

Anxiety

Overcoming worry and fear through trust in God's sovereign care

Anxiety afflicts even the strongest believers. The rapid heartbeat, racing thoughts, and overwhelming dread that accompany worry are part of fallen human experience. Scripture neither minimizes anxiety nor merely tells us to "just stop worrying." Instead, it provides the remedy: redirecting our focus from circumstances to the God who controls all circumstances.

Jesus addressed anxiety directly in the Sermon on the Mount. "Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on" (Matthew 6:25). His argument moves from greater to lesser: if God feeds birds and clothes lilies, will He not much more care for His children? Anxiety questions God's wisdom or goodness; trust affirms both.

The biblical antidote to anxiety is prayer combined with thanksgiving. "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7). This is not passive resignation but active transfer of burdens to the One who can bear them.

Fear in its various forms—fear of man, fear of the future, fear of death—finds its answer in the fear of God. "The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe" (Proverbs 29:25). When God looms larger than our problems, anxiety loses its grip. "Fear not" appears throughout Scripture because God knows our tendency to fear—and commands us to counter it with faith.

Jesus on Worry

Christ's teaching on anxiety

Matthew 6:25-27 — Take no thought for your life

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

Matthew 6:31-34 — Seek first the kingdom

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

Luke 12:22-26 — Consider the ravens

And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

John 14:27 — Let not your heart be troubled

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Prayer for Peace

Exchanging anxiety for prayer

Philippians 4:6-7 — Be careful for nothing

Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

1 Peter 5:7 — Casting all your care upon him

Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

Psalms 55:22 — Cast thy burden upon the LORD

Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.

Psalms 94:19 — Thy comforts delight my soul

In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.

Fear of Man

Overcoming people-pleasing anxiety

Proverbs 29:25 — Fear of man bringeth a snare

The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.

Isaiah 51:7 — Fear not the reproach of men

Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.

Hebrews 13:6 — The Lord is my helper; I will not fear

So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

Matthew 10:28 — Fear not them which kill the body

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

God's Promises to the Fearful

Assurances for the anxious

Isaiah 41:10 — Fear not; I am with thee

Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

Psalms 23:4 — I will fear no evil

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Psalms 56:3 — When I am afraid, I will trust

What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.

Romans 8:15 — Not received spirit of bondage to fear

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

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