

10-29-2023, COTR Texarkana

Title: Don't Stop...Keep Going!

Purpose: Provoke people to trust and depend on God instead of being controlled by panic, fear, worry and anxiety.

Truth for Today: Panic, fear, worry, and anxiety are enemies to be resisted and a door to greater dependence on God.

Text: Matthew 24:6, Psalm 56:3

Topic: Panic, Fear, Worry, Anxiety, Trust, Faith, Courage

Series Title: "Your Best Life Now" ...is found by following God's ways!

Series purpose: Provoke people to embrace the path of Biblical truth to have a blessed life now and rewards in eternity.

Don't Stop...Keep Going!

I. Introduction

A. Review Series Pic Path: "Your Best Life, Now". We're learning how following the Biblical path will lead us to a blessed life now and rewards in eternity.

B. Last week we talked Israel, War, and Armageddon... Watching, Ready, and Eager. We ended with Jesus' words about how we should live in the last days. [Matthew 24:6 (NLT) And you will hear of wars and threats of wars, but **don't panic** (*ESV be alarmed, NKJV troubled, NCV afraid*)...]

1. When we panic, we open a door to fear, worry, and anxiety. These emotions, not our faith in God, will control our life. If Jesus said not to panic, that means it's possible. How? [Ps. 56:3 (ESV) **When I am afraid, I put my trust in you**] Our trust in God can control us instead of fear, worry or anxiety. It doesn't mean we won't struggle but we can keep going. That's what we're going to talk about today. Panic, fear, worry, and anxiety are all an enemy to be resisted but also a door to greater dependence on God. Willpower, medicine, and positive self-talk aren't always enough. Our dependence on God keeps us going.

C. Title: Don't Stop...Keep Going!

II. Definitions of panic, fear, worry, and anxiety (Illus. 4 fingers on a hand)

A. CAMERA Def. Fear/ Panic: Painful emotions and thoughts that come from an expectation that something evil, bad or dangerous will happen.¹ Fear has the power to paralyze us. E.g., going on a mission's trip because something bad may happen.

1. Antidote, [Psalm 23:4 (ESV) Even though I **walk through the valley of the shadow of death** (*NLT the darkest valley*), **I will fear no evil, for**

you are with me (*NLT You are close beside me*)...] It's possible to feel the emotion of fear but not be controlled by it because of faith in God.

[Psalm 56:3 (ESV) **When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.**]

B. CAMERA Def. Worry/ Anxious/ Anxiety: Being overly concerned and mentally tormented that something bad will happen. Worry is consuming. Worry and anxiety over something can control our thinking and feelings and make us feel afraid.²

1. Testimony: After LaNell's battle with cancer, I had a panic attack after church one Sunday and went to the hospital. They couldn't find anything wrong, but the attacks become so severe I passed out several times. It began a 10 year battle I'm still fighting. (Tinnitus trigger) I've found some anxiety is controllable, but some is an involuntary response from the body's nervous system that isn't easily controlled. Anxiety can affect us mentally, physically, and spiritually and be a tool for satan to paralyze our life. E.g., anxious in grocery store and left.

2. Anxiety may knock me down, but I don't let it stop me. [Phil. 4:6–7 (NLT) Don't worry (*ESV be anxious*) about anything; instead, **pray about everything**. Tell God what you need, and **thank him** for all he has done. ⁷ Then you will experience **God's peace**...His peace will guard your hearts and minds...]

C. On a positive note, panic, worry, fear, and anxiety make us realize we can't control everything, and we need God. Depending on God is a good thing.

III. Bible heroes faced worry, fear, and anxiety.

A. Paul, [2 Cor. 7:5–6 (NLT)...in Macedonia, there was no rest for us. **We faced conflict from every direction**, with battles on the outside and **fear on the inside.**]

B. David, [Psalm 55:1–5 (NLT) ...O God...²...**I am overwhelmed by my troubles...**⁴ **My heart pounds in my chest. The terror of death** assaults me. ⁵ **Fear and trembling overwhelm me, and I can't stop shaking.**] David also wrote, [Psalm 56:3 (ESV) **When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.**]

C. Both these men faced panic, fear, worry and anxiety but they didn't let these emotions control their lives. Their faith in God enabled them to keep going. Faith worked for them, and it'll work for us.

IV. What can we do to win the battle with panic, fear, anxiety, and worry?

A.#1: Take care of our physical body's needs. Context: Mt. Carmel, [1 Kings 19:1–5 (NLT) Ahab...told Jezebel everything Elijah had done...² So Jezebel sent this message to Elijah: "May the gods...kill me if by this time tomorrow I have not killed you..."³ **Elijah was afraid and fled for his life...**⁴ Then he went on **alone** into the wilderness...and **prayed that he might die...**⁵ Then he lay down and **slept...** But as he was sleeping, an angel touched him and told him, "**Get up and eat!**"]

1. We are body, soul, and spirit. If we neglect our physical body's needs, we will suffer emotionally. If we're stressed out, not sleeping, or eating right our emotional state may be stronger than our spiritual ability to fight back.

2. See a Dr. Maybe something physically is affecting your emotions but don't assume a drug can totally fix the problem, E.g., my anxiety.

Counselor said medication may help but you've got to fight the feeling.

B. CAMERA #2: Renew our mind with truth and spiritual facts from God's Word; don't let what you feel control what you believe. Fight the negative feelings with God's Word.

1. E.g., going in surgery or a big meeting, [Isaiah 41:10 (ESV) **fear not, for I am with you...** I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you...] Faith in God will help you make it through the emotional battle.

2. Jesus used the Bible to fight satan's mental assault. [Mt. 4:2–4 (NLT) For forty days...he fasted and became very **hungry.** ³ During that time the **devil came and said to him,** "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread."⁴ But Jesus told him, "**No! The Scriptures say,** 'People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"] E.g., my darkest hour with anxiety, [Philippians 1:6 (ESV) And I am sure of this, that **he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion..**]

C. #3: Embrace the crisis as a door to get closer to God.

1. [2 Cor. 1:8–11 (NLT)...you ought to know...about the trouble we went through... We were...overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure...⁹ In fact, **we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely (NIRV depend) only on God, who raises the dead.**] Panic, fear, worry, and anxiety are both an enemy to be resisted and a door to trust God. E.g., pers test.

D.#4: Seek out an encourager

1. [2 Cor. 7:5–6 (NLT) When we arrived in Macedonia, there was no rest for us. We faced conflict from every direction, with battles on the outside and **fear on the inside.** ⁶ **But God...encouraged us by the arrival of Titus.]** We all need someone to help us fight our battles. E.g., LaNell praying & quoting Scripture.

V. Conclusion, #5, We must take courage, face our fears, and act, despite how we feel.

A. Context, Paul arrested, [Acts 23:10–11 (ESV) And when the dissension became violent, the tribune, afraid that **Paul would be torn to pieces** by them, commanded the soldiers to...bring him into the barracks. ¹¹ The following night **the Lord stood by him** and said, “**Take courage (NCV be brave)**, for as you have testified...about me in Jerusalem, so you must testify also in Rome.”] It would have been easier for Paul to quit rather than keep on following God’s path for his life. Bravery is a choice.

1. E.g., me pass out Sat night, got up and preached SAM.

2. If you’re struggling with panic, fear, worry or anxiety, what are you going to let win, your feelings or your faith in God? You may be afraid or anxious but don’t stop; keep going if you want to live your best life.

VI. Response

A. Prayer

B. Souls

VII. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

1. Webster, N. (2006). In [*Noah Webster’s first edition of An American dictionary of the English language*](#). Foundation for American Christian Education.

2. Balz, H. R., & Schneider, G. (1990–). In [*Exegetical dictionary of the New Testament*](#) (Vol. 2, p. 409). Eerdmans.

VIII. Supplemental Material

A. Paul and Luke, [Acts 27:18–20 (NIV) We took such a violent battering from the storm that the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard...²⁰ When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, **we finally gave up all hope of being saved.]**

B. 2 Corinthians 10:4–5 (ESV) For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. ⁵ We destroy arguments

and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,

1. E.g. money, job loss. Matthew 6:31–33 (NLT) “So don’t worry about these things, saying, ‘What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?’”³² These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs.³³ Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.
 2. This is more than mental gymnastics.
- C. Thoughts of worry, fear and anxiety grow bigger and bigger the more we think about them. We fight this mental battle with truth of God’s Word.
- D. Satan uses fear to stop us. [1 Samuel 17:4–44 (NLT) Then Goliath, a Philistine champion...came out...to face the forces of Israel. He was over nine feet tall!...⁴¹ Goliath walked out toward David...⁴² sneering in contempt at this ruddy-faced boy...⁴⁴ “Come over here, and I’ll give your flesh to the birds and wild animals!” Goliath yelled.⁴⁵ David replied to the Philistine, “You come to me with sword, spear, and javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD...⁴⁶ Today the LORD will conquer you, and I will kill you and cut off your head...and the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel!⁴⁷ ...This is the LORD’s battle, and he will give you to us!”]
- E. Get closer to God in prayer...
1. Jesus Gethsemane to find strength peace and direction. Mark 14:32–41 (NLT) They went to the olive grove called Gethsemane, and Jesus said, “Sit here while I go and pray.”³³ He took Peter, James, and John with him, and he became deeply troubled and distressed.³⁴ He told them, “My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.”³⁵ He went on a little farther and fell to the ground. He prayed that, if it were possible, the awful hour awaiting him might pass him by.³⁶ “Abba, Father,” he cried out, “everything is possible for you. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.”...⁴¹ When he returned to them the third time, he said, “Go ahead and sleep. Have your rest. But no—the time has come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.