
NOTES

Scripture: Philippians 4:6-9, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17, Romans 12:2, and 2 Corinthians 10:5.

REVIEW AND INTRODUCTION

1. Looking back over your notes, what did you find most helpful, challenging, or interesting in this week's teaching? Was there anything you've never heard before or something that made you think differently?
2. What do you think it means to be anxious? Why do you think this?

MY STORY

1. It's OK to not be OK, but it's not OK to stay that way. What does that mean to you? Does that resonate with you? Why?
2. Chris told us if you are suffering from physiological fear (anxiety, panic attack, etc.), it might take mental health intervention (including medication) to help you break free, but there is no magic pill. To keep you free from it, you have to do the deeper work (requiring persistence and discipline). What does this mean? How do you live this out?
3. Do you consider yourself mostly positive, mostly negative, or somewhere in-between?
4. Do you ever choose to be positive even when you're not feeling it? What happens in your life when you choose to be positive regardless of how you're feeling?

Freedom From Anxiety

5. What is gentleness? Do you consider yourself to be gentle or not? Do you think our culture values gentleness? Why or why not? Do you think gentleness is an important characteristic for you to possess?
6. Do you think the Lord is near to you? What does it mean that the Lord is near you?
7. What does your prayer life look like? Is it consistent? Is it authentic? Are you praying throughout the day and taking every thought captive or just praying periodically?
8. Do you think God answers your prayers? What makes you think this? Do you think the way you pray relates to whether or not you think God answers your prayer?
9. Think about the idea of thanksgiving. What do you have to be thankful for? Write down what comes to mind and take time to thank God for each of His blessings and gifts. When you took the time to do that, how did you feel in the minute?
10. What does it mean to be grateful? Are you a grateful person? Do you take time to thank God regularly?

DIGGING DEEPER

Read through these guiding scriptures and answer the corresponding questions.

Read Philippians 4:6-9, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17

1. What do you think Paul means by don't be anxious about anything? Do you think he's saying never allow worry or anxiety to enter your mind or don't live anxiously? Is there a difference?
2. Re-read verse 7 out loud. What do these words mean to you? How does the thought of "the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your heart and mind" make you feel? Do you feel like you have that? Do you think that is possible?
3. How do you think verses 8-9 are related to verses 6-7? Why do you think it's important that we fix our minds on the things Paul lists and practice what we have learned from God's word to break free from anxiety?

4. At the end of verse 8, Paul says to think (or meditate in some versions) about such things. What does that mean to think about these things?
5. Why is it important to rejoice always? What does it mean to rejoice always? Does it mean always putting on a happy face and pretending everything is fine? Or is it something else?

BRINGING IT HOME

1. Have you experienced debilitating anxiety (such as panic attacks)? What happened? How did you break free, or are you still experiencing it? What are you doing about it?
2. Read Romans 12:2. What is the pattern of the world? What does it mean to have your mind renewed? How are you transformed when your mind is renewed? Why do you think Paul tells us that we have to be transformed in this way before we can learn, test, and approve of God's perfect and pleasing will?
3. When you're not feeling positive, do you still choose to rejoice anyway? How can you/do you choose to rejoice even when you're not feeling positive?
4. What does grace mean? What does it mean for you to respond with grace? Think of a situation that typically annoys you - in those kinds of situations, do you usually respond with grace?
5. Think of your answer to the above question. If you don't typically respond with grace, what specifically will you do to change your way?
6. Read James 1:19-21. What does this passage teach us about how to respond with grace? What does it mean to "be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger"? Does this describe the way you usually approach life? If your gut reaction is no, what will you do about that?
7. What does getting "rid of all evil and moral filth" in our life have to do with responding with grace? Why do you think James includes this?

Freedom From Anxiety

8. Paul tells us the Lord is near. What specifically are you doing to respond to the Lord being near to you so you can draw near to Him?
9. Read 2 Corinthians 10:5. Are you applying this passage to your daily life? How? When you do, how does God respond?
10. How, specifically, do you surrender your thoughts and worries to God?
11. Why do you think Paul included "with thanksgiving" in how we should present our prayers to God? How have you found approaching God with thanksgiving to impact your fear and anxiety level?
12. Do you feel God is guarding your heart and your mind with His peace? Why do you think this is?
13. Chris presented five steps in the roadmap that Paul gives us in Philippians 4 for breaking free from anxiety: 1. Choose a positive mindset, 2. Respond with grace, 3. Remember that God is with you, 4. Stop, drop, and pray, and 5. Start your prayer with thanks. How are you approaching each of these steps? How are you doing with each of them? Do you think you need to be doing anything differently with any of these steps?
14. Spend time reading and re-reading Philippians 4:6-9 this week. Take quiet time with God, tell Him you are listening, and ask Him to speak to you in this passage. What specifically is God telling you as you meditate on this passage? What are you going to do with what He is telling you?

Your Next Steps are **1)** See the final question under Bringing it Home – commit to this as your next step this week. **2)** If you're struggling with fear, anxiety, stress, worry, etc., get prayer. God answers prayer and wants you to experience His freedom in Christ. Also, we have ministries at the church that can walk with you in this, such as Stephen Ministries. **3)** If you're a follower of Jesus but haven't been baptized yet, sign up to be baptized today. **4)** Jesus calls us to be on mission, which includes serving others. All signups are on our homepage at www.vineyardwheeling.com.