

MEDITATION

Introduction

Moving

Imagine the audacity of someone coming to you while you're straining – "just stop!" / Silly, but this is common

And the truth is this – until we deal with this weight, until we find a way to place it where it belongs, we will continue to shoulder it, to let its weight burden us.
It is not enough to simply name our anxiety, although this is powerful – but we must do something with it.
We need to find a place to put it down.
Can feel helpless – what do I do with this weight?



- Two themes I want to point out:
1. Engagement offered for us.
 2. God ready to receive us in Christ.

Replace anxiety with access

“Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace,
that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”
Hebrews 4:16

Dark/Light
Christ

Explain

Before Christ, this access impossible. veil down

The boldness of this – access to a holy place by an unclean sinner
→ Confidence = reverence, but **STUBBORN**

Illustrate

Hesitancy to get help from college counselor

Enemy tricks us into thinking our problems are too small (I shouldn't worry about this)

Enemy tricks us into thinking our problems are too big (I don't want to burden/I can't be helped)

Big or small, in time of need, God wants you to bring it.

Apply

We go to get grace because Jesus died for our access. AGONY

We go to get grace because Jesus beckons us to come. INVITATION

We go to get grace because Jesus alone dispenses the grace and mercy we truly need PROVISION

“Get there, get there, get there!”

Replace pondering with praying

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, 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 your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 4:4-7

what's here?

Explain

Rejoice (gratitude & contentment), reasonableness (sound & considering others), at hand (near and coming)
→ foundations of identity and fruit

Don't be anxious (How annoying...!)
But in all things through prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let requests be made
→ mix request and gratitude
→ God wants to know – more invitation

Then peace which surpasses understanding with guard your hearts and minds in Christ.

Illustrate

We can look at the command without looking at the promises that surround it:
“Ok... how do I figure this out???”

Dr. Marwa Azab, PhD – Psychology Today – Inside the Thinking Maze of Anxious Minds
“Anxious people differ significantly from non-anxious ones in how they assess future events. The following are some of the most common miscalculations of the anxious mind:

- They overestimate the likelihood of negative future events.
- They underestimate how much power they have over changing negative solutions.
- They over-plan to accommodate all possible future scenarios.
- They fail to lower pessimism after success (faulty re-calibration of prediction error).
- They have a hyperfocused attentional system – focus on negative reading of situation.
- They are blind to available safety options.

Apply

Our anxiety says we need to figure it out, God says to “bring it to me.”

Meditate on provision and prayer rather than weighing options and outcomes.

↳ Rejoice in his victory - he has won
Relish in your reasonableness - he is changing you
Know his nearness - he is near now & will deliver
prayer supplication, make requests known - he wants to hear & take action
powerful peace afforded

Replace carrying with casting

“Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God
so that at the proper time he may exalt you,
casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.”
1 Peter 5:6-7

What's here

Explain

Humble yourselves... posture (Psalm 131) – I can't do it/handle it

Casting (throwing) because he cares

Be sober-minded and watchful – watch for schemes – Peter's own failure

Care for what burdens us

Illustrate

Our anxieties are not trivial – they burden us because they are tied to things we care about.

Throwing down vs throwing towards the one who will catch them.

→ Casting – when a weight is really heavy and we are tired, we don't often “place” it down – backpack

Apply

A great weight to you is nothing to a greater God → not that he doesn't care, he's just stronger.
Don't carry the burdens your shoulders weren't meant to hold.
Free to be weak.

Matthew 11:28-30 – “Weary and heavy-laden? I'll provide rest instead. Take my yoke and learn.”
Replace the load with learning...

Gentle + heavy

Replace striving/stressing with seeking

“Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”
Matthew 6:31-33

What's here?

Explain

- Do not be anxious (really...?)
- Seek as gentiles – desire, wish, crave
- Instead... Seek – pursue fully
- First – first in order/priority

Illustrate

This is not a magic formula. It's a hard word.

Some of our anxieties are founded in the kingdom – Jesus was anxious as well (family, food, shelter, safety etc.)

But many of our anxieties are founded in the world and that to which we are accustomed. OR we are anxious because our identity, desires, and expectations are all misplaced.

Ever notice how when something truly scary happens our problems are reprioritized?

Apply

- Jesus is not opposed to planning or effort
- Jesus is not opposed to generosity or helping

Jesus is asking is to truly put first things first

- He cares about your anxiety, but he's saying, “Get to me first, and as a citizen of the kingdom I will help you face and order these worries.”
- I will show you what it means to be truly filled – bread of life
- I will show you what it means to be truly satisfied – living water
- I will show you what it means to be dressed in robes of righteousness

“When you look to everything and everyone else for provision you will never be satisfied because someone else will always have more.”

“I know you need these things, but watch what becomes enough when you come to be first.”

*So, instead of worrying & striving in the dark... anxiety/facess, pondering/prayer, caring/cosby, striving/seeking
most common command in Scripture: fear not - command AND invitation*