

Be Anxious for Nothing part 2

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Philippians 4:6-9 (NLT) Don't worry 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, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. ⁸ And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. ⁹ Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you.

Paul gives us two exhortations for prevailing over worry: Pray about everything and get your thinking right.

1. Pray about everything

Philippians 4:6 (NLT) Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.

Worry is never based on actuality, but rather on possibility. What happens if I lose my job, we run out of money, I die, or things don't go as planned?

Worry is always focused on the negative possibilities, whereas faith is focused on One who cares for us and through whom everything is possible.

Paul, a student of Christ who aspired to be like Him, urges His followers to trust in the Father who cares for them rather than worry. We entrust ourselves to God through authentic prayer.

Imagine if every time we faced a significant challenge, we surrounded ourselves with prayer, worship, and thanksgiving.

Praying first allows us to avoid making emotional decisions, which are not always the best because our minds are clouded by sorrow, confusion, and distress.

Entrusting oneself to God in prayer means bringing our specific petitions to Him and then submitting to His sovereign control and will.

You see this in so many of King David's Psalms. There are times when he was going through so much, and he would talk about the situation and then all of a sudden, he starts talking about God, His nature, His attributes and then David rests in that.

Psalms 3:1-3 (NLT) O LORD, I have so many enemies; so many are against me. ² So many are saying, "God will never rescue him!" ³ But you, O LORD, are a shield around me; you are my glory, the one who holds my head high. ⁴ I cried out to the LORD, and he answered me from his holy mountain.

Psalms 13-16 (NLT) O LORD, how long will you forget me? Forever? How long will you look the other way? ² How long must I struggle with anguish in my soul, with sorrow in my heart every day? How long will my enemy have the upper hand? ³ Turn and answer me, O LORD my God! Restore the sparkle to my eyes, or I will die. ⁴ Don't let my enemies gloat, saying, "We have defeated him!" Don't let them rejoice at my downfall. ⁵ But I trust in your unfailing love. I will rejoice because you have rescued me. ⁶ I will sing to the LORD because he is good to me.

When we pray we entrust ourselves to God resting in His unfailing love and care for us.

1 Peter 5:6-7 (NLT) So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honor. ⁷ Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.

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.

Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT) Don't worry 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, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

2. Get your thinking right

Philippians 4:8 (NLT) And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.

To worry is to wrestle with negative thoughts in our minds. It's like our minds don't get quiet. It continues to analyze and imagine every negative possibility.

Paul understands that the mind can be overtaken with worry but, he gives us two simple things to do instead. Pray about everything and get your thinking right. Switch the channel!

(BNB) In conclusion, my friends, fill your minds with those things that are good and that deserve praise: things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and honorable.

If you compare this list to David's description of the Word of God in Psalm 19:7-9, you will see a parallel.

Psalms 19:7-9 (NLT) The instructions of the LORD are perfect, reviving the soul. The decrees of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. ⁸ The commandments of the LORD are right, bringing joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are clear, giving insight for living. ⁹ Reverence for the LORD is pure, lasting forever. The laws of the LORD are true; each one is fair.

The Christian who fills his heart and mind with God's Word will have a built-in sensor for detecting wrong thoughts.

Once we get our thoughts under the control of the truth of God and His Word, our emotions will follow.

The reason we as Christians are fearful and anxious about the concerns of life is because many times lack depth of knowledge concerning God's nature, attributes, and promises.

God is holy, all-knowing, all-powerful, all-wise, unchanging, impartial, infinite, incomprehensible, just, patient, love, mercy and a good, good Father who cares for His children.

"With the goodness of God to desire our highest welfare, the wisdom of God to plan it, and the power of God to achieve it, what do we lack? Surely we are the most favored of all creatures."

A.W. Tozer (The Knowledge of the Holy)

When anxious thoughts begin to rise in our minds, we need to ask ourselves, "Is what I am thinking true about God, particularly of what Jesus says in Matthew 6 of God's fatherly care of me?"

If we truly want the peace of God, if we want joy instead of misery then we need have a relationship with Christ, we need to align our thoughts with His thoughts in the word, we need to set up a time for daily prayer and need to be thankful for all he has already done for us.

A worry-free mind is a Christ centered mind. We need to be like Jesus. He didn't worry so why should we.