

Cultivating Your Inner Life

Jesus does not want His followers to be undone by anxiety. He wants us to trust Him and find our peace in Him.

“Thus says the Lord: ‘Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart departs from the Lord. For he shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when good comes, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land which is not inhabited’ (Jeremiah 17:5-6).



The one who trusts in himself or in other people and makes humans his source of deliverance will be a shrub in the desert...like a dry tumbleweed that blows here and there, wherever the wind takes it. This is an apt description of a person controlled by anxiety. Their soul is so dry that even when good comes, they don't see it. Such a person will be consumed by anxiety and a lack of peace.

Jeremiah continues with the contrast: ***“Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and whose hope is the Lord. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and will not fear when heat comes; but its leaf will be green, and will not be anxious in the year of drought, nor will cease from yielding fruit” (Jeremiah 17:7-8).***

Those who trust and rely on the faithful Lord will have a secret source of peace, even in difficult times. The one who hopes in the Lord remains green and fruitful, even after a year of drought. The one who trusts in the Lord spreads out their roots by the river cultivating their inner life.

In a natural tree, the roots spread out seeking water, oxygen and minerals in the soil. Since the roots of a tree can become two to four times the diameter of the crown of the tree, they give the tree stability as well as nourishment.

The preparation of the inner life is an antidote to anxiety for the long term. As Christians we need to prepare our spiritual roots ahead of the drought. If we develop good roots, we will have something to hold us up when the heat of anxiety comes.

The Bible is our source of wisdom for how to find peace. We need to learn to enjoy it and spend time in it, discovering what our Savior and Shepherd has provided for us. ***“Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble” (Psalm 119:165).***

What things make up a strong spiritual root system?

- **Focusing your mind on God when fears arise** (Isaiah 26:3-4) “You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You. Trust in the Lord forever, for in Yah, the Lord, is everlasting strength.”
- **Knowing and relying on the Promises of God** (2 Peter 1:3-4) “as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”
- **Resting in the faithfulness of God** (Luke 12:29-31) “And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind. For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.”
- **Counting on the love and mercy of God** (Micah 7:18-19) “He delights in mercy. He will again have compassion on us, and will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.”
- **Nestling into the Lord’s protection** (Psalm 4:8) “I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.”
- **Delighting in God’s perfect will** (Romans 12:2) “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”
- **Being confident in the power of prayer** (Philippians 4:6-7) “Be anxious for nothing, 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 understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”
- **Worshipping when you want to worry** (1 Chronicles 16:23-24) “Sing to the Lord, all the earth; proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His wonders among all peoples.”

