

## "Dealing with Anxiety"

The future is uncertain, and life is full of challenges. How can we deal with it? Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." Today we're exploring how to deal with all of our anxieties.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. Oh, I'm thankful God has made His way known to us in the Bible. The Lord's way leads to peace today and salvation forever. God's way blesses us with comfort and assurance, with grace and joy, and with hope and promise. Nothing will bring you greater blessing than having a right relationship with the Lord. The answers that you need to the most pressing problems of life are found in Jesus Christ and His word. And that's why we continually point to the Lord's way. Thanks for taking time with us today. We want to be a part of your life each week.

Life challenges us with many worries and pressures. Many adults find it hard to get a good night's sleep, worried about keeping appointments, growing financial problems, declining health, or a host of family difficulties. One lady recently told me, "I just can't help worrying about things. I keep wondering what's going to happen to me." This lady believed in God, but she took her focus off God and onto her troubles. This left her anxious and upset. She had gotten into the habit of worrying about things that she couldn't change—and life was miserable. What could she do?

The world in which Jesus lived was also filled with heartaches and anxieties, just as today's world. He could see the hurts and problems people faced everyday. He knew about poverty and disease and grief. In His day, there were no hospitals, no social security, no fire houses, and no ambulances. Life was never easy. In the most well-known sermon ever preached Jesus devoted ten verses to the problem of worrying. In just a few verses he gave such a great comfort and reassurance to His followers that it is worth our time to listen closely to His wisdom.

We offer this study free on reasons to overcome our anxieties, that are found in the bible. If you'd like a printed copy or a CD of our study and you live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have materials free on our website at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org).

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from Philippians 4:4 to 9, and then explore our need to be come to Jesus.

Our reading today comes from the book of Philippians chapter 4 verses 4 to 9 and it gives the answer to finding peace. Let's read together.

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

That's a great encouraging passage from God's word. Let's pray together. Oh, Father we're thankful that You lead us in the ways that bring us peace and hope and life. Help us to be good servants. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 6:25 to 34, "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? 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? And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life? And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these.

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! Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Jesus said, "Do not be worried about your life." Now, older versions say, "take no thought for your life." Well, this phrase suggests in today's language that we're to live without care or caution; but that's not the point. Jesus was cautioning against the kind of anxiety that forgets God and that sees no hope for tomorrow. Faith sees the help of God in tough times; it trusts that God will take care of us. Anxiety, on the other hand, is full of doubt and fear. Anxiety is doubt at work; it is always uncertain. It fears the worst and ignores the watching care of a loving Father in heaven. It forgets God's promises.

Verse 25 asks, "Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?" If God our Father has given us life, surely we can trust him to provide the food and clothes we need to sustain life. Anyone who has given the extravagant gift will not be stingy or careless with the smaller gifts. In Romans 8:32, Paul said, "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?"

In verse 26 Jesus speaks about the birds, and how God feeds them. They don't worry about piling up goods for an unforeseen future; and yet their lives continue, because God feeds them. Jesus asked in verse 27, "And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life?" Other versions translate this, "which can add a cubit to his stature?" (that is, "eighteen inches to his height"). Either way, worry is pointless. It doesn't help matters. Anxiety rather than helping you with your problem causes nervousness, sleeplessness, and irritability. An anxious person often jumps the gun and does things hastily, which may cause more problems than he desired.

In verses 28 to 30, Jesus pointed to the flowers of the field. And He said, "And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. 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!" God takes care of His people. If he hasn't forgotten the wildflower, which used to help start a fire, now He won't forget you. You're worth far more.

Jesus called the anxious one a person of "little faith," little trust in His goodness and kindness. The Lord compares the worrier to the Gentiles, who don't know God. He said, "Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' For the Gentiles

eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.” You can expect a pagan or an unbeliever not to know about God, but Jesus expects more out of His followers. When one knows God, one should not have to live in worry and anxiety about the necessities of life.

Jesus’ prescription for the Christian, the believer, is to “seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” (Matthew 6:33 to 34).

We must learn the art of living one day at a time. If we live each day as it comes, and do each task as it arises, then we’ll have the strength and the grace of God to help us through each step. Let’s handle the demands of each day as it comes, not fretting over the unknown things, which may never happen. Anxiety is more about what we don’t know than the One we do know.

Anxiety can’t change the past, however hard we try. Instead of rehearsing in our hearts old failures, and old hurts, and old sins, and old injuries, we’re better off to learn from our past. That way we won’t make the same mistakes in the future. Worry about the future is useless. The biggest troubles are usually those that never happen. Our imagination may dream up things that never happen. Anxiety is a waste of effort and time, since the future that really happens is hardly ever as bad as the future of our fears. Don’t let an over-active imagination keep you from living life, a life of joy and peace, free from upset and worry. God’s prophet said in Isaiah 26 and verse 3 that, “The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, Because he trusts in You.” Peace is the opposite of fear and doubt. A person at peace is confident and unafraid.

Philippians 4:4 to 9, which we read earlier, has the prescription for anxiety. “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.”

First, rejoice in the Lord always. Consider how God has blessed you. Count your blessings every single day. When your mind is on the Lord and His love for you, you won’t get caught up in worrying over the future. You’ll keep your trust and focus on the good God and what He has done for you!

Second, cultivate a forbearing spirit—one that doesn’t react hastily and negatively to everything that happens. Develop a sweet spirit of reasonableness. Grow a heart of understanding that gives others the benefit of the doubt.

Third, remember the Lord is near or “at hand.” He sees and knows everything that happens to you. He’s not distant or unconcerned. God is your Father, and He’ll be very near to you to help you when you need Him.

Fourth, stop worrying about anything. Get out of the habit of getting upset about every unhappy event and disappointment. Examine yourself. How do you react to problems? Do you get emotionally worked up over every little thing? You don’t have to worry. You can do something.

Fifth, in every circumstance pray. Pray with an attitude of thanksgiving. Tell God what you need. Don’t hold back. Let Him know. He’s ready to listen and to help answer your requests. When you ask, the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus. God will place a guard all around you to keep you secure and so that you might be at

peace. God's help means that you can take control of your heart and mind. You don't have to be a slave of anxiety and doubt and fear. You can be at rest with God.

Sixth, decide now where you want your thoughts to live. We decide what we think about all day long. We make the choices that affect our happiness or our misery. Your emotional life will reflect what you choose to think about. Paul said in Philippians 4 verse 8, "Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." Some folks dwell on the ugly, the depressing, the sinful, the impure, the failures, and the critical. It is no wonder their attitudes in life is sour and pessimistic.

Seventh, practice doing God's will. Paul said in verse nine, "The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you." When people follow what they have learned and seen in the Word of God and in genuine Christianity, they'll find a peaceful relationship with God. The righteous man can go to bed at night with peace in his heart, but the wicked man continually worries his sins will be found out. He's always scared and hiding something. The loving person finds peace with others, but the hateful person's life is filled with strife and tension.

Solomon said in Proverbs 3:1-8, "My son, do not forget my teaching, But let your heart keep my commandments; For length of days and years of life And peace they will add to you. Do not let kindness and truth leave you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart. So you will find favor and good repute In the sight of God and man. Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your body And refreshment to your bones." The more we follow the will of God, the more we'll find the peace and grace God gives.

When you're at peace with yourself, at peace with others, and at peace with God, you'll find little to worry about. The best way to peace is through listening to God and through following His Word. Perhaps one reason people are so uptight and anxious is they've never found the peace that God gives. Paul said in Romans 5 and verse 1, "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." It is through faith in Christ and obedience to His will that we enter the peace of God. Don't let another day go by without God's peace in your life. Come to the Lord. Obey the gospel and find God's wonderful peace.

Let's pray together. Oh, Father we are grateful for all Your blessings. For the grace and the peace and the joy that You give us. Father help us to come to You and to approach You always. To find these blessing that You give. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen.

All the water in the world however hard it tried, could never, never sink a ship unless it got inside. All the hardships of this world, Might wear you pretty thin, But they won't hurt you, one least bit, Unless you let them in.

I ask people I counsel from time to time, "Who rules your mind?" That is, who's in charge of what you think? We decide what we'll think about and what we'll ignore. The best thing we can do with worry is to set our minds on something else. The more we focus on the Lord, the less we'll worry about things that don't matter or things that may not happen.

The apostle Peter said in 1 Pet. 5 and verse 7, "casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you." If you let worries burden you, you'll be overloaded and stressed. But if you give them to the

Lord, you can live free. Occasionally people cast their anxieties on Jesus and then take them back. Once you've put a matter in God's hands, trust Him to take care of it. Leave it in His hands.

Draw close to God in faith, love Him, and obey Him. If you want God as your Father, then obey Him as you would a Father. Have you become a Christian? Believe, trust, and love the Lord! Repent of your sins! Confess the name of Jesus and be baptized, immersed in water for the forgiveness of your sins. When you're baptized the Lord will wash away your sins (Acts 22:16) He'll cause you to be born again (John 3 and verse 5). And by faith, when you're baptized, you'll become a child of God (Galatians 3:26 to 27). You can start a whole new life today by responding to the Lord's invitation to follow Him. The way of the Lord leads to peace.

We hope that today's study about overcoming our anxieties has given you assurance and a way to deal with those worries. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy or a CD of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now, you can download these lessons or a newsletter online at our website: [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). There's also a schedule of our programs and a map with the location of churches that are in your area. You can watch SEARCH anytime on YouTube! Just subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry." We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now, don't worry, we're not here to try to exploit you or take away your money. We're here to help you get to heaven.

There's no better day than today to get your life back on track by going to church. There's probably a church of Christ in your area. Why not worship with them today? If you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll be happy to help you find one. We'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend about this program. God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.