

Dealing with Worry and Anxiety

George Stahnke 10/16/2016

For the past several weeks, Pastor Steve has talked about biblical prophecies indicating that we are in the last days. I agree. Daily we hear about the increase of lawlessness, wars, pestilence, famine, natural disasters, and the threat of economic collapse. We see the increase of false teachers and heretical doctrines in the church, and many people walking away from faith in God. There is no doubt, we live in perilous times!

It is no wonder that so many Christians become anxious as they contemplate their future in a world seemingly gone mad. Add to this, the everyday concerns that we all have regarding personal needs, marriage and family. It can be overwhelming!

The apostle Paul, writing to the church at Philippi, said, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God." (Philippians 4:6 NKJV)

Strong's G3309: μεριμνάω merimnáō, mer-im-nah'-o; from G3308; to be anxious about--concern; to be troubled with cares (NASB) a distracting care (Vines)

"The prohibition is of that painful anxiety which is inevitable in all who feel themselves alone in mere self-dependence amidst the difficulties and dangers of life." –Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers

"There is a care of diligence which is our duty, and agrees with a wise forecast and due concern; but there is a care of fear and distrust, which is sin and folly, and only perplexes and distracts the mind." –Matthew Henry Commentary

"The resolution of this problem probably lies in viewing anxiety as concern that may become fretful and inappropriate if taken too far." –Constable's Notes

According to Webster, anxiety is "a painful or apprehensive uneasiness of mind usually over an impending or anticipated ill; fearful concern or interest; an abnormal and overwhelming sense of apprehension and fear often marked by physiological signs (as sweating, tension, and increased pulse), by doubt concerning the reality and nature of the threat, and by self-doubt about one's capacity to cope with it."

Common Examples of worry/anxiety

Mathew 6:27-28, 31, 34: *And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? 28 And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin 31 Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'* 34 *"Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?"*

Singleness and Marriage

1 Corinthians 7: 32- 34: *I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord. 33But the married man is anxious about worldly things, how to please his wife, 34and his interests are divided. And the unmarried or betrothed woman is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit. But the married woman is anxious about worldly things, how to please her husband.*

Anxiety-Heaviness-Fear

Proverbs 12:25a: *Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down* (ESV)

Strong's H1674 נֶאֱגָה dē'agah, deh-aw-gaw'; anxiety, anxious care, heaviness, (anxious fear – Net Notes)

Jeremiah 49:23 (AMP): *Concerning Damascus [in Syria]. "Hamath and Arpad are perplexed and shamed, For they have heard bad news; They are disheartened; Troubled and anxious (dē'agah) like a [storm-tossed] sea Which cannot be calmed."*

Common Signs and Symptoms

- Increased heart rate
- Unexplained sweating
- Shaking
- Inability to breathe deeply
- Hyperventilating
- Feeling cold for no reason
- Having hot flashes for no reason
- Stomach cramps
- Feelings of dizziness

To deal with worry and anxiety, you must **GUARD** your heart.

Proverbs 4:23 (NLT): *Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.*

“Heart” (v. 23): usually means “mind” but it has a much broader meaning that includes the emotions, the will, and even the whole inner person.

➤ **Give it to God**

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

➤ **Pray-Pray-Pray**

Philippians 4:6 (AMP): *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.”*

Ephesian 6:18: *praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints*

1 Corinthians 14:15: *I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also.*

Psalm 62:8 (ESV): *Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us.*

➤ **Take it one day at a time.**

Matthew 6:34 (AMP): *So do not worry or be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will have worries and anxieties of its own. Sufficient for each day is its own trouble.*

➤ **Have faith in the moment.**

Luke 12:11-12 (AMP): *And when they bring you before the synagogues and the magistrates and the authorities, do not be anxious [beforehand] how you shall reply in defense or what you are to say. 12 For the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour and moment what [you] ought to say.*

➤ **Worship**

Philippians 4:4 (AMP): *Rejoice in the Lord always [delight, take pleasure in Him]; again I will say, rejoice!*

➤ **God's Promise**

Philippians 4:7 (AMPC): *And God's peace [shall be yours, that tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and being content with its earthly lot of whatever sort that is, that peace] which transcends all understanding shall garrison and mount guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*

----- Additional Notes -----



While we cannot control the thoughts that come into our minds, it is important to control the thoughts that stay there. This is not an easy task due to the speed at which our thoughts create feeling. Feelings produce behaviors, which, in turn, reinforce our thoughts. Prolonged anxiety can cause deep emotional upheaval resulting in dysfunctional behavior. The battle to overcome anxiety must begin with our thoughts!

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NKJV): *For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that*

exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

Additional suggestions for Overcoming Anxiety

1. Identify the stimulus that generated the unwanted worry/anxious thoughts. Ask yourself . . .

- Where was I? _____
- Who was I with? _____
- What was I doing? _____
- What happened? _____
- What am I afraid of? _____

2. In a voice that you can hear, engage in worship, prayer, and thanksgiving.

Philippians 4:4-7 (AMP): *Rejoice in the Lord always [delight, gladden yourselves in Him]; again I say, Rejoice! 5 Let all men know and perceive and recognize your unselfishness (your considerateness, your forbearing spirit). The Lord is near [He is coming soon]. 6 Do not fret or have any anxiety about anything, but in every circumstance and in everything, by prayer and petition (definite requests), with thanksgiving, continue to make your wants known to God. 7 And God's peace [shall be yours, that tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and being content with its earthly lot of whatever sort that is, that peace] which transcends all understanding shall garrison and mount guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*

3. Engage in positive thinking.

Philippians 4:8 (NKJV): *Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.*

1 Peter 5:7 (AMP): *Casting the whole of your care [all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all] on Him, for He cares for you affectionately and cares about you watchfully.*

Psalms 55:22 (AMP): *Cast your burden on the LORD [release it] and He will sustain and uphold you*

John 14:27 (AMP): *Peace I leave with you; My [own] peace I now give and bequeath to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. [Stop allowing yourselves to be agitated and disturbed; and do not permit yourselves to be fearful and intimidated and cowardly and unsettled.]*

I would encourage you to watch the 1960 Disney film, *Pollyanna*, starring Hayley Mills. Learn to practice “the glad game.”

4. Engage in positive activities.

Physical activity can improve your mood and help you sleep better. Walk, jog, or work out. Try to avoid the junk food and eat healthy. Good nutrition helps you physically and mentally. Getting enough quality sleep can help you feel better during the day.

Practice relaxation techniques. A shower, deep breathing exercises, or time in a quiet place to collect your thoughts can help relieve stress and make you feel more at ease.

5. Get involved.

Avoid the temptation to isolate. Volunteer, join a club, or take up a hobby to share your strengths, abilities and wisdom with others.

6. Get help

If your anxiety persists you may want to speak to your pastor, doctor, or a mental health professional.

7. Read the book “The Anxiety Cure” by Archibald Hart

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