ANXIOUS *for*

NOTHING

FINDING CALM *in a* CHAOTIC WORLD

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**Meditate on These Things**

 Read Philippians 4:4-9

OPENING REFLECTION

**"The challenges are great. But our God is greater."**

Friends. We find ourselves in a sober moment. These are uncertain times around the world and fears are rising. People who have never felt anxious before are suddenly weighed down with worry and are not sure what to do next.

Do you need encouragement right about now? Are you feeling anxious and uncertain? Do you find yourself in a season of isolation as events cancel, schools shift online, and churches close their doors to large gatherings?

When I need to stay calm, I turn to this Scripture: “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Phil 4:4-9, NIV).

**Less Fret, More Faith.**

Confront the Chaos

Read Isaiah 6:

1. What pictures, images, or people come to mind when you hear the word ***sovereign***?
2. Consider what sovereign means in your everyday life. Do you believe you have yielded sovereignty to God?

If not, why?

If yes, do you also trust his sovereignty?

1. This chapter emphasizes the concept that “belief always precedes behavior.” Your mind is the rudder of your actions.

What do you know or have you learned about your belief system?

Does your behavior reflect a sturdy belief system? Why or why not?

1. There are many things that might make it hard to trust in the goodness of God’s sovereignty. Read 2 Corinthians 11:23-29, Paul’s long list of perils. Then read in Philippians 1:12-13 Paul’s response to his circumstances.

In what circumstances do you struggle to trust God’s purposes?

Do you feel that God is fair in asking for a pure response like Paul’s? Why or why not?

What keeps you from fully believing that God is a good Father who cares for every detail of your life?

Take the time to bring these obstacles before the Lord and pray, “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!” (Mark 9:24).

1. Hebrews 13:7-8 says, “Remember your leaders…. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (ESV).

Are there people in your life who believed in the steady hand of God when they had much to be anxious about? How did it turn out for them?

How might their examples affect your capacity for trusting God’s sovereignty?

Read Hebrews 11 and meditate on the many faithful who experienced both blessings and hardships in this life, who trusted the immutable God we struggle to trust today. How did their stories conclude? Was trusting in God worth it for them? Why or why not?

How can you use these stories as ammunition against anxiety?

Choose Calm

1. Ponder this statement: “The mind cannot at the same time be full of God and full of fear.”

How might this truth affect how you spend your free time?

What action steps can you take to discipline your mind?

What!!! Did you actually say that, **Discipline your mind.**

1. “Your anxiety decreases as your understanding of your father increases.” Putting this thought into practice, in what way can you pursue a deeper understanding of who God is?

What intentional changes can you make in your daily schedule to ensure that God’s character is at the forefront of you mind?

How would your demeanor change if you would “dare to believe that good things will happen”?

1. Hear this challenge today: “Are you troubled, restless, sleepless? Then rejoice in the Lords sovereignty. I dare you—I double--dog dare you—to expose your worries to an hour of worship. Your concerns will melt like ice on a July sidewalk. Anxiety passes as trust increases.”

This week take up the challenge to expose your worries to an hour of worship.

**Meditation**

Prayer of Saint Patrick

I arise today

Through the strength of heaven;

Light of the sun,

Splendor of fire,

Speed of lightning,

Swiftness of the wind,

Depth of the sea,

Stability of the earth,

Firmness of the rock,

I arise today

Through God’s strength to pilot me;

God’s might to uphold me,

God’s wisdom to guide me,

I arise today

Through the mighty strength

Of the Lord of creation.

**Scriptures**

**Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Philippians 4:4-8**

**The things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ. Philippians 1:12-13**

**Whether their motives are false or genuine, the message about Christ is being preached either way, so I rejoice. And I will continue to rejoice. Philippians 1:18**

**God highly exalted (Jesus) and gave Him the name that is above every name. Philippians 2:9**

**God… works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. Philippians 2:13**

**There is no wisdom, no insight, no plan that can succeed against the Lord. Proverbs 21:30**

**(God) does as he pleases with the powers of heaven and the peoples of the earth. No one can hold back his hand or say to him: “What have you done?” Daniel 4:35**

**(God) sustains all things. Hebrews 1:3**

**(God can) whistle for the fly that is in the farthest part of the rivers of Egypt. Isaiah 7:18**

**Who can act against you without the Lord’s permission? It is the Lord who helps one and harms another. Lamentations 3:37- 38**

**“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;**

**The whole earth is full of His glory!” Isaiah 6:1-3**

**(He) is the Creator, who is blessed forever.**

**Romans 1:25**

**(He) is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Hebrews 13:8**

**(His) years will never end. Psalm 102:27**

**My soul has been rejected from peace; I have forgotten happiness. So I say, “My strength has perished, and so has my hope from the Lord.” Remember my affliction and my wandering, the wormwood and bitterness. Surely my soul remembers and is bowed down within me. This I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope. The Lord’s loving kindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. “The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, to the person who seeks Him. It is good that he waits silently for the salvation of the Lord.**

**Lamentations 3: 17-26**

**In everything God works for the good of those who love him.**

**Romans 8:28**

**He will keep in perfect peace all those who trust in him, whose thoughts turn often to the Lord!**

**Isaiah 26:3**