

Fighting Anxiety (Philippians 4:4-9)

Anxiety affects us all. Whether we are currently wrestling with it, or we love someone who is, what do we do when anxiety attacks? In Philippians 4, we have parting words from Paul which give us tremendous hope that we can maintain sanity of mind, and even rejoice, when we wrestle with anxiety. Fighting anxiety means fighting for the authentic joy and peace that only God can give. The best news is that we have a God who fights for us.

1. Direct Your Anxiety (4:4-7)

- It isn't enough to just tell ourselves to stop being anxious; we must take those anxious thoughts, and turn them Godward, so that anxious thoughts become anxious prayers. Those prayers connect us with a God who has a storehouse of peace that is beyond our understanding. (1 Peter 5:7)
- We have a God who fights for us! (Rom. 8:32)

2. Think Excellently (4:8)

- We live in a world where we are bombarded with things we could think about.
- We need a filter for our mind: Is it true? honorable? just? pure? lovely? commendable?

3. Practice the Way of Jesus (4:9)

- When we walk in the way of Jesus, we are promised God's presence.
- Jesus Himself dealt with anxiety, and found joy in the midst of it (Mk. 14:32-36, Heb. 12:2)

QUESTIONS (Pray, read the passage and pick 4-5 questions to discuss. Trust the Holy Spirit to guide.)

1. So many people deal with varying degrees of anxiety, yet few talk about it. Why do you think there is a stigma surrounding this?
2. Why is it not enough to just tell yourself to stop feeling anxious? How could this actually heap shame on us?
3. What does it look like practically to shape our worries and anxieties into prayers? Perhaps share how God has helped you do this.
4. How is the promise in Rom. 8:32 a handle to hold on to even in the darkest storm?
5. The things we think about contribute to our mental health. How have you seen this be the case?
6. How does our information age make it more difficult to keep our sanity?
7. How can you practically apply the filter of Phil. 4:8 to your mind?
8. How is Jesus' anxiety in Gethsemane like ours? How is it different?