

Saturday, 6/19/21 at 4:00 & Sunday, 6/20/21 at 9:00

anxious *for* NOTHING

Part 1: Celebrate God's Goodness



Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: Whether people admit it or hide it, *many things are trying to make us anxious!* So, I have good news for us in this new series called “Anxious for Nothing.” In part 1, let us *celebrate God’s goodness!*

1. **Less Fret, More Faith:** Fear and anxiety are similar, *but also different, “Fear sees a threat. Anxiety imagines one.”*¹ Fear sees a bear and runs; *anxiety imagines a bear behind every tree – and is nervous!*
 - a. ^{NAU} **Luke 21:34** [Jesus said:] “Be on guard, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with... the worries of life...” Life has problems, *BUT GOD HAS SOLUTIONS!*
 - b. ^{NAU} **Philippians 4:4-8** [This is the key passage of the series:] “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

¹ Max Lucado, Anxious for Nothing (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2017), 4.

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.” // Four good statements of advice, *which we will talk more about in this series (10)*:

- i. Celebrate God’s goodness: How? “Rejoice in the Lord always.”
- ii. Ask God for help: How? “...let your requests be made known to God.”
- iii. Leave your concerns with him: How? “...by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving...”
- iv. Meditate on good things: What? “...honorable, right, pure, lovely, of good repute, excellent, and worthy of praise, dwell on these things.”

2. **Rejoice in the Lord’s Sovereignty**: Paul wrote this to Timothy: **God**, “who is the blessed and only **Sovereign**,” “will bring about” “the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ” “at the proper time...” (1 Tim. 6:14-15 NAU).

- a. How can we “rejoice in the Lord always”? Knowing God is **sovereign** – *almighty and in control of all things!* The Bible says, “There is no wisdom, no insight, no plan that can succeed against the LORD” (Prov. 21:30 NIV).
- b. Anxiety comes from a lack of control: In a WWII study, **Ground troops**, who “endured a constant threat of bomb blitzes, machine guns, and enemy snipers” (23) were anxious, but **fighter pilots**, *who had a much*

higher risk of dying, were not anxious; why? They controlled their planes, while the ground troops could be killed standing still or running away (22-23). “Anxiety increases as perceived control diminishes.... You can’t run the world, but you can entrust it to God” (23-24).

- c. God’s ways are best: Paul wrote: “...my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, so that my imprisonment in *the cause of Christ* has become well known” (Phil. 1:12-13 NAU).
 - d. Let us be aware of our Heavenly Father’s abilities: The 10-year-old son of an orthopedic surgeon twisted his ankle before his first school dance; his father said he would be fine, *but his son did not believe him....* (28-29) “Your anxiety decreases as your understanding of your father increases.” The next time we fear the future, *let us rejoice in our Lord’s sovereignty* (28-29)!
3. **Rejoice in the Lord’s Mercy**: Guilt can make us anxious, so *we develop clever ways to deal with guilt*: ♦ **numb it**—with alcohol; ♦ **deny it**—with a coverup; ♦ **bury it**—under a busy schedule; etc. David tried and failed; then he prayed: “When I kept silent *about my sin*, my body wasted away Through my groaning all day long.... [Then he prayed:] I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I did not hide... And You forgave the guilt of my sin” (Ps. 32:3, 5 NAU). We all have sin and we all need God’s forgiveness through Jesus, *so let us quickly follow David’s lead!*
- a. Go forward with Paul’s advice: “...forgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:13-14 NAU). “There is a

reason the windshield is bigger than the review mirror. Your future matters more than your past” (45).

- b. The secret of trapeze artists... (46) “In the great trapeze act of salvation, God is the catcher, and we are the flyers. We trust. Period” (46-48).

4. **Rejoice in the Lord Always:** Good things to remember:

- a. ^{NAU} **Colossians 1:17** [God the Son] is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.”
- b. ^{NAU} **Ephesians 1:11** “... [God the Father] works all things after the counsel of His will...”
- i. Joseph said to his brothers: “...you meant evil against me, *but* God meant it for good in order to... preserve many people alive” (Gen. 50:20 NAU).
- ii. Peter explained God’s plan to save us: Jesus, “delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put *Him* to death. But God raised Him up again...” (Acts 2:23-24 NAU).

Conclusion:

- **Truth** – Fear sees a threat, anxiety imagines it.
- **Relevance** – God is almighty and in control.
- **Inspiration** – It Is Well with My Soul... (61).

Let Us Pray: Dear Father, *our very best Father*, as we live, help us to fly in peace – *always trusting You to catch us!*

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