

Cornerstone

Care Ministry

How to Handle Anxiety, Worry, and Fear in a Godly way!



Fear, Anxiety, and Worry are acceptable or maybe even considered normal in today's society. More often than not they go hand-in-hand or lead to one another. We fail to realize that fear is good and in certain scenarios, it is even a good safety emotion. It keeps us from getting burnt by fire or alerts us to other dangers. However, like all good things, fear is often perverted and ends up enslaving us.

This happens when we fear things that God tells us not to fear or we fail to follow God's commands out of fear. Like when we don't share the gospels because we fear what people might say or being out-witted or looking naïve.

Breaking free!!!

So, what can we do when fear enslaves us? Where do we go, who do we turn to when fear turns to worry or anxiety? There are many avenues for help such as a wise friend, Pastor, or counselor.

In my experience, as believers, the best place to turn is God's Word. I have found that Philippians 4:4-9 is the best place to camp when feeling anxious or afraid and it often provides an oasis of hope. Let's look at this passage and see how it can help us when fear creeps in

HOW TO

- REJOICE
- RESOLVE
- REMEMBER
- REFUSE
- RELY
- REST
- REACH

Rejoice

In this passage we are told twice to rejoice, but sometimes the gravity of what's happening makes it difficult to be happy. Notice that Paul was not telling us to be happy in difficult situations, but rather to rejoice *in the Lord*.

- Step 1 to breaking free is **Rejoicing** in Christ when experiencing hardships and not being consumed by the situation. Our fears, worry, or anxiety will go away as we learn to rejoice in Christ in the midst of pain or uncertainty (Matt 11:28-30).

Resolve

Verse 5 gives a simple but yet difficult task and that is to resolve to be gentle and patient when tempted to do otherwise.

- Step 2 to breaking free is **Resolving** to be gentle and patient with everyone during difficult times. This might sound crazy but a practical way to develop joy in the midst of chaos is by exhibiting gentleness. By doing this we give up our demands for justice and allow God to move in our hearts.

Remember

Like I said, we are given a simple task but it is difficult to carry out. It is difficult because our focus is off when we are afraid, worried, or anxious. We focus horizontally instead of vertically.

- Step 3 to breaking free is **Remembering** that Jesus is near. The difficulties of life start to fade as we focus on the Cross (Jn 14:27). Focusing on the Cross keeps our fears, worries, and anxiety under control.

Refuse

Remembering is key because our stinking-thinking tends to drift to the horizontal. That's when the troubles of life creep back in and we become overwhelmed.

- Step 4 to breaking free is **Refusing** to be anxious (fearful) about anything! Worry and anxiety come from focusing on your situation and not Christ. Anxiety and worry does not accomplish anything good, but prayer does. So, pray always.

Rely

Prayer can move mountains and brings peace. It also centers our focus vertically where it belongs.

- Step 5 to breaking free is **Relying** on prayer. You must pray in every circumstance, specifically, and with thanksgiving. When you continually do that, God's peace will guard your heart and mind from drifting into fear.

Rest

When fear has taken root, it is hard to keep your mind focused vertically. Our minds are racing with scenarios that may never happen and we get stuck.

- Step 6 to breaking free is to **Rest your mind** on whatever is excellent or praiseworthy. Our minds will be filled with fear and anxious thoughts if they are not filled with Godly thoughts. Godly thinking leads to Godly living. Godly thinking is thinking that focuses on what Jesus calls us to do in the here-and-now.

Reach

Paul was not shy about calling people to imitate him. He was ok with this because he was following Jesus.

- Step 7 to breaking free is **Reaching out** and practicing what is good. You must practice good to feel good. When we practice Godly thinking and Godly actions, our fears, worries and anxiety will fade away.