

# Fear, Anxiety, and Panic

Pastor Chad Wagner

[PastorWagner.com/fear-anxiety-and-panic/](http://PastorWagner.com/fear-anxiety-and-panic/)

## Table of Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| I. Definitions .....   | 2  |
| II. Fear .....   | 2  |
| 1. Normal and good fear .....  | 2  |
| 2. Other good fears.....   | 2  |
| 3. Unhealthy and sinful fear.....  | 3  |
| 4. Fear can cause us to disobey God’s commandments and bring judgment upon us..... | 4  |
| 5. Fear is caused by a lack of faith.....  | 5  |
| 6. The devil is behind many of our fears .....                                     | 5  |
| 7. Sometimes fear comes from God as punishment.....                                | 5  |
| 8. Fear is tormenting.....   | 5  |
| III. Anxiety .....   | 5  |
| 1. Anxiety is a terrible feeling .....   | 5  |
| 3. The Bible refers to anxiety as <i>carefulness</i> .....                         | 6  |
| 4. The Bible refers to anxiety as <i>care</i> .....                                | 7  |
| 5. The Bible refers to anxiety as being <i>troubled</i> .....                      | 8  |
| 6. The Bible refers to anxiety as being <i>vexed</i> .....                         | 16 |
| 7. The Bible refers to anxiety as being <i>disquieted</i> .....                    | 19 |
| 8. The Bible refers to anxiety as <i>restlessness</i> .....                        | 20 |
| 9. The Bible refers to anxiety as being <i>distressed</i> .....                    | 22 |
| 10. The Bible refers to anxiety as <i>dread</i> .....                              | 24 |
| 11. The Bible refers to anxiety as <i>perplexity</i> .....                         | 24 |
| 12. The Bible refers to anxiety as <i>astonishment of heart</i> .....              | 24 |
| 13. Causes of anxiety .....  | 24 |
| IV. Panic .....  | 27 |
| 1. Definitions .....   | 27 |
| 2. Examples of people in the Bible who had panic attacks.....                      | 27 |
| V. How to deal with fear, anxiety, and panic .....                                 | 30 |

## I. Definitions

1. Fear *n.* - 1. In OE.: A sudden and terrible event; peril. 2. a. The emotion of pain or uneasiness caused by the sense of impending danger, or by the prospect of some possible evil. 3. This emotion viewed with regard to an object; the state of fearing (something).
2. Fear *v.* - II. To feel fear; to regard with fear. 3. *refl.* (cf. 1b) To be afraid. 5. *trans.* To regard with fear, be afraid of (a person or thing as a source of danger, an anticipated event or state of things as painful or evil).
3. Afraid *adj.* - 1. As *ppl.* Alarmed, frightened; hence as *adj.*, In a state of fear or apprehension, moved or actuated by fear.

## II. Fear

### 1. Normal and good fear

- A. There is normal fear that is experienced when something frightening happens.
  - i. This emotion of fear has been given to us by God for self-preservation.
  - ii. When we become afraid, physiological things happen to our body to prepare us for “fight or flight.”
    - a. “People often refer to the physiological changes that occur when a person experiences fear as the fight-or-flight response. Overall, as the name suggests, the changes prepare the animal to either fight or run.

“Breathing rate increases, heart rate follows suit, peripheral blood vessels — in the skin, for instance — constrict, central blood vessels around vital organs dilate to flood them with oxygen and nutrients, and muscles are pumped with blood, ready to react.

“Muscles — including those at the base of each hair — also become tighter, causing piloerection, which is colloquially called goosebumps. When a human’s hair stands on end, it makes little difference to their appearance, but for more hirsute animals, it makes them seem larger and more formidable.

“Metabolically, levels of glucose in the blood spike, providing a ready store of energy if the need for action arises. Similarly, levels of calcium and white blood cells in the bloodstream see an increase.”  
(*Dissecting terror: How does fear work?*, [Medical News Today](#), 10-30-2021)

### 2. Other good fears

- i. Fear of judgment and punishment for doing evil is a good thing which keeps us from sinning (**Pro 14:16; Pro 3:7; Pro 22:3; Psa 119:120**).

- a. God has instituted powers (both civil and religious) for the punishment of evildoers (**1Pe 2:14; Rom 13:1-3**).
- b. We should fear doing evil (**Rom 13:4**).
- ii. We should fear God because of His unlimited power (**Rev 19:6**), presence (**Pro 15:3**), knowledge (**Psa 139:1-6, 14**), intellect (**Psa 147:5**), and judgment of sin (**Heb 10:26-27, 30-31; Heb 12:28-29; 2Co 5:10-11**).

### 3. Unhealthy and sinful fear

- A. The Bible says “fear not” 62 times, “fear ye not” 8 times, “fear them not” 4 times, “be not afraid” 28 times, “neither be afraid” 3 times, “nor be afraid” twice, “be not ye afraid” once, and “be not terrified” once.
  - i. That is at least 109 times in which God tells us to not fear.
  - ii. When synonyms of fear and anxiety are included, the number is even higher.
  - iii. This indicates that children of God struggle with fear.
- B. The following fears are unhealthy and sinful.
  - i. Fear of man (**Pro 29:25; Mat 10:28; Isa 51:7; Psa 118:6; Php 1:28; Neh 6:13**).
  - ii. Fear of death (**Heb 2:15**).
  - iii. Fear of loss of possessions (**Heb 13:5-6 c/w Heb 10:34**).
  - iv. Fear of bad news (**Psa 112:7-8**).
  - v. Fear of fear (**Pro 3:25; Psa 91:5; 1Pe 3:14**).
    - a. Terror *n.* – 1. The state of being terrified or greatly frightened; intense fear, fright, or dread.
    - b. Fear of fear is what causes people to fall into the cycle of nervous illness.
  - vi. Irrational and unfounded fear
    - a. Irrational fear is fearing something that has no ability to harm you, is extremely unlikely to occur, or is simply a figment of one’s imagination.
    - b. The wicked have irrational fear and flee when no man pursueth (**Pro 28:1**).
      - (i) The Lord warned Israel that if they would not keep His word they would flee when no man pursued them (**Lev 26:17**).
      - (ii) The Lord caused the Syrians to hear what they thought was the noise of an army, and they fled when there was no actual danger (**2Ki 7:5-7**).
    - c. God can cause sinners to be in great fear where no fear is (**Psa 53:4-5**).
      - (i) This happened during the Covid-19 scamdemic.
      - (ii) People were terrified of a virus that had a very high survivability rate, especially among younger, healthy people.
      - (iii) Because of fear, people wore masks, physically distanced themselves from others, stayed home from church, and took an insufficiently tested, worthless, and deadly “vaccine.”
    - d. Moab was afraid and distressed because of Israel (**Num 22:1-3**).

- (i) Their fear was unfounded though because God had commanded Israel to not harm Moab (**Deut 2:8-9**).
  - (ii) Balak the king of the Moabites assumed the worst and hired the false prophet Balaam to curse Israel (**Num 22:4-6**).
  - (iii) Balaam ended up blessing Israel through the intervention of God.
  - (iv) Balak got the opposite of what he wanted due to his unfounded fear.
- e. Through unfounded fear, Abraham assumed that Abimelech king of Gerar would kill him for his wife, so he lied and said Sarah was his sister (**Gen 20:1-2, 10-11**).
- (i) Through this act which was motivated by fear he almost caused the death of Abimelech who took Sarah to be his wife (**Gen 20:3**).
  - (ii) Abraham and Sarah ended up being reproved by Abimelech and made to look foolish (**Gen 20:9, 16**).
- f. After the king of Ammon died, David decided to show kindness to the new king Hanun because his father had shown kindness to David (**2Sa 10:1-2**).
- (i) Hanun, because of unfounded fear, believed his paranoid princes who thought David sent his men to spy out their city and overthrow it (**2Sa 10:3**).
  - (ii) Hanun took David's servants and humiliated them by shaving off one half of their beards and cutting off their garments at their butts (**2Sa 10:4**).
  - (iii) This ended up causing a war which Ammon lost (**2Sa 10:14**).
- g. King Jeroboam through unfounded fear convinced himself that if he let his northern kingdom of Israel go to sacrifice at Jerusalem that they would return to King Rehoboam and kill him (**1Ki 12:27**).
- (i) Consequently, he then sinned and made two golden calves and put them in Bethel and Dan for the people to worship (**1Ki 12:28-30**).
  - (ii) His fear was unfounded because God had promised to be with him if he would have kept His commandments (**1Ki 11:35-38**).
4. Fear can cause us to disobey God's commandments and bring judgment upon us.
- A. King Zedekiah was afraid of the Babylonians and the Jews that had fallen to them, and therefore he did not obey the word of the Lord from the prophet Jeremiah and suffered severely for it (**Jer 38:17-20 c/w Jer 39:4-8**).
  - B. King Saul was afraid of the Philistines and did not wait for Samuel to come and offer a sacrifice, but instead did it himself and thus lost the kingdom (**1Sa 13:8-14**).
  - C. In the parable of the talents the servant who was afraid (and lazy) and hid his talent in the earth instead of investing it like he was supposed to was judged severely by his lord (**Mat 25:24-30**).

5. Fear is caused by a lack of faith.
  - A. Jesus attributed the disciples' fear to a deficiency of faith (**Mar 4:40**).
  - B. Faith is the antidote to fear (**Psa 56:3**).
  - C. If we put our trust in the LORD, we will be safe (**Pro 29:25**).
  - D. If we love God, we will believe that He will protect us; and that love of God exercised through faith will cast out fear (**1Jo 4:18**).
  - E. Believing that God will protect us is the way to fight fear (**Mar 5:36**).
  - F. We must not be afraid of sudden fear, but let the LORD be our confidence (**Pro 3:25-26**).
  
6. The devil is behind many of our fears.
  - A. Satan's most effective fear that he afflicts people with is the fear of death (**Heb 2:14-15**).
  - B. Satan afflicted Job and caused him to be *troubled* in mind (more on this later).
  - C. Satan is likened unto a roaring lion because he uses fear to attempt to paralyze his victims (**1Pe 5:8**).
  - D. When the devil tempts you to fear, answer him with the word of God (**Mat 4:1-11**).
    - i. Examples of how to do this will be given later in this study.
    - ii. Resist him steadfast *in the faith* (**1Pe 5:8-9**).
    - iii. When you do that, he will flee from you (**Jam 4:7**).
  
7. Sometimes fear comes from God as punishment.
  - A. God judges sinners by appointing terror over them (**Lev 26:14-16**).
  - B. Those who turn from God will be given over to destruction and fear (**Deut 32:15-25**).
  
8. Fear is tormenting (**1Jo 4:18**).
  - A. Torment *n.* - 1. An engine of war worked by torsion, for hurling stones, darts, or other missiles. *Obs.* 2. An instrument of torture, as the rack, wheel, or strappado (rare or doubtful); hence, the infliction of torture by such an instrument as a form of punishment, a means of extracting information, etc.; torture inflicted or suffered. *b. spec.* The punishment of hell. 3. A state of great suffering, bodily or mental; agony; severe pain felt or endured.
  - B. Fear is torture.
  - C. Fear inflicts great mental suffering and agony.

### III. Anxiety

1. Anxiety is a terrible feeling.
  - A. It is a feeling of fear, uneasiness, nervousness, and dread.
  - B. Anxiety attacks can cause a feeling of horrible, overwhelming fear.
  - C. It can also be accompanied by depression and heaviness.
  - D. Anxiety attacks can cause moderate to severe physical symptoms, such as:
    - i. The feeling of one's heart dropping into his stomach
    - ii. Stomach churning

- iii. Increased heart rate
  - iv. Chest pain
  - v. Sweaty palms
  - vi. Tingling in hands
  - vii. Lightheadedness
  - viii. Headache
  - ix. Flushed / hot face
- E. For people that suffer with it, it can come suddenly, and sometimes for no apparent reason.
- i. Sometimes there is a particular thing or event that one dreads which causes his anxiety.
  - ii. Sometimes the fear of that particular thing is irrational, but even if the sufferer knows it's irrational, it's hard for him to stop himself from feeling anxious about it.
- F. The feeling of anxiety will sometimes come and go quickly and often over short periods of time.
- G. One minute the man will feel fine, the next minute the anxiety is back again.
- H. When a person is experiencing an attack of anxiety, he feels like it will never get better, but that he will have to suffer with it for the rest of his life (similar to how a depressed person feels).
- I. He struggles to not fear the next bout of anxiety that might come at any time.
2. The word "anxiety" is not found in the Bible.
- A. However, many synonyms of it are.
  - B. As will be demonstrated in this study, the Bible has A LOT to say about anxiety.
  - C. Before I started this study, I assumed that anxiety is a modern phenomenon which is a product of our modern world.
    - i. I figured that, though the Bible has a lot to say about fear, it probably has little to say about anxiety.
    - ii. As I defined words and searched the scriptures, I found that people in the Bible thousands of years ago suffered with anxiety just like many people do today.
3. The Bible refers to anxiety as *carefulness* (**Eze 12:18-19; Luk 10:41; 1Co 7:32**).
- A. Definitions
    - i. Carefulness *n.* – Quality or state of being careful. a. Solicitude, anxiety, concern.
    - ii. Careful *adj.* – 1. Full of grief; mournful, sorrowful; also (of cries, etc.), expressing sorrow. *Obs.* (last usage in 1599) 2. Full of care, trouble, anxiety, or concern; anxious, troubled, solicitous, concerned.
    - iii. Concern *n.* – 1. a. Regard, respect, reference; concernment. 5. a. Interest, solicitous regard, solicitude, anxious, uneasy, or troubled state of mind, arising from regard to or interest in any person or thing.
    - iv. Anxiety *n.* – 1. The quality or state of being anxious; uneasiness or trouble of mind about some uncertain event; solicitude, concern.

- v. Anxious *adj.* – 1. a. Troubled or uneasy in mind about some uncertain event; being in painful or disturbing suspense; concerned, solicitous. 2. a. Fraught with trouble or solicitude, distressing, worrying.
  - vi. Solicitude *n.* – 1. The state of being solicitous or uneasy in mind; disquietude, anxiety; care, concern.
  - vii. Solicitous *adj.* – 1. Full of care or concern; anxious, apprehensive, disquiet. 2. Troubled, anxious, or deeply concerned, on some specified account.
  - B. We are commanded to be *careful* (be full of anxiety) for *nothing* (**Php 4:6**).
  - C. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were not *careful*, even when faced with death and having to answer to the most powerful king in the world (**Dan 3:16**).
    - i. They believed that God would deliver them (**Dan 3:17**).
    - ii. But even if God did not deliver them, they would not compromise on their faith, obedience, and principles (**Dan 3:18**).
    - iii. Their faith in God quelled their fear and anxiety (**Heb 13:6**).
4. The Bible refers to anxiety as *care* (**Eze 4:16; Mat 13:22; 1Co 7:21; 1Pe 5:7**).
- A. Care *n.* – 1. a. Mental suffering, sorrow, grief, trouble. 2. Burdened state of mind arising from fear, doubt, or concern about anything; solicitude, anxiety, mental perturbation; also in *pl.* anxieties, solitudes.
  - B. Care *v.* – 2. To be troubled, uneasy, or anxious.
  - C. The *care* of this world can choke the word of God in our lives (**Mat 13:22**).
    - i. Mark’s gospel renders it “the *cares* of this world” (**Mar 4:19**).
      - a. The *cares* of this world (concerns, things that need tended to, etc.) can cause *care* (anxiety).
        - (i) Reading and studying the Bible is difficult when a man is filled with anxiety.
        - (ii) Why do you think Satan wants us filled with anxiety and fear, and therefore entices us have too many cares?
      - b. Over 40 million Americans suffer with anxiety (John Delony, *Redefining Anxiety*, p. 4).
      - c. It is little wonder that this is the case due to the fast-paced, always-running life style many Americans have wherein they do not get enough sleep, eat garbage, live on coffee and energy drinks, drive in hectic rush hour traffic, work long hours, consume gloom and doom news, and spend hours per day on social media.
    - ii. The care of this world is also linked with the deceitfulness of riches (**Mat 13:22**).
      - a. Riches can be a source of anxiety (**Ecc 5:12**).
      - b. Wealth requires a lot of attention if it is to be maintained and held onto (**Pro 27:23-24**).
      - c. Many people live hectic lives because of the desire for more money and the things it can buy.
    - iii. The *care* of this world is likened unto *thorns* (**Mat 13:22**).
      - a. Thorn *n.* - 1. A stiff, sharp-pointed, straight or curved woody process on the stem or other part of a plant; a spine, a prickle. 2. *fig.* (or in *fig.* context): Anything that causes pain, grief, or trouble; in various

metaphors, similes, and proverbial expressions, as *a thorn in the flesh* or *side*, a constant affliction, a source of continual grief, trouble, or annoyance; (*to be, sit, stand, walk*) *on thorns (a thorn)*, (to be, etc.) in a painful state of anxiety or suspense.

- b. Could *care* (anxiety) have been Paul's *thorn in the flesh* (2Co 12:7)?
- (i) The thorn in Paul's flesh was the messenger of Satan, who, as a roaring lion, uses fear to try to destroy us (1Pe 5:8).
  - (ii) Paul certainly dealt with a lot of stressful and fearful situations in his life (2Co 11:23-29).
  - (iii) He admitted to having fears within himself (1Co 2:3; 2Co 7:5).
  - (iv) He associated his *weakness* with *fear* and *trembling* (1Co 2:3).
    1. In response to Paul's prayer for God to take away his thorn in the flesh, God replied that His strength is made perfect in *weakness* (2Co 12:9).
    2. In connection with his thorn in the flesh and God's strength being made perfect in his weakness (2Co 12:7-9), Paul wrote that he took pleasure in *distresses* (2Co 12:10).
    3. Distress *v.* – 4. To cause pain, suffering, agony, or anxiety to; to afflict, vex, make miserable.
  - (v) Being in high-stress situations can cause anxiety attacks later on in time.
  - (vi) Anyone who has ever suffered with anxiety knows that it is a major thorn in the flesh.

5. The Bible refers to anxiety as being *troubled*.

A. Definitions

- i. Troubled *ppl.* - 1. Physically agitated; of the sea, sky, etc., stormy; of water, wine, etc., stirred up so as to diffuse the sediment, made thick or muddy, turbid. 2. Disturbed; disquieted; disordered; agitated; afflicted.
- ii. Disquieted *ppl. adj.* – Disturbed; rendered uneasy or restless.
  - a. Restless *adj.* – 1. a. Deprived of rest; finding no rest; *esp.* uneasy in mind or spirit.
  - b. Uneasy *adj.* – 1. Not conducive to ease or comfort; productive of physical discomfort. b. Causing mental discomfort for disquietude; unpleasant, disagreeable. c. Characterized by absence of ease or comfort; suggesting or manifesting want of ease in body or mind.
  - c. Uneasiness *n.* – 3. Discomfort, trouble, or anxiety, as affecting one's circumstances or welfare. c. Mental discomfort; anxiety, apprehension.
- iii. Anxiety *n.* – 1. The quality or state of being anxious; uneasiness or trouble of mind about some uncertain event; solicitude, concern.



- iv. Anxious *adj.* – 1. a. Troubled or uneasy in mind about some uncertain event; being in painful or disturbing suspense; concerned, solicitous. 2. a. Fraught with trouble or solicitude, distressing, worrying.
  - v. Solicitude *n.* – 1. The state of being solicitous or uneasy in mind; disquietude, anxiety; care, concern.
  - vi. Solicitous *adj.* – 1. Full of care or concern; anxious, apprehensive, disquiet. 2. Troubled, anxious, or deeply concerned, on some specified account.
- B. Being *troubled* is being in a state of fear (**Mat 14:26; Luk 1:12; Luk 24:37-38; Joh 14:27; 1Pe 3:14**) and sometimes painful fear (**Psa 48:5-6**).
- C. There are many examples of men being *troubled* (suffering with anxiety) in the Bible.
- D. No man is exempt from suffering with anxiety.
- i. Pharaoh was *troubled* (had anxiety) in his spirit because of a disturbing dream (**Gen 41:8**).
  - ii. Nebuchadnezzar was *troubled* by a dream which kept him from sleep (**Dan 2:1; Dan 4:5**).
  - iii. If two of the most powerful kings who have ever lived suffered with anxiety, so can the rest of us.
- E. David described many of the characteristics of anxiety in Psalm 38.
- i. David was troubled because of his sin for which he was being punished (**Psa 38:1-5**), but the symptoms of anxiety are the same, regardless of the cause.
  - ii. David experienced the following as a result of being *troubled* in mind (**Psa 38:6a**).
    - a. He was bowed down (in heaviness, depressed) and went about mourning all the day (**Psa 38:6b**).
    - b. He was feeble (weak) and broken in spirit (**Psa 38:8a**).
    - c. His heart was disquieted (deprived of quietness, peace, or rest; anxious, restless, uneasy) (**Psa 38:8b**).
    - d. His heart panted (palpitated) (**Psa 38:10a**).
      - (i) Pant *v.* – 1. *intr.* To breath hard or spasmodically, as when out of breath; to draw quick laboured breaths, as from exertion or agitation; to gasp for breath. 3. To throb or heave violently or rapidly; to palpitate, pulsate, beat: said of the heart, bosom, etc.; also of the blood. (cites Psa 38:10 and Isa 21:4)
      - (ii) Heart palpitations are a classic symptom of anxiety attacks.    - e. His strength failed (mental and physical weakness) (**Psa 38:10b**).
    - f. The light of his eyes was gone (his joy was gone, and the concern, fear, and worry were visible on his face) (**Psa 38:10c c/w Pro 15:30 c/w Psa 6:7; Eze 27:35; Dan 7:28**).
- F. Joseph's brothers were *troubled* (had anxiety), which was so powerful that it prevented them from speaking when they realized that their brother whom they had sold into slavery was the ruler of Egypt (**Gen 45:3**).
- i. They were in *distress* (**Gen 42:21**).

- ii. Severe anxiety will prevent a man from speaking (**Psa 77:4**).
  - iii. Sometimes talking about what is worrying oneself with a wise and trusted person can help to allay one's fears.
    - a. It's necessary to find someone you can trust to talk with.
    - b. It's also important to find someone who can handle your heart being poured out to.
      - (i) Some people cannot handle that.
      - (ii) They get uncomfortable and want to leave the conversation or change the subject.
    - c. A word of advice.
      - (i) If someone is opening up to you, it's because he wants to.
      - (ii) Don't respond with "you don't have to talk about it."
      - (iii) Don't assume that talking about it will make the person sad or worse off.
      - (iv) Just listen with empathy and understanding.
  - iv. There is a time to keep silence and a time to speak (**Ecc 3:7**), so when you are able to speak, find someone who will be helpful to talk to.
- G. Joshua and Israel were *troubled* (suffered with anxiety) because of Achan's sin (**Jos 7:25**).
- i. Joshua's bout with being *troubled* can tell us much about the nature of anxiety.
  - ii. Israel was under the judgment of God because of Achan's secret sin (**Jos 7:1 c/w Jos 6:18-19 c/w Jos 7:20-21**).
  - iii. Not aware of what Achan had done, Joshua sent a relatively small army to smite Ai (**Jos 7:2-3**).
  - iv. The men of Ai smote, chased, and defeated them in battle (**Jos 7:4-5**).
  - v. This experience *troubled* Israel and Joshua (**Jos 7:25**).
  - vi. Their experience is typical of an anxiety attack.
    - a. The hearts of the people *melted* (**Jos 7:5**).
      - (i) In other words, they became very fearful and lost their courage (**Jos 2:11; Jos 14:8 c/w Num 13:30 – 14:4**).
      - (ii) There was no more spirit in them (**Jos 5:1**).
      - (iii) They lost their strength (**Psa 22:14-15**).
      - (iv) Their hands became faint, they were afraid, pain and sorrow took hold on them, they were amazed (stunned and stupefied), and their faces were as flames (**Isa 13:7-8**).
        1. This is characteristic of an anxiety attack.
        2. One becomes weak.
        3. Fear takes hold on him with a frightening grip.
        4. One feels pain in his chest and other places in the body.
        5. It is often accompanied with sorrow and depression.
        6. One cannot think straight.
        7. Amazed *adj.* - 1. Driven stupid; stunned or stupefied, as by a blow; out of one's wits. 2. Bewildered,

confounded, confused, perplexed. Of things: Thrown into confusion.

8. One's face becomes flushed and hot.

- (v) Their hands and legs became weak as water and their spirits' fainted (**Eze 21:7**).
- b. Their hearts became *as water* (**Jos 7:5**).
  - (i) Becoming as water denotes becoming weak (**Eze 7:17; Eze 21:7**) and unstable (**Gen 49:4**).
  - (ii) They were no longer valiant, but were weak and unable to make sound decisions.
- c. Joshua overreacted and assumed the worst (**Jos 7:7**).
  - (i) He assumed that because they had lost one small battle that God was going to deliver them into the hands of the Amorites to be destroyed.
  - (ii) He second-guessed himself and wished that they had never crossed the Jordan.
  - (iii) He was not thinking rationally.
  - (iv) God had promised to give them the land of Canaan (**Jos 1:1-7**).
  - (v) This is typical of an anxiety attack
    - 1. One becomes fearful of something.
    - 2. He assumes the worst which makes him more fearful.
    - 3. He stops thinking logically and rationally.
    - 4. He second-guesses himself and wants to give up.
- d. Joshua then began to panic about what might happen in the future (**Jos 7:8-9**).
  - (i) He feared as he thought about what he would say when Israel flees before their enemies again?
  - (ii) He again jumped to conclusions and assumed the worst.
  - (iii) He was already convinced that the Canaanites would hear about it and would annihilate them.
  - (iv) And furthermore, he panicked about how this would bring reproach upon God's name.
- e. What Joshua needed to do was to stop worrying about what might happen in the future and take care of what needed dealt with in the present (**Jos 7:10-13**).
  - (i) In Joshua's case, what needed to be done was a sinner in the camp needed punished.
  - (ii) Once Joshua did what needed to be done, his anxiety went away, and he was strong again (**Jos 7:25 – 8:3**).
  - (iii) If the cause of our anxiety is something that we can take care of, then we need to do so.
    - 1. Once the source of worry and concern has been addressed, the anxiety may go away if there are no other things contributing to it.

2. Dealing with present problems will help to alleviate worry about possible future problems.
- (iv) If we have unconfessed and unforsaken sin in our life, we need to take care of it by confession and repentance (**1Jo 1:9**).

- H. King Saul was *troubled* by an evil spirit from the Lord (**1Sa 16:14**).
- i. This was a judgment against Saul for his disobedience (see 1Sa 15).
  - ii. Saul's servants came up with a plan to have music played for Saul when the evil spirit was troubling him in order to give him peace (**1Sa 16:15-16**).
  - iii. Saul called David to play the harp for him when the evil spirit was upon him, which caused him to be refreshed and well, and the evil spirit departed from him (**1Sa 16:23**).
  - iv. Listening to classical music when feeling anxious might be helpful.
    - a. Good classical music has a calming effect on the mind and brings peace and happiness.
    - b. And a merry heart does good like a medicine (**Pro 15:13; Pro 17:22**).
    - c. I have been listening to classical music while I work, which has helped me considerably.
    - d. Listening to Handel's Messiah is sure to lift one's spirit.
- I. Job was *troubled* by Satan, whom God allowed to afflict him as a test of Job's faith and integrity (**Job 4:5 & Job 21:4-6 c/w Job 1:6-12 & Job 2:1-8**).
- i. Prior to Job being troubled in body and mind he strengthened others and upheld them with his words and instruction (**Job 4:3-4**).
  - ii. Now it was Job's turn to be weak and anxious (**Job 4:5**).
    - a. The Lord allowed Satan to reduce a good, upright, and wise man like Job to a point of misery, weakness, and despair.
    - b. If it happened to Job, it can happen to any of us.
    - c. God did this to try Job and prove the integrity of his faith.
    - d. This experience also gave Job personal experience with anxiety and weakness that he would be able to use in the future to comfort others who suffered similar affliction.
  - iii. The Lord purified Job through this trial (**Job 23:10**) and did him good in his latter end (**Jam 5:10-11; Job 42:10-13**).
    - a. The Lord will likewise purify some of His other children through similar trials of psychological suffering including anxiety and depression (**Pro 17:3 c/w Pro 25:4; Mal 3:3; 2Ti 2:20-21; Psa 66:10-12; Psa 105:19**).
    - b. Being troubled in mind and suffering with anxiety is a trial of our faith which works patience, spiritual maturity, and hope (**Jam 1:2-4; Rom 5:3-5; 2Co 1:8-10; Jam 1:12**).
      - (i) Suffering with anxiety is a trial of our faith because it causes us to beseech God to help us and trust that He will, despite enduring dreadful suffering.

- (ii) God knows our souls in a special way in trouble and adversities (**Psa 31:7; Php 3:10; Exo 3:7; Isa 63:9**).
- (iii) When we are *troubled* in mind and suffer with anxiety, we are partaking of the sufferings of Christ (**Php 3:10 c/w Joh 12:27 c/w 2Co 4:7-10**), and will partake of Christ's consolation (**2Co 1:5 c/w Lam 2:13; 1Pe 4:12-13**).

J. God can cause us to be troubled to humble us and rebuke our pride.

- i. In our prosperity we can become puffed up and think that we will never be moved (**Psa 30:6**).
- ii. We can easily forget that it is only by the blessing of God that we are what we are and have what we have (**Psa 30:7a c/w 1Co 15:10 & Joh 15:5**).
- iii. All God has to do is hide His face from us and we will be *troubled* (**Psa 30:7b**).
- iv. When this happens, we must cry unto the Lord and make supplication for help and mercy (**Psa 30:8-10 c/w Heb 4:15-16**).
- v. When we turn to God in humility, begging for His help and mercy, the Lord will save us from our trouble and distresses (**Psa 107:6, 13, 19, 28**) and give us joy and gladness once again (**Psa 30:11**).
- vi. When God does so, we must never forget to praise and thank Him for it (**Psa 30:12**).

K. Belshazzar king of Babylon experienced some of the markers of a classic anxiety attack.

- i. He held a drunken, idolatrous party in which they drank wine out of the golden vessels of God's temple (**Dan 5:1-4**).
- ii. During the party he saw part of a hand writing on the wall of his palace (**Dan 5:5**).
- iii. Belshazzar became very afraid and experienced what would today be called an anxiety or panic attack.
  - a. The king's countenance was changed (**Dan 5:6a**).
    - (i) Countenance *n.* – 1. Bearing, demeanour, comportment; behaviour, conduct; sometimes spec. behaviour of two persons towards each other. 2. Appearance, aspect, look (*obs. exc. as transf. from 4*); also, a show or semblance of anything. 4. The look or expression of a person's face. (In early use often not easily distinguished from 1, 2, and in later use difficult to separate from 5.)
    - (ii) The fear could be seen on his face.
  - b. His thoughts *troubled* him (**Dan 5:6b**).
    - (i) In other words, his thoughts brought him anxiety, uneasiness, and fear.
    - (ii) His mind likely immediately began racing, thinking things like:
      - 1. What is that hand?
      - 2. Is it a ghost?

3. Am I going to die?
  4. What have I done?
  5. What am I going to do?
- c. The joints of his loins loosed and his knees hit together (**Dan 5:6c**).
    - (i) He starts to shake uncontrollably.
    - (ii) His legs become weak.
    - (iii) Fear has completely taken him over.
  - d. He cries out in desperation to bring in his astrologers and soothsayers to read the writing (**Dan 5:7**).
  - e. When his wise men could not read it, he becomes *greatly troubled* (**Dan 5:8-9**).
    - (i) His fear begins to spiral out of control (**Dan 5:9a**).
    - (ii) The look on his face went from scared to terrified (**Dan 5:9b**).
    - (iii) His lords then became overwhelmed with fear as well (**Dan 5:9c**).
    - (iv) Astonied *adj.* – 1. Stunned, stupefied, deprived of sensation; primarily by a blow, but subseq. also by anesthetics, cold, etc.; insensible, benumbed, paralyzed. 3. Bewildered, filled with consternation, dismayed.
    - (v) Dismayed *ppl.* – Overwhelmed with fear, etc.; appalled.
  - f. The queen finally comes in and calms him down by telling him about Daniel who could interpret dreams, show hard sentences, and dissolve doubts (**Dan 5:10-12**).
- iv. It always helps to have a calm, level-headed person to calm one down when he is having an anxiety attack.
- L. The psalmist Asaph was severely *troubled* (suffered with severe anxiety), which he recorded in Psalm 77.
- i. He did the right thing and cried unto God and sought His help in his trouble (**Psa 77:1-2a**).
  - ii. His sore ran in the night and ceased not (**Psa 77:2b**).
    - a. Sore *n.* – 1. Bodily pain or suffering. 6. Mental suffering, pain, or trouble; grief, sorrow, anxiety, or the cause of this.
    - b. His mental suffering and anxiety continued through the night as he tried to sleep.
  - iii. His soul refused to be comforted (he could not calm himself down and put his mind at ease) (**Psa 77:2c**).
  - iv. He remembered God and was *troubled* (**Psa 77:3a**).
    - a. God was allowing this to happen to him, which was troubling.
    - b. God was not helping him immediately, and this caused him further anxiety.
  - v. He complained, and his spirit was overwhelmed (**Psa 77:3b**).
    - a. Overwhelm *v.* – 1. *trans.* To overturn, overthrow, upset; to turn upside down. 3. *fig. a.* To overcome or overpower as regards one's action or circumstances; to bring to ruin or destruction; to crush. b.

- To overcome completely in mind or feeling; to overpower utterly with some emotion.
- b. The emotion of fear had completely overpowered his spirit, and he could not stop it.
  - vi. He was not able to sleep (**Psa 77:4a**).
  - vii. His anxiety was so severe that he could not even speak (**Psa 77:4b**).
  - viii. He begins to think on the past when he was well and wonders if he will ever be well again (**Psa 77:5-6**).
    - a. He wonders if God has cast him off forever and will never show him favor again (**Psa 77:7**).
    - b. He questions whether God's mercy is gone and if His promises will fail (**Psa 77:8**).
    - c. He ponders whether God has forgotten him and if He has shut up His mercy towards him because He is angry at him (**Psa 77:9**).
    - d. He has now reached rock-bottom in his anxiety and depression.
  - ix. He then reaches a turning point.
    - a. He accepts that he is being afflicted with anxiety (**Psa 77:10a**).
    - b. Instead of focusing on his suffering, he turns his attention on God's sovereign rule from heaven (**Psa 77:10b**).
      - (i) When we are anxious or depressed, we should likewise remember that Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of God (**Eph 1:20**).
      - (ii) Jesus is reigning from heaven and is doing so for the benefit of His church (**Eph 1:21-23**).
      - (iii) He is the blessed and only potentate (**1Ti 6:15**), and therefore He has the power to help us through our troubles.
    - c. He remembers and thinks on God's works (**Psa 77:11-12**).
    - d. He begins to praise and worship God (**Psa 77:13**).
    - e. He praises God for doing wonders (miracles) and delivering His people by His great strength (**Psa 77:14-20**).
  - x. By the end of the Psalm, we can assume that Asaph has been delivered from the spirit of fear which had overwhelmed him and was restored to a sound mind (**2Ti 1:7**).
    - a. He did so by accepting that God had permitted his anxiety, turning his attention on God instead of his problems, remembering God's great works of old, and praising God for delivering His people.
    - b. By reminding ourselves of the mighty power of God, and by trusting Him to save us from our distresses like He has many times for many people in the past, we will find mercy and be strengthened to overcome our fears.
- M. Our Lord Jesus Christ was *troubled* (suffered with anxiety) at the thought of His approaching crucifixion, suffering, and death (**Joh 12:23-27a**).
- i. Jesus was so troubled that He asked God to save Him from having to undergo it (**Joh 12:27b; Luk 22:42**).
  - ii. Jesus offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto God who was able to save him from death (**Heb 5:7a**).

- a. He was heard in that he *feared* (**Heb 5:7b**).
- b. He feared the horrible, agonizing death that was coming.
- c. But He feared God His Father more than the pain and suffering, and therefore He prayed that God's will be done.
- d. He was heard because He prayed for God's will do be done (**1Jo 5:14-15**).
- iii. Despite being severely troubled in mind, Jesus kept the Father's will in His foremost thoughts, saying "for this cause came I unto this hour" (**Joh 12:27c**).
- iv. Even while suffering with anxiety, the Lord Jesus' chief aim was that the Father's name would be glorified (**Joh 12:28**).
- v. Let this be a lesson to us to always have the glory of God as our chief aim, even when suffering.
- N. Our Lord Jesus was also *troubled* at the thought of one of His 12 disciples betraying Him (**Joh 13:21**).
  - i. Jesus was well acquainted with grief (**Isa 53:3**).
  - ii. He understands what it's like to suffer with anxiety, and He can therefore help us when we suffer with it (**Heb 4:15-16**).
- O. News of terrible events such as wars and rumors of wars can cause of us to be *troubled*, but we shouldn't be (**Mat 24:6**).
- P. Take that worry, along with all others, to the Lord Jesus Christ.

6. The Bible refers to anxiety as being *vexed*.

A. Definitions

- i. Vex *v.* – 1. *trans.* To trouble, afflict, or harass (a person, etc.) by aggression, encroachment, or other interference with peace and quiet. 3. To afflict with mental agitation or trouble; to make anxious or depressed; to distress deeply or seriously; to worry with anxiety or thought. (cites Dan 5:9 in the Coverdale Bible)
- ii. Vexed *ppl. adj.* – 1. Troubled, harassed; kept in a disturbed or unquiet state. Distressed, grieved; affected with vexation; annoyed, irritated.
- iii. Vexation *n.* – 3. The state or fact of being mentally troubled or distressed, in later use esp. by something causing annoyance, irritation, dissatisfaction, or disappointment. b. In the phr. *vexation of mind, spirit*. 4. A source or cause of mental trouble or distress; a grief or affliction.

B. The Egyptians *vexed* the children of Israel in Egypt (**Num 20:15**).

- i. They set taskmasters over them and afflicted them with burdens (**Exo 1:11**).
  - a. They had to serve with rigour, and their lives were bitter with hard bondage (**Exo 1:13-14**).
  - b. This would certainly be a cause for anxiety.
  - c. Working too much and wearing oneself down is a cause of anxiety.
- ii. The Israelites cried unto the LORD, and He delivered them from their vexation in Egypt (**Num 20:16**).
  - a. God saw their affliction, heard their cry, and knew their sorrows (**Exo 3:7**).
  - b. In all their affliction, God was afflicted, and in love and pity He delivered them (**Isa 63:9**).



- c. Likewise, when we cry unto the LORD, He will deliver us from our *distresses* (**Psa 107:6**).
- C. *Vexation* is one of the curses with which God judges His disobedient children (**Deut 28:15, 20**).
  - i. This happened to Israel repeatedly during the times of the Judges (**Jdg 2:17-18; Jdg 10:6-9, etc.**).
  - ii. When they repented, God delivered them from their vexation (**Neh 9:27**).
- D. The soul of the Shunammite woman was *vexed* within her because her son had died (**2Ki 4:27**).
  - i. She went to Elisha the man of God with hopes that he could restore her son's life (**2Ki 4:20-23**).
  - ii. When Elisha saw her coming, he sent his servant to ask her if she, her husband, and her child were well (**2Ki 4:26a**).
  - iii. She replied to the servant that all was well (**2Ki 4:26b**).
    - a. It is not uncommon for people who are suffering with anxiety (or other things) to put on a good face in public and tell people they are well when they are not.
    - b. In many cases, the sufferer replies "good" to those who ask "how are you doing?", even when he is not doing well.
      - (i) He does this because most people who ask really don't want to know how he is doing, but are only uttering a greeting, not really asking a question.
      - (ii) He also does this because he doesn't want to open up to just anyone and tell them about his anxiety problems.
  - iv. When she got to Elisha, all pretenses of being well were shed, and she clung to his feet, desperately seeking help (**2Ki 4:27**).
  - v. Elisha raised her son from the dead and delivered her from her vexation.
  - vi. When you are suffering with anxiety, do as the Shunammite woman did and seek out a person who has the ability to help you.
    - a. The most important person to seek for help is the Lord Jesus Christ.
    - b. Jesus cares and has the power to help you (**Heb 4:15-16**).
- E. There was a time in Israel's history when they had been without the true God, the scriptures, and a teaching priest (**2Ch 15:3**).
  - i. They had forsaken God, and He had forsaken them (**2Ch 15:2**).
  - ii. During that time, they had *no peace*, but *great vexations* (**2Ch 15:5**).
  - iii. God had *vexed* them with all adversity (**2Ch 15:6**).
  - iv. In their trouble they turned to the LORD and sought Him and found Him (**2Ch 15:4**).
  - v. They were told to be strong and to not let their hands be weak, and their work would be rewarded (**2Ch 15:7**).
  - vi. There is a striking parallel between Israel's situation and ours today.
    - a. Most Americans are without the true God, the Bible, a church, and a pastor.
    - b. They have forsaken God, and He has forsaken them.
    - c. They are living their lives according to their own ideas, and not seeking or acknowledging God.

- d. They are therefore in a state of vexation and have no peace.
  - e. Is it any wonder that over 40 million American adults suffer with anxiety?
  - f. The solution is to turn to God and seek Him.
  - g. If the people of our country would do that, I suspect that the number of cases of anxiety would decrease significantly.
- F. Stressful situations can cause bouts of anxiety.
- i. David pleaded with God for mercy because his body and soul were *sore vexed* (**Psa 6:2-3a**).
  - ii. He was weak, which is a byproduct of anxiety (**Psa 6:2**).
  - iii. He recognized that he needed healing (**Psa 6:2**).
    - a. Anxiety is a mental illness (an illness that affects the mind).
    - b. Mental illnesses need healed just like physical illnesses (**Mat 4:23-24**).
    - c. People with broken hearts needed healed as much as people with broken bones (**Luk 4:18**).
  - iv. David asked God *how long* his soul would be *sore vexed* (**Psa 6:3**).
    - a. The pain of anxiety feels like it will never let up.
    - b. This is one of the reasons that it is such a dreadful affliction.
  - v. David asked God to deliver him from his vexation (**Psa 6:4**).
  - vi. He reminds God that he cannot praise Him if he is dead (**Psa 6:5**).
    - a. David thought that his bout with anxiety was going to kill him, and he was therefore pleading for his life.
    - b. It is common for people when having an anxiety or panic attack to think they are going to die.
  - vii. David's anxiety was accompanied with groaning and weeping (**Psa 6:6**).
    - a. It is also common for anxiety to weaken a man so that he cannot control his emotions and therefore cries uncontrollably.
    - b. Crying is actually helpful for healing, so don't try to suppress it.
  - viii. David's eye was consumed with grief (**Psa 6:7**).
  - ix. David's consolation came because he believed that God heard his prayers and would answer them (**Psa 6:8-9**).
- G. The best of men can suffer from anxiety and be mentally troubled and distressed.
- i. Solomon was one of the wisest (**1Ki 4:29-31**) and richest men to ever live (**1Ki 10:27**).
  - ii. He had all that heart could wish (**Ecc 2:1-10**).
  - iii. Yet, he was afflicted with *vexation* of spirit (**Ecc 1:14, 17**).
  - iv. Consider all the blessings and advantages that Solomon had which did not prevent him from being mentally troubled and distressed.
    - a. He was king over Israel (**Ecc 1:12**).
    - b. He gave his heart to the pursuit of wisdom (**Ecc 1:13**).
    - c. He had seen all that the world had to offer (**Ecc 1:14**).
    - d. He came to great estate (**Ecc 1:16a**).
    - e. He had more wisdom than all that had gone before him (**Ecc 1:16b**).
    - f. Nevertheless, he was still anxious and depressed in spirit.

- v. Years of hard work and great accomplishments did not stop Solomon from suffering with mental distress (**Ecc 2:11**).
    - a. In fact, it may have contributed to it.
    - b. In his anxious and depressed state, he hated life (**Ecc 2:17**).
  - vi. After suffering with a troubled mind due to trying to do everything and find happiness in *things* instead of *God*, Solomon finally began to learn the path toward peace of mind.
    - a. He realized that it's better to have little with inner peace than abundance with anxiety (**Ecc 4:6**).
    - b. He found that constantly desiring to have more than one already has is a source of anxiety (**Ecc 6:9**).
    - c. He concluded his quest for happiness and satisfaction with the realization that the whole duty of man is to fear God and keep His commandments (**Ecc 12:13**).
    - d. This, and this alone, will bring a man a peaceful and satisfied mind.
- H. Other causes of *vexation* of spirit (being troubled in mind or anxious).
- i. Devil possession can cause a person to be *vexed* (**Mat 15:22; Mat 17:15; Luk 6:18; Act 5:16**).
    - a. Remember, fear is one of Satan's favorite tactics to afflict the saints with (**1Pe 5:8**).
    - b. Whether it is outright devil possession, or devil oppression, God's children can suffer vexation of mind from devilish influence.
    - c. Never rule out the possibility that vexation of mind could be due to the influence of an unclean spirit.
    - d. If this is the case, we must resist the devil with the word of God (**1Pe 5:9 c/w Mat 4:1-11**).
    - e. Pray and ask God to rebuke the devil (**Jud 1:9**).
  - ii. Persecution can cause vexation of spirit (**Act 12:1**).
  - iii. Seeing and hearing the wickedness of the wicked around us can cause our souls to be *vexed* (**2Pe 2:7-8**).
    - a. To mitigate this vexation, read much less "gloom and doom" news, and spend more time thinking on good things (**Php 4:8**), such as our Lord Jesus Christ.
    - b. Do your best to avoid spending time with sinners who will vex your soul (**1Co 15:33**).

7. The Bible refers to anxiety as being *disquieted*.

A. Definitions

- i. Disquiet *v.* – To deprive of quietness, peace, or rest, bodily or mental; to trouble, disturb, alarm; to make uneasy or restless.
- ii. Disquiet *n.* – Absence of bodily or mental quietness; disturbance; uneasiness, anxiety, worry; restlessness, unrest.
- iii. Disquieted *ppl. adj.* – Disturbed; rendered uneasy or restless.
- iv. Anxiety *n.* – 1. The quality or state of being anxious; uneasiness or trouble of mind about some uncertain event; solicitude, concern.

- v. Anxious *adj.* – 1. a. Troubled or uneasy in mind about some uncertain event; being in painful or disturbing suspense; concerned, solicitous. 2. a. Fraught with trouble or solicitude, distressing, worrying.
- B. Disquietness in heart (anxiety, in other words) causes great turmoil within a person (**Psa 38:8-9**).
- C. Being disquieted (anxious, troubled, uneasy, restless) is often accompanied by depression (being cast down) (**Psa 42:5, 11; Psa 43:5**).
  - i. We can learn a few things from these verses.
    - a. The cause of anxiety and depression is often unknown to us (*why art thou disquieted within me?*).
    - b. Help for anxiety is found in hoping in God (*hope thou in God*).
    - c. Help for anxiety is found in praising God (*I shall yet praise him*).
    - d. Even in the midst of suffering with anxiety, we must never forget to praise God (*I shall yet praise him*).
      - (i) Yet *adv.* – III. 9. a. as *conj. adv.* or *conj.* (developed from I), introducing an additional fact or circumstance which is adverse to, or the contrary of what would naturally be expected from, that just mentioned: In spite of that, for all that, nevertheless, notwithstanding. Sometimes strengthened by *nevertheless*, etc. Often correlative to *though*, etc.
      - (ii) When we make our requests known to God when in a state of *carefulness*, we must always do so with *thanksgiving* (**Php 4:6**).
    - e. God is the health of our countenance.
      - (i) God is ultimately from where our healing comes.
      - (ii) God is the one who can restore our joy and peace.
  - ii. Remember to always seek God's help *first* when suffering with anxiety.
    - a. Keep pleading with God for help until He helps you (**Luk 18:1-8**).
      - (i) God will avenge us when we cry day and night unto Him.
      - (ii) He may bear *long* with us, but He will eventually give us the relief we are seeking.
    - b. Pray to God for help with *importunity* (**Luk 11:5-10**).
    - c. Importunity *n.* – Troublesome pertinacity in solicitation.

8. The Bible refers to anxiety as *restlessness*.

A. Definitions

- i. Disquieted *ppl. adj.* – Disturbed; rendered uneasy or restless.
- ii. Restless *adj.* – 1. a. Deprived of rest; finding no rest; *esp.* uneasy in mind or spirit.
- iii. Uneasy *adj.* – 1. Not conducing to ease or comfort; productive of physical discomfort. b. Causing mental discomfort or disquietude; unpleasant, disagreeable. c. Characterized by absence of ease or comfort; suggesting or manifesting want of ease in body or mind.
- iv. Uneasiness *n.* – 3. Discomfort, trouble, or anxiety, as affecting one's circumstances or welfare. c. Mental discomfort; anxiety, apprehension.

B. Paul and his companions suffered with anxiety at times.

- i. They had *no rest*, but were *troubled* on every side (**2Co 7:5a**).
  - ii. This is *restlessness* by definition which is synonymous with *disquietness* and *anxiety*.
  - iii. Without were fightings and *within were fears* (**2Co 7:5b**).
  - iv. God comforted Paul and his companions when they were cast down by sending them Titus, their friend and fellow minister (**2Co 7:6**).
    - a. Not being able to find Titus was another source of *anxiety* or *restlessness* for Paul (**2Co 2:13**).
    - b. Titus comforted them by telling them about the Corinthian church's fervent mind toward him (**2Co 7:7**).
    - c. Knowing that the church loves me, appreciates me, and is concerned about me is comforting.
  - v. God sent me a dear friend to comfort me when I was suffering a great affliction in the previous church I pastored.
  - vi. This is an example of how God gives us a way of escape from our anxiety so that we are able to bear it (**1Co 10:13**).
- C. Job experienced the restlessness of anxiety.
- i. Job's body could get no rest because of the terrors which pursued his soul (**Job 30:15-17**).
  - ii. Anxiety keeps the mind running and often prevents sleep.
    - a. I have experienced this on a couple of occasions, and it is miserable.
    - b. To mitigate this, don't read, watch things, or talk to people who are going to stress you out late in the evening.
    - c. Spend time in the evening relaxing, reading the Bible, praying, or reading a good book before going to bed.
    - d. Once in bed, read a book until you fall asleep.
- D. David suffered with restlessness when he was suffering for his sin (**Psa 38:3**).
- E. Baruch, Jeremiah's scribe, experienced restlessness.
- i. He had grief and sorrow that caused him to faint and sigh and have no rest (**Jer 45:3**).
  - ii. Baruch was suffering with grief and restlessness because of the word of the Lord that he had written at the mouth of Jeremiah (**Jer 45:1**).
  - iii. The prophesied judgments of God in the book of Jeremiah had caused Baruch anxiety.
  - iv. The Lord comforted him, telling him that though He would destroy the land of Judah, He would preserve Baruch's life wherever he went (**Jer 45:4-5**).
  - v. The Lord gave him a way to escape that he might be able to bear the tribulation he was facing (**1Co 10:13**).
- F. Anxiety attacks are like hell on earth.
- i. Those in hell are utterly consumed with terrors (**Psa 73:19**).
  - ii. Those in hell have *no rest* day nor night (**Rev 14:11; Isa 57:20-21**).
  - iii. They have neither physical, mental, nor emotional rest.
  - iv. They are *restless*, which is *uneasy in mind*, which is *anxious* by definition.
  - v. Those who have suffered with anxiety in this life have had a little foretaste of hell.

- vi. Thank God that the only restlessness and anxiety that we will endure is in this life, not the next.

9. The Bible refers to anxiety as being *distressed*.

A. Definitions

- i. Distress *n.* – I. 1. a. The action or fact of straining or pressing tightly, strain, stress, pressure; *fig.* pressure employed to produce action, constraint, compulsion; less usually, pressure applied to prevent action, restraint. 2. a. The sore pressure or strain of adversity, trouble, sickness, pain, or sorrow; anguish or affliction affecting the body, spirit, or community. b. with *adj* and *pl.* A sore trouble, a misfortune or calamity that presses hardily; esp. in *pl.* straits, distressing or strained circumstances.
- ii. Distress *v.* – 4. To cause pain, suffering, agony, or anxiety to; to afflict, vex, make miserable.
- iii. Distressed *ppl. adj.* – 1. a. Afflicted with pain or trouble; sorely troubled; in sore straits. Applied *spec.* to a person living in impoverished circumstances. b. Of actions or conditions: Pertaining to or showing distress; in straits, sorely straitened.

B. To be *distressed* is to be *sore afraid* (**Num 22:3**).

C. Being distressed makes your bowels and heart (your inner man) to be troubled and turned (**Lam 1:20**).

D. Jacob was *greatly afraid* and *distressed* when he heard that Esau was coming to meet him with 400 men (**Gen 32:7**).

- i. We can learn some lessons on how to deal with anxiety and fear by Jacob's example.
  - a. Jacob firstly took action and divided his people and animals into two bands (**Gen 32:7b**).
    - (i) He did this to mitigate the damage that Esau could do to his family and herds (**Gen 32:8**).
    - (ii) Doing something that will alleviate our worries and concerns is a good way to calm our fears and anxiety.
  - b. Jacob then prays to God and reminds Him of the promise He made to him (**Gen 32:9**).
  - c. He next and confesses that he is not worthy of the least of God's blessings (**Gen 32:10**).
    - (i) This was act of humility which brings God's help and grace to us, which is exactly what a distressed person needs (**Jam 4:10**).
    - (ii) This was also an act of praising God for all He had blessed Jacob with.
      - 1. Praising God brings strength (**Mat 21:16 c/w Psa 8:2**).
      - 2. Strength is exactly what a distressed and fearful person needs (**Deut 31:6**).
  - d. Jacob then admits his fear and prays to God for deliverance (**Gen 32:11**).

- (i) Whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved **(Rom 10:13)**.
      - (ii) God will deliver men from their distresses when they call upon Him **(Psa 107:6, 13)**.
    - e. Jacob then again reminds God of His promises to him **(Gen 32:12)**.
    - f. The Lord honored Jacob's faith and humility and delivered him from his distress and fear.
      - (i) Esau's heart was softened, and he met Jacob in peace **(Gen 33:1-4)**.
      - (ii) When a man's way please the Lord, he makes even his enemies to be a peace with him **(Pro 16:7)**.
    - g. After God delivered him from his distress, Jacob purged his house of false religion and built an altar to worship God **(Gen 35:1-4)**.
  - ii. If we do as Jacob did and take whatever action we can to deal with our fears, pray to God for help in humble faith, admit our fear to God, and remind Him of His promise to deliver us from our distresses, we will likewise be saved from our distresses.
  - iii. When God delivers us from our distress, let us be sure to purge our lives of sin and worship Him in spirit and in truth.
- E. Our Lord Jesus Christ was distressed and anxious in anticipation of His crucifixion.
  - i. He was *straitened* (constricted, under pressure) until it was accomplished **(Luk 12:50)**.
  - ii. He was so stressed and in mental agony that He sweated drops of blood **(Luk 22:44)**.
    - a. Agony *n.* – 1. a. Anguish of mind, sore trouble or distress, a paroxysm of grief.
    - b. Anguish *n.* – 1. Excruciating or oppressive bodily pain or suffering, such as the sufferer writhes under. 2. Severe mental suffering, excruciating or oppressive grief or distress.
  - iii. He was “going out of His mind” because of the pressure He was under **(Mar 14:33)**.
  - iv. Amazed - 1. Driven stupid; stunned or stupefied, as by a blow; out of one's wits. 2. Bewildered, confounded, confused, perplexed. Of things: Thrown into confusion.
  - v. When Jesus hung on the cross His heart was melted like wax in the midst of His bowels **(Psa 22:14)**.
  - vi. Jesus understands what it feels like to suffer with severe anxiety, and He is there to help us when we are anxious **(Heb 2:18)**.
- F. It is possible to be enduring external trouble from every side, yet not be *distressed* **(2Co 4:8)**.
  - i. However, the same apostle Paul also suffered with fears within himself when he was troubled on every side **(2Co 7:5)**.
  - ii. Having fears is one thing, but letting them overcome you and undo you is another.

10. The Bible refers to anxiety as *dread*.

- A. Dread *n.* - 1. Extreme fear; deep awe or reverence; apprehension or anxiety as to future events.
- B. Fear and dread accompany one another (**Exo 15:16**).
  - i. Also associated with dread is:
    - a. Sorrow (**Exo 15:14**)
    - b. Amazement, trembling, and heart-melting (**Exo 15:15**)
    - c. Anguish (**Deut 2:25**)
- C. God repeatedly tells us to *dread not* (**Deut 1:29; 1Ch 22:13**).
- D. Only God should be our fear and dread (**Isa 8:13; Dan 9:4; Mal 1:14**).

11. The Bible refers to anxiety as *perplexity*.

- A. Perplexed *ppl.* - 1. Of a person: Involved in doubt or anxiety on account of the intricate character of the matter under consideration; bewildered, puzzled: see *perplex* v. 1.
- B. The knowledge of a coming calamity is a source of perplexity (**Est 3:13-15**).
- C. Though we may be perplexed, we should not be in despair because God is always with us (**2Co 4:8**).

12. The Bible refers to anxiety as *astonishment of heart*.

- A. Definitions
  - i. Astonishment *n.* – 1. Loss of physical sensation, insensibility; paralysis, numbness, deadness. 2. Loss of sense or ‘wits’; being out of one’s wits or at one’s wits’ end; mental prostration, stupor. 3. Loss of presence of mind, coolness, or courage; dismay, consternation, dread. 4. Mental disturbance or excitement due to the sudden presentation of anything unlooked for or unaccountable; wonder temporarily overpowering the mind; amazement.
  - ii. Astonished *ppl.* – 1. Bereft of sensation; stunned, benumbed. 2. Stunned or paralyzed mentally, bereft of one's wits; stupefied, bewildered.
  - iii. Astonied *adj.* – 1. Stunned, stupefied, deprived of sensation; primarily by a blow, but subseq. also by anesthetics, cold, etc.; insensible, benumbed, paralyzed. 3. Bewildered, filled with consternation, dismayed.
  - iv. Dismayed *ppl.* – Overwhelmed with fear, etc.; appalled.
- B. Being *astonished* sometimes refers to being *afraid* (**Jer 2:12; Eze 27:35**).
- C. *Astonishment* is sometimes associated with *care* which is a synonym of *anxiety* (**Eze 4:16; Eze 12:19**).
- D. One of God’s judgments on those who forsake Him is to smite them with astonishment of heart (**Deut 28:28**).
- E. King Belshazzar’s lords were *astonied* when they saw the hand writing on the wall and how the king was greatly troubled over it (**Dan 5:9**).

13. Causes of anxiety

- A. Distressing circumstances such as our Lord Jesus Christ and the apostle Paul faced (see above).
- B. Being too busy doing too many things.
  - i. Martha chose to be busy with many things.



- ii. She was cumbered about much serving (**Luk 10:40**).
  - a. Cumber *v.* - 1. *trans.* To overwhelm, overthrow, rout, destroy. 2. To harass, distress, trouble. *Obs.* (exc. with mixture of sense 4: to incommode, bother). 1611 Bible Luke x. 40 Martha was cumbered about much serving. 4. To occupy obstructively, or inconveniently; to block up or fill with what hinders freedom of motion or action; to burden, load.
  - b. She was *troubled* and *distressed* (stressed), or, in other words, suffering with *anxiety*.
- iii. She was *careful* and *troubled* about *many things* (**Luk 10:41**).
  - a. Careful *adj.* - 1. Full of grief; mournful, sorrowful; also (of cries, etc.), expressing sorrow. *Obs.* (last usage in 1599) 2. Full of care, trouble, anxiety, or concern; anxious, troubled, solicitous, concerned.
  - b. Because she was so busy tending to so many things, she was full of anxiety and concern.
  - c. She was mentally disturbed, disquieted, agitated, *troubled*, and *anxious*.
- iv. She needed to give priority to those things which were *needful*, the most important of which is learning Christ's doctrine (**Luk 10:42**).
- v. Spending too much time and energy being busy and not enough time in the Bible and prayer is a recipe for anxiety.
- vi. Anxiety is an alarm system in our body that alerts us that we have been stressing it for too long.
  - a. "*Anxiety is just an alarm system.* Nothing more and nothing less. Anxiety is our body's internal notification that our brain is detecting danger, that our body is in desperate need of sleep and restoration, that we are disconnected from our tribe or community, or that we are lonely.

"Our anxiety alarms cause restlessness, racing hearts, panic attacks, a stomach drop, hypervigilance, and looping, intrusive thoughts. They do this because it's our body's way of screaming, "DANGER! NOT SAFE! RUN!"

"But . . . Anxiety is not a permanent medical condition. Anxiety is not an identity. Anxiety shouldn't be a way of being, an excuse, or a reason for giving up on connection and joy.

"It's just an alarm. And in our never-ending quest to avoid pain, negative consequences, or uncomfortable feelings or any kind, we've channeled all of our spiritual, pharmaceutical, medical, and psychological energies into trying to fix or disable the alarm system instead of putting out the fires and clearing out the smoke." (John Delony, *Redefining Anxiety*, p. 6-7)

- b. "If you're struggling with anxiety, remember you probably don't have a disease that can only be solved with medications. Instead, you may be stuck in or choosing an unsustainable, overwhelming

life—dragged into or leaning into the chaos and disconnection of our modern world. Or you may have found yourself lonely and without relationships. But you can change.” (Ibid, p. 17)

C. The death of a loved one.

- i. David was *distressed* because of the death of his best friend Jonathan (**2Sa 1:26**).
- ii. The death of a loved one can be a traumatic event which can cause anxiety.
  - a. “At first glance, the relationship between anxiety and grief might not seem obvious. But grief and anxiety are intimately connected. Grief provides an opportunity to examine the people and situations that have hurt us so we can learn from them and move forward. Grieving is about acknowledging, processing, and putting down the bricks of deep pain or regret, unmet expectations, shame, different life paths, or change. Unresolved grief can become a breeding ground for the nameless, low-level anxiety we can’t shake.” (Ibid, p. 55)
  - b. “Acknowledging what you’ve lost shines a light on your pain. Light takes away the power and mystery of darkness. We will never heal from our trauma until we’ve processed it. We will never move on until we’ve allowed ourselves to feel the weight of the loss and hurt so we can make sense of it all. Give yourself permission to grieve. Cry. Yell. Be angry. Connect with a trusted friend or a therapist to work through lingering pain. Sit in your pain and loss, maybe even schedule time with it, but don’t bathe in it. Eventually, you will move through the grief and find meaning on the other side. Acknowledging loss and finding meaning helps us silence the alarms.” (Ibid, p. 57)

D. Obsessing and worrying about things that we cannot change, such as evil happening in the world.

- i. The evil men of this world and their wickedness can cause God’s children to *fret* (worry, be distressed, or anxious), which we are commanded not to do (**Psa 37:1; Pro 24:19**).
- ii. *Fret v.1 - 8. trans.* To chafe, irritate. Chiefly with regard to the mind: To annoy, distress, vex, worry. Also, *to fret oneself*; and to bring into or to (a specified condition) by worrying. Cf. *fret v.4 1*.
- iii. Instead of worrying and being anxious about what the wicked may be plotting, we should rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him to judge them (**Psa 37:7; Psa 37:2, 9-10, 12-15**).
- iv. If the evil happening in the world is causing you anxiety, turn off the TV and stop reading the news for a while, and instead read your Bible and pray to God.

E. A moral collapse of society.

- i. When a society becomes corrupt, it causes perplexity (anxiety) for those who live in it (**Mic 7:2-4**).
- ii. Such a situation is a source of anxiety because nobody can be trusted (**Mic 7:5-6**).

F. Political and national upheavals.

- i. Great national and political upheavals cause men to be *perplexed* and fearful (**Luk 21:25-26**).
  - ii. This is probably contributing the heightened anxiety levels in our world today.
- G. Extreme poverty
  - i. The Lord sent a famine to Jerusalem and the people ate bread by weight *with care* and drank water by measure with *astonishment* (**Eze 4:16**).
  - ii. Care *n.* – 1. a. Mental suffering, sorrow, grief, trouble. 2. Burdened state of mind arising from fear, doubt, or concern about anything; solicitude, anxiety, mental perturbation; also in *pl.* anxieties, solitudes.
  - iii. Famine and destitution cause perplexity (anxiety) among both man and beast (**Joe 1:15-20**).
- H. Being in debt
  - i. The men that followed David were in *distress*, in *debt*, and *discontented* (**1Sa 22:2**).
  - ii. Discontentment leads to debt (**Heb 13:5**).
  - iii. Debt leads to distress.
    - a. Being in debt causes worry and anxiety.
    - b. Owing no man anything leads to freedom and peace of mind.

#### IV. Panic

##### 1. Definitions

- A. Panic *adj.* and *n.* – A. *adj.* 1. In *panic fear, terror*, etc.: Such as was attributed to the action of the god Pan: B. 2. b. Of the nature of or resulting from a panic; exhibiting unreasoning, groundless, or excessive fear. B. *n.* 1. Contagious emotion such as was ascribed to the influence of Pan. *Obs.* 2. a. (= *panic fear, terror*, etc.; see A. 1): A sudden and excessive feeling of alarm or fear, usually affecting a body of persons, originating in some real or supposed danger vaguely apprehended, and leading to extravagant or injudicious efforts to secure safety.
- B. Panic *v.* – 1. *trans.* To affect with panic. 2. *intr.* To get into a panic, to lose one's head.
- C. A panic attack causes sudden, unreasonable, and excessive fear.
- D. A panic attack will make one feel like he is losing his mind.

##### 2. Examples of people in the Bible who had panic attacks.

- A. King David experienced what would be today called a “panic attack.”
  - i. His heart was “sore pained” within him (**Psa 55:4a**).
    - a. Heart *n.* – I. The simple word. \* *The bodily organ, its function, region, etc.* 1. a. The hollow muscular or otherwise contractile organ which, by its dilatation and contraction, keeps up the circulation of the blood in the vascular system of an animal. \*\* *As the seat of feeling, understanding, and thought.* 5. a. = mind, in the widest sense, including the functions of feeling, volition, and intellect. 6. a. The seat of one's inmost thoughts and secret feelings; one's inmost being; the depths of the soul; the soul, the spirit. 9. a. The seat of the

- emotions generally; the emotional nature, as distinguished from the intellectual nature placed in the *head*.
- b. Sore *adv.* – 3. With verbs of grieving, annoying, etc.: So as to cause mental pain or irritation; deeply, intensely. 4. With great grief, distress, or perturbation of mind; in such a manner or to such an extent as to involve or manifest this.
  - c. Pained *ppl. adj.* – Affected with pain (physical or mental); hurt, distressed, grieved, etc.: see the verb; expressing or indicating pain.
  - d. Extreme emotional pain caused by fear are characteristic of panic attacks.
  - e. Physical chest pains are also common during panic attacks.
  - f. Whether speaking literally or figuratively about his heart being sore pained, David was likely suffering a panic attack as verse 5 strongly indicates.
- ii. The *terrors* of death fell upon him (**Psa 55:4b**).
    - a. Terror *n.* – 1. The state of being terrified or greatly frightened; intense fear, fright, or dread.
    - b. Terror is panic, which is “exhibiting...excessive fear.”
  - iii. Fearfulness and trembling came upon him (**Psa 55:5a**).
    - a. Fearfulness *n.* – The quality of inspiring fear; dreadfulness. 2. The quality or state of being affected with fear; timidity, timorousness.
    - b. Tremble *v.* – 1. *intr.* – Of persons (less commonly of animals), or of the body or a limb: To shake involuntarily as with fear or other emotion, cold, or weakness; to quake, quiver, shiver.
    - c. Panic attacks sometimes cause people to shake uncontrollably.
  - iv. Horror overwhelmed him (**Psa 55:5b**).
    - a. Horror *n.* – 1. a. Roughness, ruggedness. 3. a. A painful emotion compounded of loathing and fear; a shuddering with terror and repugnance; strong aversion mingled with dread; the feeling excited by something shocking or frightful. Also in weaker sense, intense dislike or repugnance. (The prevalent use at all times.)
    - b. Overwhelm *v.* – 1. *trans.* To overturn, overthrow, upset; to turn upside down. 3. *fig.* a. To overcome or overpower as regards one’s action or circumstances; to bring to ruin or destruction; to crush. b. To overcome completely in mind or feeling; to overpower utterly with some emotion.
    - c. I have experienced this very feeling, and the terribleness of it is beyond description.
  - v. David desperately wanted to escape from the terrible fear that was afflicting him (**Psa 55:6-8**).
  - vi. Anyone who has ever experienced a panic attack knows what that feels like.
- B. The Babylonians would suffer a panic attack when the Lord’s judgment came upon them (**Isa 13:1, 6**).
- i. Their hands became faint, they were afraid, pain took hold on them, they were amazed (stunned and stupefied), and their faces were as flames (**Isa 13:7-8**).

- ii. This is characteristic of a panic attack.
  - a. One becomes weak (v.7).
  - b. Fear takes hold on him with frightening grip (v.8).
  - c. He feels pain in his chest and other places in the body (v.8).
  - d. It is often accompanied with sorrow and depression (v.8).
  - e. He cannot think straight (v.8).
  - f. Amazed *adj.* - 1. Driven stupid; stunned or stupefied, as by a blow; out of one's wits. 2. Bewildered, confounded, confused, perplexed. Of things: Thrown into confusion.
  - g. His face becomes flushed and hot (v.8).
- C. Isaiah had a panic attack when he saw a vision of the destruction of Babylon (**Isa 21:1-4**).
  - i. A *grievous* vision of the destruction of Babylon was declared to Isaiah (**Isa 21:2**).
    - a. Grievous *adj.* – 1. a. Pressing heavily upon a person (or persons), burdensome, oppressive. 2. a. Of things, events, accidents, etc.: Bringing serious trouble or discomfort; having injurious effects; causing hurt or pain. (Now only with mixture of sense 5 – ‘grievous to think of’ – qualifying intensely a sb. (noun) denoting something painful or injurious.) 5. Causing mental pain or distress. Now with narrowed sense: Exciting grief or intense sorrow.
    - b. The vision Isaiah saw caused him intense mental pain, trouble, discomfort, and distress.
  - ii. The grievous vision caused his loins to be filled with pain (**Isa 21:3a**).
    - a. Pangs, like the pangs of child birth, took hold on him (**Isa 21:3b**).
    - b. Pang *n.* – 1. A brief keen spasm of pain which appears suddenly to pierce or shoot through the body or any part of it; a shooting pain. 2. *fig.* A sudden sharp mental pain or feeling of intense mental anguish.
    - c. During a panic attack, fear can shoot across the mind and body and cause intense mental and physical anguish.
  - iii. He was dismayed at the seeing of the vision (**Isa 21:3c**).
    - a. Dismayed *ppl.* - Overwhelmed with fear, etc.; appalled.
    - b. Isaiah became overwhelmed with fear by what he saw.
    - c. He couldn’t control his fear.
  - iv. His heart panted (palpitated) (**Isa 21:4a**).
    - a. Pant *v.* – 1. *intr.* To breath hard or spasmodically, as when out of breath; to draw quick laboured breaths, as from exertion or agitation; to gasp for breath. 3. To throb or heave violently or rapidly; to palpitate, pulsate, beat: said of the heart, bosom, etc.; also of the blood. (cites Psa 38:10 and Isa 21:4)
    - b. Isaiah was having rapid heart palpitations because of his fear.
    - c. This is exactly what happens to people during a panic attack.
  - v. Fearfulness affrighted him (**Isa 21:4b**).
    - a. This is one of the causes of panic attacks: *the fear of fear*.
    - b. Once fear sets in, the body starts producing adrenaline which energizes the nerves.

- c. The feeling of fear causes fear of the fearful feeling, which results in more fear.
- d. The vicious cycle repeats quickly until a full panic attack ensues.
- vi. The troubling vision took away his happiness and turned it into fear (**Isa 21:4c**).
  - a. His sleep was likely taken from him (the night of his pleasure).
  - b. Panic attacks often happen to people after they lie down in bed to sleep.

## V. How to deal with fear, anxiety, and panic

1. Always go to the Lord *first* for deliverance from your fear, anxiety, and panic.
  - A. The LORD is a strength to the needy in distress (**Isa 25:4**).
  - B. Don't make the mistake of going to doctors, psychiatrists, psychologists, counselors, or other people for help *before* going to the Lord (**2Ch 16:12**).
    - i. Don't pooh-pooh or make light of seeking deliverance from God through reading the scriptures and praying in favor of humanistic ideas.
    - ii. Don't say to yourself, "yeah, I know the pastor told me to go to the Lord for help, but I need professional help."
    - iii. Help from other people may be necessary, and God may use others to help you, but make sure you go to the Lord for help *first* before seeking help from others.
    - iv. Ezra serves as a good example of trusting in the Lord for deliverance instead of men (**Ezr 8:22-23**).
      - a. Ezra had publicly stated that God's hand was with them that seek him (v. 22).
      - b. When hard times came, he decided to live what he preached and did not ask for help from the king (vv. 22-23).
      - c. He and his people instead fasted and besought the Lord, and the Lord helped them (v. 23).
      - d. I have tried to follow this principle when dealing with anxiety without medication.
        - (i) I do not think it is sinful or wrong to use medication to help deal with anxiety.
        - (ii) I am not in any way condemning people who have used, or do use, medication to help them overcome anxiety.
        - (iii) Not using medication for anxiety should never be done so that one can be proud or boast that he did not use medication.
        - (iv) I have decided to make an earnest effort to overcome my anxiety without medication because I have found so much instruction in the Bible on how to do so with God's help.
        - (v) But I am not saying that I will never take medication if it becomes absolutely necessary.
  - C. Be very cautious about taking anti-anxiety or anti-depressant medication, as they can be very difficult and dangerous to get off of.

- i. I know people who have used these medications to help get them “over the hump” of severe anxiety, and were subsequently able to get off of them without bad side-effects.
  - ii. I also know people who had a very hard time getting off of these medications, or were never able to get off of them.
  - iii. If you decide to take prescription medication for anxiety or depression, be sure to create a clearly defined exit strategy with your doctor before you begin.
  - iv. Anxiety medication is only a temporary fix to help get a person past a severe bout of symptoms, but it should not be a permanent solution in most instances.
    - a. “The right medication can turn off or lower the volume of the alarms. If they’re helpful for a season, take them. In the short term, medication can be a wonderful way to tone down the alarms that are constantly ringing, giving you a chance to catch your breath and do the deeper work that leads to lasting change.” (John Delony, *Redefining Anxiety*, pp. 19-20)
    - b. “Once again, I’m oversimplifying here, but at the end of the day, all anxiety medications do is dial down or temporarily turn off the alarms. Silencing the alarm doesn’t fix the problem. It doesn’t stop the anxiety raging in your heart, in your relationships, or in your past. In almost every situation, *medication is not a long-term solution to anxiety. You are.*” (Ibid, p. 20)
  - v. Despite a huge increase in the use of anxiety medications in recent times, the problem is getting worse, not better.
    - a. “But understand this: despite a massive increase in the use of medications for anxiety, no country in the world is seeing a reduction in the number of diagnoses. Despite billions and billions of dollars spent on anxiety medications, the anxiety problem is only getting worse.” (Ibid, p. 16)
    - b. Based on the fact that over 40 million Americans suffer with anxiety, and Americans are heavily medicated, it appears that anxiety medication is not a very good long-term solution to the problem.
2. Never forget that God has allowed fear and anxiety to afflict you for a purpose.
- A. God does everything with purpose (**Isa 14:24, 27; Eph 1:9; Eph 3:11**).
    - i. We might not know what God’s purpose is in our suffering, but that doesn’t mean that God doesn’t have a good reason for it.
    - ii. If we are mindful that God is afflicting us for a purpose, it makes the suffering easier to bear.
  - B. One purpose God may have in allowing us to suffer with anxiety is to draw us closer to Him through His Son Jesus Christ.
    - i. Jesus knows what it’s like to suffer with severe anxiety (**Mar 14:33-34; Luk 22:44**).
      - a. Amazed *adj.* – 1. Driven stupid; stunned or stupefied, as by a blow; out of one's wits. 2. Bewildered, confounded, confused, perplexed. Of things: Thrown into confusion.

- b. Agony *n.* – 1. a. Anguish of mind, sore trouble or distress, a paroxysm of grief.
- c. Anguish *n.* – 1. Excruciating or oppressive bodily pain or suffering, such as the sufferer writhes under. 2. Severe mental suffering, excruciating or oppressive grief or distress.
- d. When we suffer with anxiety we are partaking of Christ’s sufferings **(1Pe 4:13)**.
- e. We have fellowship with Christ when we suffer like He did **(Php 3:10)**.
- ii. Jesus has considered our trouble and known our souls in adversities **(Psa 31:7)**.
  - a. Pour out your concerns to Jesus in prayer **(Psa 31:9-12)**.
  - b. Trust Him to deliver you from your fears **(Psa 31:13-15)**.
  - c. Ask Him to shed His mercy upon you abundantly **(Psa 31:16)**.
  - d. Call upon Him for deliverance and trust that He will not let you be ashamed for doing so **(Psa 31:17; Psa 31:1; Rom 10:11)**.
  - e. Jesus will help you if you ask Him **(Heb 4:15-16)**.
- iii. A sister in the faith told me that she suffered with dreadful anxiety for many years, and she was never closer to the Lord than during that time.
  - a. I experienced the same thing.
  - b. Suffering causes us to draw nigh to God, and God draws nigh to us when we are broken-hearted **(Psa 34:17-18; Isa 57:15)**.
- iv. God will not allow you to be tempted above what you are able, but will give you a way of escape so that you will be able to bear it **(1Co 10:13)**.
- v. Our greatest desire should be that God will be glorified in our suffering.
  - a. Even while suffering with anxiety, the Lord Jesus’ chief aim was that the Father’s name would be glorified **(Joh 12:27-28)**.
  - b. Let this be a lesson to us to always have the glory of God as our chief aim, even when suffering.
- C. Other purposes that God allows us to suffer with anxiety.
  - i. The following are some reasons that I think God allowed me to experience anxiety attacks.
    - a. To understand what it’s like so that I can help and comfort others **(Lam 2:13 c/w 2Co 1:4)**.
    - b. To be an example to others of how to suffer **(1Ti 4:12; 1Pe 5:3; 2Ti 3:10-12)**.
    - c. To humble me and let me know that I am not above suffering with anxiety **(Deut 8:3)**.
    - d. To help me learn to be more empathetic toward others **(1Th 5:14; Rom 15:1; 1Pe 3:8)**.
    - e. To make me rely on God’s help and not my own strength **(2Co 12:7-10; 2Ch 33:12-13)**.
    - f. To give evidence that I am an approved minister of God by way of enduring *distresses* faithfully **(2Co 6:4)**.
  - ii. Some of these may be reasons that God has allowed this dreadful suffering into the lives of others as well.



3. Remember that distress (anxiety) will not separate us from the love of Jesus Christ (**Rom 8:35-39**).
  - A. God loves you whether you are suffering with anxiety or are of a peaceful mind.
  - B. The love of God is shown to us by what Jesus did for us on the cross, not by our circumstances (**1Jo 3:16; Ecc 9:1-2**).
4. If you have taken on too much, reduce your workload.
  - A. Get enough sleep.
    - i. “A sleep-deprived brain is an anxious one—and a disturbed one. Neurologists and sleep researchers are uncovering shocking links between chronic lack of sleep and a host of health problems, including depression and anxiety. One study found that after a night of being subjected to no sleep, brain scans of participants showed decreased activation of the medial prefrontal cortex (that’s the decision-making part of the brain that normally helps keep our anxiety in check). Additionally, the study found that while the thinking part of the brain slowed down, the brain’s deeper emotional centers were overactive. Sleep researcher Dr. Matthew Walker explained, “Without sleep, it’s almost as if the brain is too heavy on the emotional accelerator pedal, without enough brake.”
  
    - “Another study tracked sleep and saw anxiety levels change over four consecutive days. A lack of sleep or poor sleep quality was a reliable indicator that the participant would feel more anxious the next day. And on the flip side, those who got sufficient deep sleep had better moods and less anxiety. Dr. Walker sums it up best: “The best bridge between despair and hope is a good night of sleep.”” (John Delony, *Redefining Anxiety*, pp. 52-53)
  - B. Anxiety keeps the mind running and often prevents sleep.
    - i. I have experienced this on a few occasions, and it is miserable.
    - ii. To mitigate this, don’t read, watch things, or talk to people who are going to stress you out late in the evening.
    - iii. Spend time in the evening relaxing, reading the Bible, praying, or reading a good book before going to bed.
    - iv. Once in bed, read a book until you fall asleep.
  - C. Take time to rest physically.
    - i. Remember that one of the causes of anxiety is being cumbered and troubled about many things (**Luk 10:40-42**).
    - ii. If you have been working too much or doing too many things, reduce your working hours, your work load, and your activities.
    - iii. Take a whole day off per week to rest. God Himself did this (**Gen 2:2**).
  - D. Take time to let your mind rest.
    - i. Anxiety is the result of a tired mind which cannot process fears correctly.
    - ii. Watching TV, reading news, listening to Podcasts, and other such things that keep the mind active are not activities that let your mind rest.
    - iii. Take some time after work to sit and think about *nothing*.
    - iv. If you have a hard time doing this, then focus your mind on your breathing.
  - E. Exercise

- F. Get outside
- G. Eat healthy food and avoid caffeine
- 5. Pray to God and ask Him to take away your anxiety (carefulness) (**Php 4:6**).
  - A. Supplication *n.* – The action, or an act, of supplicating; humble or earnest petition or entreaty.
  - B. Supplicate *v.* – 1. *intr.* To beg, pray, or entreat humbly; to present a humble petition.
  - C. When you pray and ask for help, always remember to give thanks (**Php 4:6**).
    - i. We should give thanks to God in every situation (**1Th 5:18**).
    - ii. Never neglect to praise God, even when suffering with anxiety (**Psa 42:5, 11; Psa 43:5**).
  - D. Pray in faith, believing that God will honor His promise to give you grace to help in time of need (**Heb 4:15-16 c/w Jam 1:6 & Mat 21:22**).
    - i. God will help you when you humbly ask Him for it in faith (**Psa 28:6-7**).
    - ii. When you do this, God will give you peace (**Php 4:7**).
    - iii. Faith in God’s protection and deliverance will quell anxiety (**Dan 3:16-18**).
  - E. A good prayer when suffering with anxiety is **Psa 25:16-18**.
  - F. If any man is afflicted with suffering in mind or body, let him pray (**Jam 5:13**).
  - G. When king Jehoshaphat feared, he prayed to God and asked Him for help (**2Ch 20:3-4**).
    - i. He went to church and prayed to God for help (**2Ch 20:5-11**).
    - ii. He humbly admitted that they were powerless to deliver themselves and that they didn’t know what to do, but that he was trusting in God for help (**2Ch 20:12**).
    - iii. In an act of faith, he faced his fear, not ran from it (**2Ch 20:17**).
    - iv. He worshipped God (**2Ch 20:18, 22**).
    - v. God honored his humble faith, delivered him from his fears, and gave him rest and quietness (**2Ch 20:30**).
  - H. When David was greatly distressed, he encouraged himself in the LORD his God (**1Sa 30:6**).
    - i. Contrariwise, when king Ahaz was in distress, he trespassed more against God (**2Ch 28:22**).
    - ii. The last thing you want to do is to sin against God when you are in distress.
      - a. Never resort to alcohol or drugs to help you escape your pain.
      - b. Never seek out a sinful relationship to try to make yourself feel better.
    - iii. Never believe Satan’s lies that God is not listening to your prayers, He won’t help you, or He doesn’t care.
    - iv. Encourage yourself in the LORD your God, read His word for comfort, pray to Him for deliverance, and trust His promises that He will help you.
  - I. When praying to God, remind Him of His promise to deliver those who call upon Him (**Rom 10:13**).
    - i. Jacob reminded God of His promises to him when he prayed for deliverance from his fears (**Gen 32:9, 11-12**).
    - ii. Reminding God of His promises is an act of faith which God accepts.
  - J. Keep praying until God answers you and gives you relief from your anxiety.
    - i. Keep pleading with God for help until He helps you (**Luk 18:1-8**).

- a. God will avenge us when we cry day and night unto Him.
    - b. He may bear *long* with us, but He will eventually give us the relief we are seeking.
  - ii. Pray to God for help with *importunity* (**Luk 11:5-10**).
  - iii. Importunity *n.* – Troublesome pertinacity in solicitation.
- 6. Call upon God and cry out to Him to save you from your distresses (**Psa 107:6, 13, 19, 28**).
  - A. In David's *distress* he called upon God (**Psa 25:16-17**), and He heard him (**2Sa 22:7**).
  - B. God will hear us (**Psa 120:1**) and answer us (**Psa 118:5**) when we cry to Him in our distress like He did the Psalmist.
  - C. God redeemed David's soul out of all *distress* (**1Ki 1:29**).
  - D. David pleaded with God to hear him when he called to Him in distress (**Psa 4:1**).
    - i. Psa 4 gives the elements necessary to have God hear us when we call to him to save us from our *distress*.
      - a. Be godly, for God will hear the godly when they call to Him for help (**Psa 4:3**).
      - b. Commune with your own heart upon your bed and be still (talk to yourself to calm yourself down) (**Psa 4:4**).
      - c. Worship God in church and trust Him to deliver you (**Psa 4:5**).
      - d. Don't believe your doubtful thoughts, but rather just keep beseeching God for help and mercy (**Psa 4:6**).
    - ii. When we do these things in faith, God will put gladness in our hearts (**Psa 4:7**).
    - iii. We will feel a sense of peace and security which will allow us to sleep peacefully (**Psa 4:8**).
  - E. David cried unto God to deliver him from being troubled (**Psa 30:6-10**).
    - i. God heard him and turned his grief into joy (**Psa 30:11-12**).
    - ii. God will do the same for us.
  - F. The psalmist Asaph was suffering with severe anxiety in **Psa 77**.
    - i. He was so troubled that he could no speak, his soul refused to comforted, and he wondered if God had forsaken him and if he would ever feel better (**Psa 77:1-9**).
    - ii. He found relief from his anxiety when he did the following.
      - a. He accepted that he was being afflicted with anxiety (**Psa 77:10a**).
      - b. Instead of focusing on his suffering, he turned his attention on God's sovereign rule from heaven (**Psa 77:10b**).
        - (i) When we are anxious or depressed, we should likewise remember that Jesus Christ is seated at the right hand of God.
        - (ii) Jesus is reigning from heaven and is doing so for the benefit of His church.
        - (iii) He is the blessed and only potentate, and therefore He has the power to help us through our troubles.
      - c. He remembered and thought on God's works (**Psa 77:11-12**).
      - d. He began to praise and worship God (**Psa 77:13**).
      - e. He praised God for doing wonders (miracles) and delivering His people by His great strength (**Psa 77:14-20**).

- iii. We will find relief from our anxiety if we follow Asaph's example.
7. Cast your *care* upon the Lord (**1Pe 5:7**).
- A. Cast *v.* – I. The simple action. To throw. 1. a. *trans.* To project (anything) with a force of the nature of a jerk, from the hand, the arms, a vessel, or the like; to THROW (which is now the ordinary equivalent); to fling, hurl, pitch, toss. V. To put, or place, with haste, violence, force, or power, so that the effect resembles throwing. 31. a. To lay, place, put, with an action of force, decisiveness, or haste. (Now usually *throw.*) b. *fig.* Of care, blame, or the like.
- B. Care *n.* – 1. a. Mental suffering, sorrow, grief, trouble. 2. Burdened state of mind arising from fear, doubt, or concern about anything; solicitude, anxiety, mental perturbation; also in *pl.* anxieties, solitudes.
- C. The Lord cares for His children.
- i. God's cares for us in the sense of being concerned about us, compassionate and pitiful towards us, and providing for us (**Luk 10:33-35; Deut 11:10-12; Joh 10:11-13**).
- ii. Like a father pities his children, God pities us who fear Him (**Psa 103:13; Jam 5:11**).
- iii. Pity *n.* – I. 1. The quality of being pitiful; the disposition to mercy or compassion; clemency, mercy, mildness, tenderness. *Obs.* (or merged in next.) 2. a. A feeling or emotion of tenderness aroused by the suffering, distress, or misfortune of another, and prompting a desire for its relief; compassion, sympathy.
- iv. Pity *v.* – 1. *trans.* To feel pity for; to compassionate, commiserate.
- v. God is grieved when we are in misery (**Jdg 10:16; Isa 63:9**).
- vi. God considers our trouble and knows our souls in adversities (**Psa 31:7**).
- vii. God not only cares, but He has the power to deliver us from our fear and anxiety.
- D. **1Pe 5:6-11** gives us a good formula for overcoming anxiety.
- i. Step 1: humble yourself (**1Pe 5:6**).
- a. Humbling yourself includes admitting that you are struggling with fear and anxiety.
- b. Humbling yourself includes admitting that you need help from God or others to overcome your anxiety.
- c. When we humble ourselves, God will exalt us in due time and lift us up (**Jam 4:10**).
- d. *In due time* indicates that we may have to suffer and humble ourselves for a while before God will lift us out of our affliction.
- ii. Step 2: cast your care upon God (**1Pe 5:7**).
- a. Casting your care upon God is taking your anxiety and worry and giving it to God for Him to bear and deal with.
- b. Once you give it to God, when you are tempted to worry about it again, remind yourself that God is going to deal with it.
- c. Imagine that you had a problem that you were very worried about.
- (i) Now imagine that you knew a person that could fix your problem.

- (ii) Imagine that you had absolute confidence in his ability to take care of your problem.
  1. In that situation, do you think you would continue to have severe anxiety?
  2. You would not because you would be certain that the person who promised to fix your problem would do what he promised.
- (iii) God is able to deliver you from any trouble you face.
  1. There is nothing too hard for God (**Gen 18:14; Jer 32:17, 27**).
  2. There is nothing impossible with God (**Mar 10:27; Mar 14:36; Luk 1:37**).
  3. God can fix any problem you have, no matter how insurmountable it may seem.
  4. Therefore, cast your care upon God and trust Him to take care of your trouble.
  5. If you are later tempted to worry or be anxious about it, remind yourself that if you would have absolute confidence in a man who you were certain could solve your problem, how much more so should you trust God and stop worrying about it.
- iii. Step 3: be sober and vigilant (**1Pe 5:8**).
  - a. Be serious about your Christian life and walk.
  - b. Be wise, walk in wisdom, and be watchful for the snares and traps of the devil (**Eph 5:14-17**).
  - c. Recognize that your anxiety attacks may be coming from the devil who as a roaring lion loves to use fear to afflict the saints.
- iv. Step 4: resist the attacks of the devil in the faith, knowing that your brethren have suffered similar afflictions (**1Pe 5:9**).
  - a. Resisting the devil in the faith is done by answering his attacks with the word of God like Jesus did (**Mat 4:1-11**).
    - (i) When you feel fearful, repeat the following verses to yourself and Satan.
      1. “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” (**2Ti 1:7**)
      2. “Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them...” (**Deut 31:6**)
      3. “Be strong and of a good courage...” (**Jos 1:6**)
      4. “Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.” (**Jos 1:9**)
      5. “...Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake

thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD.” (1Ch 28:20)

6. “...Fear not; I will help thee...” (Isa 41:13)

7. “...Fear not: for I am with thee...” (Isa 43:5)

8. “What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.” (Psa 56:3)

9. “In God I will praise his word, in God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me.” (Psa 56:4)

(ii) When you feel anxious, repeat the following verses to yourself and Satan.

1. “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” (Php 4:6-7)

2. “Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.” (1Pe 5:7)

3. “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. <sup>34</sup> Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” (Mat 6:33-34)

b. When you resist Satan’s temptations to fear with the word of God, he will flee from you for a time (Jam 4:7 c/w 1Jo 2:14 c/w Luk 4:13).

c. Take comfort knowing that saints in the Bible, and down to the present day, have suffered with fear and anxiety just like you are.

v. Step 5: remember that after God has allowed you to suffer for a while He will make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, and settle you (1Pe 5:10).

a. God’s purpose in allowing us to suffer with anxiety and other afflictions is to do us good in our latter end (Deut 8:16; Psa 66:10-12).

b. His purpose is to make us into mature Christians through these sufferings (Jam 1:3-4).

vi. Step 6: praise God and give Him the glory for saving you eternally and delivering and sustaining you through your trials (1Pe 5:10-11).

a. Always remember to glorify God in all that we do (1Co 10:31), even in suffering (1Pe 4:16).

b. We should praise God for delivering us from our affliction (Act 3:8) and for delivering us from the wrath to come.

8. Wait on the LORD to deliver you in His perfect timing (Psa 27:1, 13-14).

A. Remember that your suffering will end; it will not last forever, even if it feels like it will (Psa 30:5).

B. Even if you have the thorn in your flesh for the rest of your life (2Co 12:7-9), you will be forever free of it for all eternity in heaven (Rev 21:4).

9. God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind (**2Ti 1:7; Rom 8:15**).
  - A. Therefore, unhealthy, unbiblical, or irrational fear is not from God.
  - B. God gives us the power, love, and sound mind to overcome the spirit of fear that sometimes plagues us.
  - C. Remind yourself of this when you suffer with bouts of fear, anxiety, or panic.
10. Remind yourself that most of the things that we worry about never come to pass.
  - A. “My life has been full of terrible misfortunes most of which never happened.” – Montaigne, French Philosopher
  - B. Ask yourself:
    - i. What is the likelihood that what I fear will come to pass?
    - ii. What is the worst thing that could happen if what I fear materializes?
    - iii. If it happens, will I be able to go on?
    - iv. Have other people lived through it?
    - v. If it kills me, won't I be better off in heaven?
    - vi. Is what I am worried about now going to matter in five years?
11. Tell yourself to believe the following things to alleviate your fears.
  - A. God is in control, and nothing happens without His permission (**Isa 46:10**).
  - B. God has not given me the spirit of fear, but of power and love and a sound mind (**2Ti 1:7**).
  - C. At what time I am afraid, I will trust in God (**Psa 56:3**).
  - D. In God I have put my trust; I will not fear what flesh can do unto me (**Psa 56:4**).
  - E. Fear not; God is with me (**Isa 41:10**).
  - F. Fear not men (**Mat 10:28**).
  - G. Be not afraid (**Jos 1:9; Isa 40:9; Jer 42:11; Mat 14:27; Mat 17:7; Act 18:9**).
  - H. Be still and know that the LORD is God (**Psa 46:10**).
    - i. Being *still* is the opposite of being *troubled*.
    - ii. Being still will help your mind to calm down.
    - iii. Sit in a chair and try to fix your thoughts on God.
    - iv. Think about the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - I. God has saved me from many things in the past, and He will continue to do so (**2Co 1:8-10**).
  - J. God will deliver me from all my fears and troubles (**Psa 34:4-6, 17-19**).
  - K. Let not my heart be troubled (**Joh 14:27; Mat 24:6**).
  - L. Though a host should encamp against me, I will not fear (**Psa 27:3**).
  - M. God hears my prayers and will protect me; and even if He does allow me to suffer, I will not be afraid (**1Pe 3:12-14**).
12. Think on good things (**Php 4:8**).
  - A. Stop filling your mind with gloom and doom.
  - B. Our Lord Jesus Christ exhorted us to let not our hearts be *troubled* (**Joh 14:1a; Joh 14:27**).
    - i. Jesus’ antidote for a troubled heart is believing in God the Father and in Him, God the Son (**Joh 14:1b**).
    - ii. Jesus went on to tell us that He went to heaven to prepare a place for us there (**Joh 14:2**).

- iii. He promised to come back and receive us unto Himself for us to forever be where He is (**Joh 14:3**).
  - iv. So, to prevent or stop our hearts from being troubled, we must:
    - a. believe in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
    - b. focus our thoughts on heaven where Jesus has prepared a place for us (**Col 3:1-2**).
    - c. look forward in anticipation of the second coming of Christ (**Col 3:4**).
  - v. When you are troubled because of persecution, remember that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming back to deliver us and to destroy the wicked who persecute us (**2Th 1:7-10**).
  - C. Mediate on the word of God (**Psa 77:12; Psa 119:15; 1Ti 4:15**).
  - D. God will keep our hearts in perfect peace if we keep our hearts and minds stayed on God and trust Him (**Isa 26:3-4**).
  - E. Stop fretting and obsessing about the wicked and the evil in the world, but instead trust in God and focus on Him (**Psa 37:1-9**).
13. Listen to classical music and hymns.
- A. Listening to classical music has a calming effect on the mind.
  - B. This helped to calm down Saul when he was distressed in mind (**1Sa 16:23**).
  - C. Singing or listening to hymns does the heart good and helps to put us in a thankful mood (**Eph 5:19-20**).
  - D. And a merry heart does good like a medicine (**Pro 15:13; Pro 17:22**).
14. Find a wise and helpful person to talk to.
- A. It is important to get counsel to deal with life's challenges (**Pro 11:14; Pro 24:6; Pro 15:22; Pro 20:18; Pro 12:15**).
    - i. Never forget that the counsel of the Lord (**Psa 16:7; Pro 19:21**) in the Bible is the best counsel (**Psa 119:24**).
    - ii. Other counselors can help, but always go to the scriptures first.
    - iii. Always weigh the advice of others against the testimony of God.
  - B. Sharing your struggles with a trusted and wise person can be very helpful when trying to overcome fear and anxiety.
  - C. That person may be a pastor, church member, spouse, parent, friend, or even a professional counselor if necessary.
  - D. Sometimes, telling another person about your fears will calm you down because he will see things as an outsider and can look at the problem logically and rationally and then explain why your fear is unfounded.
  - E. We often just need someone to talk some sense into us.
  - F. Church members should endeavor to comfort one another in times of suffering (**1Th 5:11**).
    - i. Sometimes people will distance themselves from those who are suffering because it makes them uncomfortable (**Psa 38:11; Job 19:14-19**).
    - ii. Don't do that!
  - G. A person who can speak comforting words to a suffering soul is a gift from God.
    - i. A good word makes the heart glad (**Pro 12:25**).
    - ii. A word spoken in due season is a good thing (**Pro 15:23**).
    - iii. Pleasant words are sweet to the soul and health to the bones (**Pro 16:24**).



- iv. A word fitly spoken is beautiful (**Pro 25:11**).
  - v. Find a person who knows how to speak a word in season to you when you are weary with anxiety (**Isa 50:4**), and you will find relief.
15. Accept your station in life.
- A. If you have a lowly station, *care* not for it (**1Co 7:21**).
  - B. Care *v.* – 1. a. To sorrow or grieve. *Obs.* (last usage in 1530) 2. a. To be troubled, uneasy, or anxious. b. To feel concern (great or little), be concerned, trouble oneself, feel interest.
  - C. Some people worry and fret about not having as much as others.
  - D. Some people worry about losing their wealth or income, or having it taken from them.
  - E. The solution to these worries and fears is:
    - i. Be content with what you have (**Heb 13:5a; Php 4:11-13; 1Ti 6:5-8**).
    - ii. Trust that God will never forsake you and will always provide for you (**Heb 13:5b; Php 4:19; Psa 34:9-10; Pro 10:3**).
  - F. When you are content and trusting in God, you can boldly say that you will not fear what man can do unto you (**Heb 13:6**).
16. Be wise with your money.
- A. Get out of debt (**Rom 13:8; Pro 22:7**).
    - i. Debt is a major cause of anxiety.
    - ii. Being debt-free brings peace of mind.
    - iii. Being debt makes every worry more worrisome.
  - B. Save up a large emergency fund so that you could survive for 6 months or more with no job or income (**Pro 6:6-8**).
    - i. That safety net will help to alleviate your anxiety about the future.
    - ii. But never trust in your savings (**1Ti 6:17**).
    - iii. Do your best to prepare, but always trust in the Lord for safety (**Pro 21:31**).
  - C. Save for the time when you get old and can no longer work, which will prevent you from having anxiety when you are old.
17. Be content with less.
- A. Having too many things to care for is a source of anxiety (**Pro 15:16; Ecc 4:6**).
  - B. The care of this world is also linked with the deceitfulness of riches (**Mat 13:22**).
    - i. Riches can be a source of anxiety (**Ecc 5:12**).
    - ii. Wealth requires a lot of attention if it is to be maintained and held onto (**Pro 27:23-24**).
    - iii. Many people live hectic lives because of the desire for more money and the things it can buy.
  - C. Be content with such things as you have (or maybe a lot less than you have) (**Heb 13:5; Ecc 6:9**).
  - D. “Nature is content with little, grace with less, but lust with nothing.” (Matthew Henry)
18. When possible, avoid people who cause stress in your life.
- A. Sinners and fools will vex your spirit (**2Pe 2:7-8**).
  - B. A companion of fools will be destroyed (**Pro 13:20**).
  - C. Sometimes it’s necessary to break off relationships or distance ourselves from people who are harmful to our mental health.

- D. You may need to stop talking to people (at least for a time) who cause you anxiety by the topics or problems they discuss with you.
19. Confess and forsake your known sins.
- A. One of the ways God punishes sinners is by appointing terror over them (**Lev 26:14-16**).
    - i. Therefore, we ought to examine ourselves (**2Co 13:5**) and make sure that we are not suffering with fear or anxiety as a punishment from God.
    - ii. If we continue to reject God’s call to repent and refuse to turn at the reproofs of His word, He will mock when our fear comes (**Pro 1:22-27; Jdg 10:6-14**).
    - iii. That would be truly horrifying.
  - B. If we confess and forsake our sins we will find forgiveness and mercy from God (**1Jo 1:9; Pro 28:13**).
  - C. If we confess our sins, our heart will not condemn us, and we will have confidence toward God (**1Jo 3:20-21**).
20. Face your fears and do whatever the thing is that you are dreading which is causing your fear.
- A. For instance...
    - i. When Jacob feared Esau, who was coming to meet him with an army of men, he took action and divided his people and animals into two bands to limit the potential damage (**Gen 32:7**).
    - ii. When Joshua did what needed to be done and executed judgment on Achan, his anxiety went away, and he was strong again (**Jos 7:25 – 8:3**).
  - B. I have found that taking care of the thing that I have been stressing about has helped much to alleviate anxiety.
21. Deal with your fears head-on.
- A. If you have an unrealistic fear of something, do it rather than avoiding it. For example:
  - B. If you have a fear of germs...
    - i. don't wash your hands after you use the bathroom.
    - ii. don't wash your hands after you shake someone's hand.
    - iii. pick up food off of the floor as soon as you drop it and eat it.
    - iv. eat food a few days past the expiration date if it looks and smells okay.
  - C. If you have a fear of leaving your door unlocked....
    - i. don't check the lock when you are pretty sure you locked it.
    - ii. leave the door unlocked for a night.
  - D. If you have a fear of talking with people, force yourself to introduce yourself to someone.
  - E. If you have a fear of driving on snowy roads, do it.
  - F. If you fear being rejected by women, ask one out on a date. If she turns you down, ask another one.
22. Dr. Claire Weekes’ four steps for overcoming nervous illness.
- A. Dr. Claire Weekes, author of “Hope and Help for Your Nerves,” recommends the following four steps to overcome anxiety and panic attacks.
    - i. Facing – instead of running away from our fears, we need to face them.

- ii. Accepting – instead of fighting our fears and our body’s reaction to them, we need to accept them.
  - iii. Floating – instead of resisting the nervous reactions of our body and trying to withdraw from them or force our way through them, we need to go with them and allow them to pass.
  - iv. Letting time pass – instead of becoming impatient with time, we need to let it pass.
- B. In summary, when you start to experience the manifestations of anxiety such as increased heart rate, churning in your stomach, shortness of breath, etc., accept that it is happening to you, don’t allow yourself to fear the fear, and wait for it to subside.
- C. While waiting for it to subside, practice deep breathing which will have a calming effect on you.
- D. These four steps are essentially taught in the Bible, only under different terminology.
- i. Facing
    - a. *Facing* is basically having *courage* to deal with your anxiety.
    - b. The Bible exhorts us to have courage to face our fears (**Deut 31:6; 1Ch 28:20; Psa 31:24**).
  - ii. Accepting
    - a. *Accepting* is having *humility* to admit that we have a problem with fear.
    - b. When we humble ourselves, God will lift us up (**Jam 4:10**).
    - c. Humility is the path toward getting your *life* back (**Pro 22:4**).
    - d. The Psalmist Asaph accepted that he was being afflicted with anxiety (**Psa 77:10**), which was the first step in overcoming his affliction.
    - e. Jacob admitted his fear and prayed to God for deliverance (**Gen 32:11**).
  - iii. Floating
    - a. *Floating* is *not fearing* your initial fears, either before they come or at the moment they come.
      - (i) The Bible repeatedly tells us to *fear not* and *be not afraid* (**Jos 8:1; Jos 1:9; etc.**).
      - (ii) We are told to be not afraid of sudden fear (**Pro 3:25**).
      - (iii) If you can train yourself to be not afraid when the initial fear happens, you can stop a panic/anxiety attack from happening.
    - b. *Floating* is also *casting our cares upon God* (**1Pe 5:7**).
  - iv. Letting time pass
    - a. *Letting time pass* is the exercise of *patience* (**Luk 21:19; 2Co 6:4; Col 1:11; Heb 12:1; Jam 1:3-4; Jam 5:10-11**).
    - b. Patience *n.* – 1. a. The suffering or enduring (of pain, trouble, or evil) with calmness and composure; the quality or capacity of so suffering or enduring.
    - c. *Wait* on the LORD to deliver you from your anxiety (**Psa 27:14**).
- E. Some of Dr. Weekes’ recommendations to overcome anxiety and nervous illness.

- i. “Float past tension and fear. Float past unwelcome suggestions. Float, don’t fight. Go through the peak of experience with utter acceptance. Let more time pass.” (Claire Weekes, *Hope and Help for Your Nerves*, p. 40)
- ii. “This person must first *find some solution or compromise for his problem, seeking advice where necessary; he must be prepared to cease fighting and float forward to recovery, accepting all the tricks his nerves play on him while attempting to lose himself in occupation.*” (Ibid, p. 168)
- iii. “Never tell your relative to “fight it.” Tell him *not to fight it, to accept it; to practice masterly inactivity and float past troublesome issues that cannot be resolved; to float past fear of the bodily sensations of his illness. He must float, not fight. This is the way!*” (Ibid, p. 191)