

FEAR & WORRY

We tend to worry about things that are outside of our control. Examples of this would be work layoffs and how weather patterns might effect our plans and schedules.

What kinds of things cause you to worry?

Read Matthew 6:25-34

Read Psalm 23:1-3 and combine/compare to Matthew 6:25-27

What do these verses seem to be telling us about God's care for us and His provision?

Do these verses imply that we don't need to make an effort to supply our own needs?

Read: 2 Thessalonians 3:10, 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12, Titus 3:14 and Ephesians 4:28

These verses make it pretty clear that God expects us to do our part in providing for our lives. God knows that we have needs and *He leads us to the place* that provision can be found. *In short if He makes you lie down in a green pasture and you don't eat... it's not His fault.*

James 4:1-3 is very blunt. There are two reasons that we do not receive the things that we want.

1. We don't ask God.
2. We want to use these things for pleasure. A possible third reason is that these are wants and not needs.

Dealing with anxiety

There is no doubt that things beyond our control do weigh on our minds.

Philippians 4:4-7 directs us how to deal with these kinds of struggles.

1. Rejoice! Everything in our lives must start with a rejoicing, thankful heart. Paul then says it again REJOICE!! No matter how bad things may appear to you there are things you can rejoice over. It does not say to rejoice over what concerns you it just says rejoice. Take stock of the things in life that you have. Family, friends, food, shelter, life itself

2. Never let the cares of your life to change who you are. Let your gentle spirit be seen. As Psalm 23 told us The Lord is Near! You are not alone. God is with you.

3. Do not be anxious. Rather carry what is bothering you to the Lord in Prayer. Realize Who God is and the love He has for you. Be thankful and not a complainer.

As you do these things a transcendent peace will begin to settle on you. It cannot be defined or explained other than to say God's peace just liberated you from your burdens. He does not take them from you He simply removes the concern that accompanies them. They no longer have power over your life.

This is known by the old timers as "praying through" Spending enough time in the presence of God that His Devine nature, love and holiness cuts through the fog of our circumstance and we are able to see our problems in the light of an eternal significance. Our burden lifts His joy floods our heart and our anxious hearts find peace.

Avoiding Anxiety and Worry in the first place

The best way to cure a cold is not to get sick in the first place.

Romans 12:2 tells us to be transformed by the renewing of our minds

After Philippians instructs us how to be free from our anxiety and to receive the peace of God we are instructed to watch what we let our minds dwell on.

Where do you allow your thought life to go?

What do you think about?

Do you spend time thinking about everything that can go wrong?

Read Philippians 4:8-9

Do you look for the good in things or the bad?

Don't just read the bible, put it into practice.

And never forget God is with you.

One Last Verse

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

John 16:33 NIV