ANXIOUS *for*

NOTHING

FINDING C ALM *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

1. Max lists several descriptors of anxiety: “a low-grade fear” “edginess,” and “a free-floating sense of dread,” to name a few.

 Even if you’ve never considered yourself to be someone who struggles with anxiety, did any of these descriptions ring true for you? If so, which one(s)?

 If you have recognized anxiety as part of your life for a while now, which aspect did you relate to the most? Why?

1. Define anxiety in your own words based on your experiences. What role does anxiety play in your life?
2. “Anxiety and fear are cousins but not twins.” Do you agree? If so, how do the two manifest themselves differently in your life?
3. Take some time to define your personal anxieties.

What keeps you awake at night or wakes you up early?

What persistently distracts you from the task at hand?

What makes your chest tighten?

If your anxieties change day to day, focus on naming what is currently on your mind and heart.

**Choose Calm**

1. Consider this: “We have been taught that the Christian life is a life of peace, and when we don’t have peace, we assume the problem lies within us.” If this has been your perspective, how does Philippians 4:4-9 make you feel?

Does it motivate you?

Does id discourage you?

Does it feel impossible?

1. “Anxiety is not a sin; it is an emotion.” 4 consistent causes of anxiety: change, pace of life, personal challenges, and aging. (What Aging!!! No.)

Think of a time when change created anxiety in your life. What is it about the nature of change that lends itself to anxiety? Can anyone say that they haven’t experienced change because of Covid 19???

Consider you current pace of life. (Covid 19) Do you live in survival mode? If so, how many items or events on your to-do list do you say yes to out of obligation or a “need to be needed”? Is there something you could say no to that would create some margin in your life? Why or Why not?

Personal challenges can include many different things, but they are often concerns that stick around for a while, perhaps even for a lifetime. That means it’s important to address them. What are some personal challenges (could be due to covid 19) that cause you to worry? Are these concerns outside of you control? If so, are you praying about these issues daily?

What scares you most about getting older? Consider how the Bible talks about age (Prov. 16:31; Isa. 46:4; Job 12:12). Do these verses sound different from the way we as a society talk about aging? If so, how?

1. Read the following passages and note the promise held in each:

Proverbs 3:5-6

Matthew 11:28-30

John 14:27

Psalm 55:22

1 Peter 5:6-7

Psalm 23:4

1. Write down the C.A.L.M. acronym, and place it somewhere accessible to remind yourself that “the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds.”

Celebrate God’s goodness Phil 4:4

Ask God for help v 6

Leave your concerns with him

(with thanksgiving) v 6

Meditate on good things. V 8

Plan your day to include time alone with God!!

Meditation

Dear Lord, You spoke to storms. Would you speak to ours? You calmed the hearts of the apostles. Would you calm the chaos within us? You told them to fear not. Say the same to us. We are weary from our worry, battered and belittled by the gales of life. Oh Prince of Peace, bequeath to us a spirit of calm. As we turn the page in this book, will your turn a new leaf in our lives? Quench anxiety. Stir courage. Let us know less fret and more faith.

In Jesus name, amen.