond their expertise and God somehow works to bring about the healing of a person if He so chooses. It’s His business. I’ve heard doctors admit that it was a higher power that brought the person they were operating on through because they realized that this person should be dead, but they lived.

b. We don’t have to be able to know if it is in what the doctors and nurses do or if God causes the body to heal itself, or all of these combined, all we need to do is pray and trust God to do what others are unable to accomplish.

c. Before my operation last June, to have my left knee replaced, I asked people to pray for me. I remember one email I sent out asking specifically for them to pray that I would not have any blood clots as a result of the surgery. I had just lost a friend and brother (Guy Dietch) after he had surgery on his broken ankle. He died of a blood clot. In Rehab one of my nurses was especially thorough and dedicated to her patients. She came in one day and said she wanted to check my leg. She caught my foot in both hands and with great force, pushed my foot so that my toes went toward my chin. I said, **Ouch! You are very strong**. She asked if it hurt and I said yes. At that time anything hurt my knee area. She said she was checking for blood clots and went to the office and ordered a test, which scanned my leg from the ankle to the knee. It showed a blood clot three inches long just above my ankle. That’s

not where it hurt when she pushed my foot. Did God answer my prayers and the prayers of others concerning my not having a blood clot? Yes, He helped them find the blood clot and increase my blood thinning medication so that I didn't suffer the consequences. To me that was even better than not having a clot because He saw to it that I didn't suffer a stroke or death as a result of the clot. My faith was strengthened! I believe this was God answering our prayers!

5. I knew a well-known preacher and college professor who underwent surgery and the doctors found “**inoperable**” cancer and just sewed him up and told the family that he didn't have long to live. His name is Homer Hailey.
 - a. When the preacher heard the diagnosis he said, “I may die, and that is all right, but I feel that I have much to do in the teaching and preaching of the gospel and so I will do all I can do to take care of my body and pray that the Lord will extend my time so that I can complete what I believe to be my mission.
 - b. He made sure that nothing went into his body that was not healthful. He exercised to build up his strength and continued teaching and preaching for many, many, years before **he died in the year 2000, but not of cancer. He was 97 years old when he died, had written 15 books, taught in two Christian Colleges, and held gospel meetings all over.** He fulfilled the purpose for which he desired to live rather than die of cancer!
 - c. Did God answer his and many other people's prayers to save him from cancer? Remember, it wasn't a cancer diagnosed by an X-ray but by opening him up and seeing it.
 - d. **How did God do this – I don't know, but He did it!!**
6. If we don't believe that GOD works in answering our prayers shouldn't we be at least honest enough to admit it and quit asking Him to do what we do not believe He can do.
7. But if we believe God answers prayers we should pray all the more earnestly and not think we have to know exactly how He works to answer the prayer.
8. **When we offer prayers and petitions to the Lord God, having faith that He answers prayer, we will not be anxious and will have reason to rejoice! This is entire surrender and absolute trust!**

CONCLUSION:

1. **The test of our faith is seen in how we deal with Philippians 4:4-7 and Hebrews 11:6.**
 - a. **Test number one – We either believe God or not.**
 - b. We can't choose what we believe and what we do not believe in Scripture.
 - c. We believe all that God says or we don't believe anything He says!
Philippians 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. That is His promise and He keeps His promises.

- 1). **First** – don't be anxious about anything!! If you can do something to solve the problem – do it! If you can't, all the worry and anxiety in the world won't change it – but it will ruin you, your health, faith, pleasure and joy in life, etc.
 - 2). **Secondly** – If you have a problem take it before God in prayer and supplication, **with thanksgiving** (thankful for being able to ask God's help, for having the promise of peace from God).
 - 3). **And** the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (God will put a garrison or guard around you).
2. **Remember - Hebrews 11:6 (NASB) 6 And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.**
- a. When we are anxious we show our lack of faith in God!
 - b. We are, in action saying, "I believe in God but I don't believe He can fix this, so I am worried, anxious and upset.
 - c. Believing in God is believing in the God who created the universe out of nothing and therefore He can do anything – If He can create the universe out of nothing – why can't He be trusted to take care of something we ask Him to do when it was He who told us to ask?
 - d. If we come to God in faith and diligently seek Him, **He will reward us!**
3. Each and every Christian has been anxious over many things.
- a. The apostle Paul said that he brought each and every thought into subjection to Christ – that is constant maintenance or vigilance – the spiritual warfare.
 - b. This is a temptation that we must continue to fight.
 - c. We must not be discouraged when we become anxious. We just need to repent and do what God instructs us to do. John, writing by inspiration instructs us on how to handle any sin.
- 1). **1 John 1:6-10 (NASB) 6** If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet **walk** in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; 7 but if we **walk in the light** as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and **the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses** us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 **If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.
 - 2). **1 John 2:1-2 (NASB) 2:1** My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. **And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; 2 and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.**

- a). **Advocate** - 3875 παράκλητος [*parakletos* /par·ak·lay·tos/] ⁿ
^m. A root word; ¹DNT 5:800; ¹DNTA 782; ⁶K 4156; Five

n **n**: noun or neuter

m **m**: masculine

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occurrences; ^{AV} translates as “comforter” four times, and “advocate” once. **1** summoned, called to one’s side, esp. called to one’s aid. **1A** one who pleads another’s cause before a judge, a pleader, counsel for defense, legal assistant, an advocate. 1B one who pleads another’s cause with one, an intercessor. 1B1 of Christ in his exaltation at God’s right hand, pleading with God the Father for the pardon of our sins. **1c** in the widest sense, a helper, succourer, aider, assistant. **1c1** of the Holy Spirit destined to take the place of Christ with the apostles (after his ascension to the Father), to lead them to a deeper knowledge of the gospel truth, and give them divine strength needed to enable them to undergo trials and persecutions on behalf of the divine kingdom.

- b). **Propitiation** - **2434 ἱλασμός** [*hilasmos* /hil·as·mos/] ^{n m}. A root word; ^{TDNT} 3:301; ^{TDNTA} 362; ^{GK} 2662; Two occurrences; ^{AV} translates as “propitiation” twice. **1** an appeasing, propitiating. 2 the means of appeasing, a propitiation.

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HILASMOS (ἱλασμός, (2434)), akin to *hileōs* (merciful, propitious), signifies an expiation, a means whereby sin is covered and remitted. It is used in the ^{N.T.} of Christ Himself as “the propitiation,” in 1 John 2:2 and 4:10, signifying that He Himself, through the expiatory sacrifice of His Death, is the Personal means by whom God shows mercy to the sinner who believes on Christ as the One thus provided. In the former passage He is described as “the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only but also for the whole world.” The italicized addition in the ^{A.V.}, “*the sins of,*” gives a wrong interpretation. What is indicated is that provision is made for the whole world, so that no one is, by Divine pre-determination, excluded from the scope of God’s mercy; the efficacy of the propitiation, however, is made actual for those who believe. In 4:10, the fact that God “sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins,” is shown to be the great expression of God’s love toward man, and the reason why Christians should love one another.

- 3). We must trust Him all the way – not just up to a point and then try to take over ourselves – but all the way, all the time.

CONCLUSION:

1. God is calling you through the written word to believe, trust, and obey Him.

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2. If you are tired of living in sin and would like to turn over your sins to God, He will remove them through the perfect sacrifice He provided so that you can rest assured that everything is forgiven.
3. He and other Christians will then help you walk in the newness of life that will bring peace and contentment so that you can rejoice and feel the assurance that you are in God's hand where no one can snatch you out.
4. To come to God, you must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.
6. If you believe that He is God, then you can know that He has provided Christ as a sacrifice to take your place and pay for your sins.
7. All you need to do is trust in God's instructions given by Christ just before He returned to be with God to wait for the deliverance of His people – **Mark 16:** ¹⁵He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. ¹⁶Whoever **believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.**