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.**

Think about… what you think about!

The problem is not your problem but the way you see it.

1. Consider this statement: “You didn’t select your birthplace or birth date. You didn’t choose your parents or siblings. You don’t determine the weather or the amount of salt in the ocean. There are many things in life over which you have no choice. But the greatest activity of life is well within your dominion. You can choose what you think about.”

Do you find it difficult to control what you think about?

Describe an experience when you felt you took control of your thoughts.

1. Do you let your mind wander?

Where does your mind go when you don’t direct it?

How do you feel afterward?

1. We are bombarded every day with information that fights for our brain space (marketers are good at what they do!). Cell phones, social media, and advertisements deliver a ceaseless deluge of content.

What things do you indulge in even though you know you should stay away from them and keep your mind focused on truth? List those things.

Why do you make these choices?

What do you notice about your circumstances or physical state when you are more susceptible to letting down your mental guard?

1. Do you agree with this statement: “Your challenge is not your challenge. Your challenge is the way you think about your challenge. Your problem is not your problem; it is the way you look at it”?

Why or why not?

Fill in the blanks: My problem is not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_; it’s the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I let my mind focus on.

1. Read Philippians 4:8-9 again and write down the attributes Paul encourages us to focus on. Particularly note the very first attribute Paul mentions.

Is the source of your anxiety true?

Has it become a reality, or is it something that might happen?

If it hasn’t happened, don’t dwell on it!

1. On the other hand if the source of your anxiety is a reality, make a list of other truths that are good. These things are just as true as the mountain you face.

Which list will your make a priority in your mind?

How do you think the Holy Spirit plays a role in helping you do this?

1. Whom do you go to when you hear bad news? List at least three people.

Where is God on the list?

What does his position on this list say about your belief in his ability to solve your problems or his desire to hear your prayers?

1. Read Psalm 8 and Psalm 121.

Does anything about God strike you in these passages?

Often our view of our problems looms larger than our view of God. How can you start the day in a way that places the source of your anxiety in proper perspective relative to God’s magnanimous power?

1. Take time to write down today’s anxious thoughts in the form of bullet points, and bring each of them before the Lord with this prayer: “Jesus, this anxious, negative thought just wormed its way into my mind. Is it from you?” Ask Jesus to take away whatever thoughts are not from him.

Meditation

O God, early in the morning I cry to you. Help me to pray and gather my thoughts to you, I cannot do it alone In me it is dark, but with you there is light; I am lonely, but you do not desert me; My courage fails me, but with you there is help; I am restless, but with you there is peace; in me there is bitterness, but with you there is patience; I do not understand your ways, but your know the way for me. Father in Heaven praise and thanks be to you for the night.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer,

A prayer written in Tegel prison, Berlin

Be careful what you think,
    because your thoughts run your life. Proverbs 4:23 NCV

Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Philippians 4:8 NLT

Anxiety weighs down the human heart, Proverbs 12:25 NRSV

 Capture every thought and make it give up and obey Christ. 2 Corinthians 10:5 NCV

 Fasten the belt of truth around your waist, Ephesians 6:14 NRSV

O my soul, bless God,
    don’t forget a single blessing! Psalm 103:2 the message

God Bless you this week!!!