



Sermon Title: Lifewise part 3

Sermon Title: Overcoming Anxiety

Date: 9/25/2022

Philippians 4:4-9, is one of the most relevant and practical passages we can turn to when talking about anxiety. Paul affirms that anxiety is a real struggle – and that God is the real answer

Big Idea: Overcome anxiety by changing your focus

Anxiety is the culmination of worry and stress. While worry is in the mind and stress is in the body, anxiety involves both the mind and the body. We will break this passage down into three focal points that Paul gives us to move towards gaining victory over anxiety.

FOCUS ON REJOICING

Philippians 4:4

To rejoice means “to feel joy or great delight.” When Paul says to rejoice in the Lord, that means to feel joy when you think of Him.

Paul uses three important writing tactics in this passage that are worth noting.

- 1) First, this is a command that he gave. That means it is attainable
- 2) Second, he says to rejoice in the Lord ALWAYS.
- 3) Third, Paul repeats himself. Repetition is how people would emphasize words or phrases in the original language.

When you choose to rejoice in the Lord, you overlook the triggers of anxiety and instead focus on who God is and that he is good and loving and is working through your situation. **Romans 8:28**

Rejoicing in the Lord is also celebrating the fact that He loves you no matter what you are going through. And if you are a follower of Jesus, no matter what you face, you will never be separated from Him. **Romans 8:35-39**

FOCUS ON PRAYER

Philippians 4:6-7

Paul lays out elements of talking to God: prayer, petition, and thanksgiving.

Prayer is the general word for making requests known to the Lord. It carries the idea of adoration, devotion, and worship. We must see the greatness and majesty of God and realize that He is big enough to solve whatever problem we are facing.

The second element Paul talks about is petition - a genuine sharing of our needs and problems. **1 Peter 5:7**. God says He wants us to talk with Him about everything that concerns us and leave the issue with Him to handle, however, He sees fit.

Thank God for all He has done and all He is going to do. When we thank God, it takes our eyes off of our problems and our anxieties and puts them on our blessings.

REDIRECT YOUR MIND

Philippians 4:8

Your thoughts can affect you mentally, spiritually AND affect your brain physically. Your thoughts really do directly impact whether or not you have the peace of God. **Isaiah 26:3**

Your thought life will determine your spiritual health as a Christian. It will transform your Christian life if you can keep your thoughts on things pleasing to God. **Romans 12:2**

The best way to keep the bad thoughts out of your mind is to concentrate on the good thoughts. Paul says redirect your thoughts to good thoughts - let your thoughts focus on things worthy of praise - and then he gives us all these characteristics to set our minds on. Paul says we are to set our minds on the things that are honoring and pleasing to God - whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

Worry, stress, and anxiety are real, but they don't have to dominate your life. God wants you to be free from the weight that they put on you by trusting Him with your life.

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Discussion Questions:

- **What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?**
- **What is it about our culture that makes anxiety levels so high?**
- **How would you explain *rejoicing in the Lord* to a new Christian?**
- **What do you do to help manage and overcome anxiety?**
- **Do you find it easy or challenging to pray during stressful times?**
- **What difference does it make in your life knowing that God is in control of all situations? Do you praise Him when things go well? Do you blame Him when things don't go as you planned? Explain**