

Do Not Be Anxious

Introduction

Worry is a normal emotion and thought that we humans all experience. In fact, a study by psychologists from Harvard University in 2010 noted that 46.9% of our waking hours are usually spent thinking about other things than what we're dealing with in the moment: things that happened in the past, things that might happen in the future or may never happen at all. Sometimes our mind's wandering can help us learn and plan. Sometimes it can turn to rumination and anxiety. Jesus knows the worries of this world and, by his life example and teachings, offers us some practical tips in helping our souls find peace when we get stuck in worry. Top of the list is focusing our minds and hearts on God, his love for us and his plans and purpose for our lives. When we don't know what choice to make, turn to God in prayer. When we get focused on the negative, remember the promises and blessings of God. When our thoughts are spiraling, interrupt them with God's Word. When anxiety gets out of control, seek the help of trusted friends, family, and professionals that God has put in your life. For when we seek God and his kingdom during our anxious times, God promises to meet us in our need, "and the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." – Philippians 4:7

Read Your Bible

- Matthew 6:25-34
- Philippians 4:4-9

Apply God's Word to Your Life:

1. What things does Jesus lift up as things that can cause worry in life?
2. What would you add to that list?
3. Who does God care and provide for according to Jesus?
4. When have you been caught in a cycle of worry and how did you seek to remedy it?
5. What does Jesus offer as an antidote to worry?
6. How would offering every situation to God in prayer and praise (Philippians 4:4-7) help you in those moments of worry in life?
7. The Apostle Paul offers practical steps in Philippians for Jesus' teaching. Philippians 4:8-9 invites us to focus on "whatever is noble...right...pure...lovely...admirable." What comes to mind for you when you think of those things?

Reflecting on the text:

1. What have you learned about God?
2. What have you learned about the world?
3. What have you learned about yourself?

Pray

Gracious God, you hold together the world and are mindful of all your creation. You clothe, feed, and provide for all your creation. The sin of the world and the sin in us causes me to forget this and not live according to this truth. Help us to turn to you in every circumstance and transform our worrying thoughts into opportunities to seek you more. Give us the peace that passes all understanding so that

those around us can see your hand at work and come to know the healing grace of Jesus in their lives.
Amen.