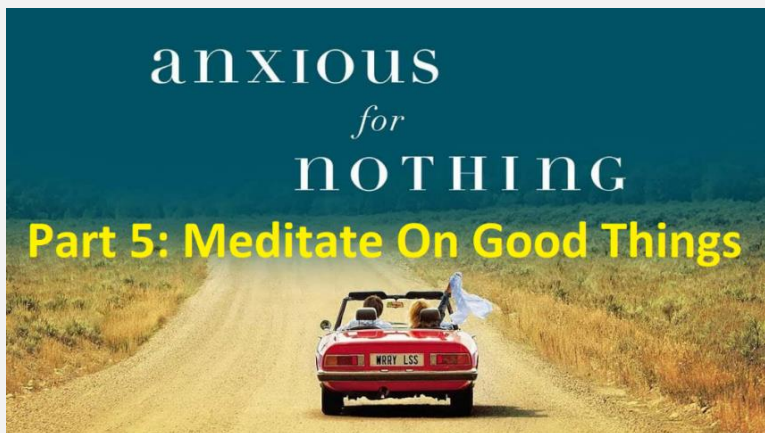


Saturday, 8/7/21 at 4:00 & Sunday, 8/8/21 at 9:00



Bible References are from the NAS-1995, unless noted otherwise.

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: **This is the 5th and final** part of the series, Anxious for Nothing.¹ *We will learn that IT IS ESSENTIAL to fill our anxiety-vacuum with GOOD THINGS!*

Fundamentals of an Anxiety-Free Life: Whether we know it or not, we have **God-given anxiety-removal tools**, which are contained in **Philippians chapter 4**. Forgiven in Christ and heaven-bound, let us get familiar with our tools...

1. **Rejoice always:** **Not IN ALL THINGS, but AT ALL TIMES!**
How? The Bible says: ⁴“Rejoice in the Lord always...”
Why? Even when life is difficult, we have God’s gifts of
‣love, ‣forgiveness, ‣salvation, and ‣so much more!
2. **Be kind:** **And NOT just to those who are kind.** The Bible says: ⁵“Let your gentle spirit be known to all men.” **Why?**
As God responded to our meanness with kindness, *may the Spirit help us to do the same to all!*
3. **Be at peace:** **And IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES.**

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

- a. **Why?** The Bible says: ⁵“**The Lord is near.**” Imagine walking in a very bad part of town, **YET** *you are being protected by four fully armed Navy Seals*. Even though the area is dangerous, *those warriors being with you could bring you peace*. So, **knowing the Lord near, should bring us MUCH MORE peace!**
- b. **How?** Let me give you four answers, **and all four are important for success**.
- i. Give anxieties to God through prayer (verse 6):
1. Be specific: **For example**, “Lord, I’m anxious about getting my test results, *so help me to remember You* ♣are in control, ♣are with me, ♣have a plan, and, *regardless of the results,* ♣will help me each step of the way! Amen!”
 2. One by one: When a rope is tangled, we *untangle one part at a time*, so let us take our anxieties to God *one item at a time!*
- ii. Remember blessings and give thanks (verse 6): **Why?** As we give our anxieties to God, *that process could increase our anxiety*, **so** the process **MUST ALSO INCLUDE** ♣the identification of our blessings **and** ♣the giving of thanks. **For example**, *as we give our test-result anxieties to God, let us be thankful for* ♣our healthy years of life, ♣good medical care, ♣forgiveness in Christ, ♣being sure of heaven, ♣etc.!
- iii. Receive God’s peace (verse 7): **How?** **Perfect trust in God equals perfect peace** (Is. 26:3). So, since the *maturity of our faith* directly influences *our peace*, let us **GROW** in ♣learning, ♣believing, and ♣living God’s promises!

iv. Dwell ONLY on good things:

1. What things? **The Bible says:** ⁸⁻⁹ “...whatever is true, ...honorable, ...right, ...pure, ...lovely, ...of good repute, ...[excellent], ...worthy of praise...”
2. For what purpose? **To replace our anxieties!**
Whenever we give them to God, there is an empty space in us. If we leave it empty, the anxieties will return, *so it is critical to quickly fill that void with the list above* (verses 8-9).

How to Be Anxious for Nothing: 5 things to practice...

1. Thoughts have consequences (AFN, 121): **We are our own MENTAL air traffic controllers;** whatever thoughts we have, *we have permitted them to land.* The Bible says: “Be careful what you think, **because your thoughts run your life**” (Proverbs 4:23 NCV).
 - a. Want happiness tomorrow? **Then today,** ✦count your blessings, ✦memorize a Bible verse, ✦pray, ✦sing a hymn, or ✦talk to an encouraging friend.
 - b. Want misery tomorrow? **Then today,** ✦Wallow in self-pity, ✦assume the worst, ✦beat yourself up, or ✦complain to a complainer.
2. Face God before problems: **God said:** “Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you...” (Ps. 50:15). **The Bible says:** “Cast your burden upon the LORD and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken” (Ps. 55:22).
3. Two choices: **For example,** our doctor wants to see us about some recent tests; *we have two choices:*

- a. **Anxiety:** ☹️My family history is not good; ☹️it must be serious; ☹️my vision seems blurry, *so I must have a brain tumor*; ☹️I'm too young to die...
- b. **Trust:** 😊God is my solid rock; 😊His promises will never fail; 😊my sins are forgiven through Jesus; 😊my life is in God's loving hands... **Then**, let us look up every Bible promise we can remember. **Then**, let us **"Focus on the facts, nothing more"** (125).
4. **Let God take charge:** **Have you ever had an appliance repaired?** If so, **did you offer to help him fix it OR did you let him take over?** **Let us LET GO and LET GOD!**
5. **Focus on the present:** Those who are *anxious* are *divided*. We are in the present, **yet** anxiety tries to ▶pull us into the past **OR** ▶propel us into the future. **Gratitude** **"keeps us focused on the present"** (148). Max Lucado: **"Today, I will live today... [read from 152]."**

Conclusion:

- **Truth** – God calls us to be anxious for nothing (Phil. 4:4-9)!
- **Relevance** – We have the secret for anxiety-free living!
- **Inspiration** – Our CALM will glorify God and bless others!

Let Us Pray: Father, help us apply what we have learned!

Tactical Breather (available on Android and IOS): **You "...can learn to gain control of your heart rate, emotions, concentration, and other physiological and Psychological responses to your body during stressful situations"** (Google).



If you have a smartphone, try it; very easy, quick, and effective!

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