



## **Anxious for Nothing - Week 5** **November 9-10, 2019 | Tim Harlow**

This weekend, Pastor Tim walks us through dealing with our anxiety by focusing on things for which we're grateful.

### **CELEBRATE**

At the beginning of your small group time, it's good to share about your week and share with each other how you're doing. So, spend some time, right now, connecting before jumping into the discussion questions. You can use the *Connect* section as a guide. If you're doing this Study Guide on your own, take a moment to focus your mind on God and what He might want you to hear today.

### **CONNECT**

1. Talk about one thing from your childhood that is "safer" today. Talk about your experience with activities or habits that would be seen as dangerous today.
2. Talk about one thought from this week that dominated your attention. How did that thought affect your week?

Before watching the sermon, or moving on in this study, take a minute to remember that God is always with you. Pray as a group for God to bless your conversation and open your eyes and hearts to what He wants you to hear.

## REFLECT

Before moving forward in your study, take a moment and review the key points from this weekend's message.

1. To combat anxiety, we practice C.A.L.M. *Celebrate* what's true about God. *Ask* God for help. *List* what we're thankful for. *Meditate* only on what is good.
2. "The presence of anxiety is unavoidable, but the prison of anxiety is optional." (Max Lucado)
3. Fear sees a threat, decides what to do, then it moves on. Anxiety imagines a threat and can't move on.
4. To deal with anxiety, we have to think about what we think about.
5. To battle anxiety, we don't empty our minds. We fill our mind with what is good.
6. You can't control every thought that flies into your mind, but you can control which ones land.

**SCRIPTURES USED IN THE MESSAGE:** Psalm 119:15-16, John 14:1, 2 Corinthians 10:5, Philippians 4:4-9

## RESPOND

1. Talk about a thought, phrase, or moment from this weekend's message that resonated with you. What made it stick with you?
2. Think back to the rest of the messages in our series - C, A, L, and now M: talk about one the elements of facing anxiety has been the most helpful to you. Talk about an element that you find challenging to deal with. Why?
3. Read Romans 12:1-2. Read slowly, making a note of any words or phrases that stand out to you. Paul is writing to a church that is divided, with Gentiles (non-Jewish Christians) and Jewish Christians in conflict over who really "belongs" in God's family. Romans chapter 12 also marks a shift in the letter, where Paul begins to talk about how to live. Chapters 1-11 is the "why" part of the letter, and 12-16 are the "how" chapters.
4. Pastor Tim said that we have to think about our thinking, because not everything is worth thinking about. Talk about a thought you've focused on in the past but eventually realized it "wasn't worth thinking about." Talk about how you came to that conclusion - how did things change once you made that distinction?
5. Paul writes "Therefore...in view of God's mercy, offer your bodies..." (12:1) He isn't suggesting people literally *sacrifice* themselves. Since our brain is part of our body, talk about how "offering" our thoughts is a good beginning point for dealing with anxiety. Talk about one thought you're dealing with right now that you could "offer" to God. What would that look like?
6. Romans 12:2 contrasts the words "conform" and "be transformed." Pastor Tim shared how the U.S. leads the world in anxiety. Talk about how easy it is, with that statistic in mind, to "conform" to a life of anxiety and even find it normal. Talk about what it could look like to have that anxiety transformed - specifically, what is it that Paul offers as the key to transformation?
7. Paul teaches the Roman Christians not to be "conformed" to the pattern of this world. The word for "world" is actually the word that means "age" or the dominance of a particular idea or power

structure. Talk about how the power of the age of anxiety has impacted you, whether directly or indirectly through someone else. How might spending time to "think about" our thinking in this age shift the way we process our anxiety?

8. In Philippians 4:8-9, Paul invites people to think on "true, noble, pure, right, lovely, admirable...excellent or praiseworthy" things. Talk about why or how this would be a "transformational" activity. This week, consider thinking on one each day thing that fits each category (true, noble, pure, etc.). Talk about what might change in the way you live with these things in mind.

**Closing Prayer:**

God, you are a a genius. You are the smartest being in the universe. You created us with a brain that does so much, but also a brain that has the capacity to do things that transform our lives and the lives of others. Help us to remember this. Help us to think on the best of things this week instead of getting caught up in the "age of anxiety" that comes from hurry, comparison on social media, or even our own individual perceived threats. You want to transform us and we really need it. We love you.

Amen.