



FACING ANXIETY WITH GOD'S PROMISES

Everyone suffers from worry, stress, and anxiety at one time or another. It's an expected part of life. So much so, that the Bible has dozens of verses that address the topic. After a short study of the word worry, I came across this interesting perspective. The word worry in the New Testament is the Greek word "merimnao" which translates to anxiety. It is a combination of two words merizo, which means "to divide" and nous which means "the mind." When combined together we see the understanding that worry divides the mind.

As you have experienced times of anxiety in your life, can you relate to that idea - a divided mind? Present, yet thinking about the future. Thankful, yet stressed. Option A and all it could mean or option B and all it could mean. Worry can easily provoke all sorts of confusion and fear in our minds. It doesn't take long to understand that anxiety and worry will steal our joy and rob us of peace.

In Psalm 55 David was struggling with worry and anxiety. He uses such words as "distraught", "suffering", "anguish", "trembling", and "overwhelmed". All within the first 5 verses! Then in verse 6 he states: "Oh that I had the wings of a dove! I would fly away and be at rest."

David was clearly under a lot of stress and had much that was worrying him. His mind seemed divided, and his thoughts were greatly troubling him. How did David deal with the stress and worry he was facing? Here are 3 things we see in this text:

He trusts God's promise to hear.

- *"I cry out in distress, and He hears my voice." (v.17)*

He trusts God's promise to act.

- *"But You, O God, will bring down the wicked... I trust in You." (v.23)*

He trusts God's promise to sustain him.

- *"Cast your cares on the Lord and He will sustain you; He will never let the righteous fall." (v.22)*

When we are anxious and worried, chances are we are not trusting in God. In this psalm, David actively reminded himself to trust God instead of giving in to anxiety. The solution to our anxious minds is always found in Jesus. He promises to hear, act and sustain us during our times of stress. However, as humans the process of surrendering these anxieties to the Lord is often where we falter. The following is a devotional prepared to help you think about the anxiety and worry that often creeps into your life. What it comes from, the ways it impacts you, and how to surrender it to the Lord.



Devotional Study

DECEMBER

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Begin by thinking about the common things that cause anxiety and stress in your life. What are the things that divide your mind? What are the things that you worry about?

What do you think the root of these worries and anxiety is? What is the deep down reason or feeling you have that stirs these worries?

Read the following verses: Isaiah 41:10, 1 Peter 5:6-7, Phil 4:19, Jeremiah 17:7-8

What do we know about God (from these Scriptures as well as from your own experience) that lets us know He is trustworthy and caring?

It is easy to believe that God is trust-worthy, but sometimes our actions and anxiety show that we are not truly trusting Him. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you any ways in which you need to put your trust in God.

These ideas are likely things you already know and believe about God. With that said, what are the biggest obstacles in your life that cause you to forget or fail to apply these promises to your thinking?