

ANXIETY, STRESS, PEOPLE AND GOD

Matthew 6:25-34, Psalm 4:1-8

“Many of us crucify ourselves between two thieves – regret for the past and fear of the future.” **Unknown**

“Anxiety is the rust of life, destroying its brightness and weakening its power. A childlike and abiding trust in Providence is best preventive and remedy.” **Unknown**

“Never trouble trouble til trouble troubles you.” **Unknown**

“Anxiety does not empty tomorrow of its sorrows, but only empties today of its strengths.” **C.H. Spurgeon**

“Pray, and let God Worry.” **Martin Luther**

“Anxiety is the natural result when our hopes are centered in anything short of God and His will for us.” **Billy Graham**

“The beginning of anxiety is the end of faith, and the beginning of true faith is the end of anxiety.” **George Muller**

“Two things come between our souls and unshadowed fellowship – sin and care. We must be as resolute to cast our care upon the Lord as to confess our sins to Him.” **F.B. Meyer**

“Anxiety is the interest paid on trouble before it is due.” **William R. Inge**

“It is easier to be busy than to be quiet.” **C.H. Mackintosh**

- Biblical direction

Always be glad in the Lord: I will repeat it, be glad. Let your forbearing spirit be known to everyone – the Lord is near. Do not be over-anxious about anything, but by prayer and earnest pleading, together with thanksgiving, let your requests be unreservedly made known in the presence of God. And then the peace of God, which transcends all our powers of thought, will be a garrison to guard your hearts and minds in union with Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever wins respect, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovable, whatever is of good repute – if there is any virtue or anything deemed worthy of praise – cherish the thought of these things.

Philippians 4:4-8 Weymouth

The Cure for Anxiety

²⁵ “For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly

Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? ²⁷ And who of you by being worried can add a *single* hour to his life? ²⁸ And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, ²⁹ yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. ³⁰ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, *will He* not much more *clothe* you? You of little faith! ³¹ Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' ³² For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. ³⁴ "So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Matthew 6:25-34 NASB

- "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness." (v33)

"First be eager to have God as your
King..." **Beck**

"But you must make His kingdom and
uprightness before Him, your greatest
care..." **Goodspeed**

- "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness." (v33)
 - First in priority: that is a decision you make.
 - First in prominence: that is a declaration you establish.
 - First...as in first love: that is a devotion of heart.
 - First in order: that is a direction of will to an order given.
 - First in schedule: that is a determination of commitment.
 - First place: that is a definition...a place to start as in first base, first lap, of first point.
- "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness. (v33)
 - His government, His Lordship, His rule, His reign, the realm of His dominion.
 - The effect of His kingdom...righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Romans 14:17 NASB

- "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness. (v33)

- Righteousness...God's rightful claim on our lives which we recognize and submit to by receiving His righteousness as a gift.

For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:17 NASB

⁸ More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, ⁹ and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith, ¹⁰ that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; ¹¹ in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. **Philippians 3:8-10 NASB**

I will rejoice greatly in the Lord, my soul will exult in my God; for He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

Isaiah 61:10 NASB

“Righteousness is not primarily an ethical quality but a right relationship; the divine acquittal from guilt and sin. To seek the kingdom of God means to seek God's righteousness and to receive the kingdom of God means to receive the accompanying righteousness.” ***George Eldon Ladd The Presence of the Future***

- “All these things will be added to you...” (v33)

Answer me when I call, O God of my righteousness! You have relieved me in my distress; be gracious to me and hear my prayer. ² O sons of men, how long will my honor become a reproach? *How long* will you love what is worthless and aim at deception? *Selah.* ³ But know that the LORD has set apart the godly man for Himself; The LORD hears when I call to Him. ⁴ Tremble, and do not sin; Meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still. *Selah.* ⁵ Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and trust in the LORD. ⁶ Many are saying, “Who will show us *any* good?” Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O LORD! ⁷ You have put gladness in my heart, more than when their grain and new wine abound. ⁸ In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for You alone, O LORD, make me to dwell in safety.

Psalms 4 NASB

“...If God has you, then He has your yesterdays and your tomorrows. He has your tomorrows and will provide grace and power to meet them. But only as they come. He will not provide for what is not yet here. His grace is like manna – when kept over for the next day, it spoiled. It has to be eaten day by day. **E. Stanley Jones, *Growing Spiritually***

- **Psalm 4 – stress relief! (v1-2)**
 - You have relieved my distress. (v1)
 - You have freed me when I was hemmed in and enlarged me when I was in distress. (v1 **Amplified**)
 - The word distress means ‘to bind up, tie up, restrict...it denotes a narrow place in life which one is bound or restricted...the trial and tribulation experienced in life.’ **Mounce’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words**
 - Pursuing and loving worthless and empty things is a ticket to deception, disillusionment and stress. (v2)
- The Lord has set apart the godly man for Himself; the Lord hears when I call to Him. (v3)
- We are His, we are purchased by His blood.
- He loves us, and He jealously desires His Spirit that He has placed within us.

Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: “He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us”?

James 4:5 NASB

Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, “The Lord knows those who are His,” and, “Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness.” 2 Timothy 2:19 NASB
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- Tremble and don’t sin...meditate and be still.

Tremble, and do not sin; Meditate in your heart upon your bed, and be still. <i>Selah.</i>

⁵Offer the sacrifices of righteousness, and trust in the Lord.

Psalms 4:4-5 NASB

- The idea is not to get out of control due to frustration, anger, or anxiety...stressed out!

- Instead of stressing out...take the pressure to Him...cast your cares on Him.
- Meditate...take control of your thoughts and then give them to Him. Pray...be silent...worship...refuse to disobey...open yourself to Him and His Word.

When my anxious thoughts multiply within me, Your consolations delight my soul.

Psalms 94:19 NASB

- People pressures and stressors; “No one is for you and no one can care enough to be good to you.”

Many are saying, “Who will show us *any* good?” Lift up the light of Your countenance upon us, O Lord! **Psalms 4:6 NASB**

- Insensitive people, the voice of the adversary and the accuser all come to darken the pathways of your life.
- The Bible says:

⁵From *my* distress I called upon the Lord; The Lord answered me *and set me* in a large place. ⁶The Lord is for me; I will not fear; What can man do to me?

⁷The Lord is for me among those who help me; Therefore I will look *with satisfaction* on those who hate me. ⁸It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man. ⁹It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in princes. **Psalms**

118:5-9 NASB

¹³You pushed me violently so that I was falling, but the Lord helped me. ¹⁴The Lord is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation. **Psalms**

118:13-14 NASB

- God puts us in a ‘large place’ and lets us know, He is for us among those who help us. (**v5-9**) He is for us and so are others!
- God comes and deposits gladness in our hearts and returns us to a place of peace!