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The Cure for the Anxious Soul; Phil 4:6-9
GPBC
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Introduction – I want to read a few verses from Psalm 119 in order to set the context for how we are to receive and understand and cling to our passage in Philippians.

119:43 – And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, for my hope is in your rules.

119:50 – This is my comfort in my affliction, that your promise gives me life.

119:92 – If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction. (hope-giving, life-giving, sustaining and preserving)

Here's what I want us to grasp this morning – if God commands it, it must be good; if God promises it, it must be true. The cure for the anxious soul begins with our view of God's holy, unchanging, absolute, bedrock Word. The path out of the crippling grip of anxiety is an ever-growing reliance upon, trust in, and loving surrender to the words of life. We must learn to read the Bible as "that means me, that's true for me, that applies to me." The way to loosen and finally break the chains of despairing anxiety is to believe that God's Word is true no matter my circumstances, no matter my feelings. The Bible is sufficient because God is sufficient! His Word trumps all other words, even my own words!

The Bible is not to be taken as equal with any other counsel. God is all wise and all faithful and true and light without any shade of darkness. His Word is eternal and the source and fountain of life. Treasure it. Stand upon it. Cling to it. Rest in it. Hope in it. For God cannot lie. He will always be true to His commands and faithful to His promises.

The night of anxiety might be long and exhausting, but the dawn will come when our souls are rooted and anchored in Scripture. For the Word of God is living and active...it pierces to the soul and spirit...it discerns the thoughts and intentions of the heart (Heb 4:12). Notice with me the connection between v5 and v6. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything. The presence of God in your life is an unstoppable force that conquers the giant of anxiety by calming the anxious

heart and easing the anxious mind. The Bible gives us the opportunity to discover the God who lives within us.

I. Fellowship with God in Prayer

a. Do not be anxious about anything

i. I take “anything” here to mean anything real or imagined.

Much of our anxiety is stirred up from the hypothetical that is not rooted in reality. It’s the “what if’s” that bother us. What if this happens? What if I have this? What if it’s not good? What if I lose this? Don’t be anxious about the what ifs, for God is greater than the what ifs. Jesus said in Matthew 6, “Do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble. God already knows exactly what you need and His grace will be sufficient for whatever tomorrow holds. Just seek first His kingdom and His righteousness and trust Him to meet your needs.”

ii. Most of our anxious thoughts concern our health, our death, our future needs, or our discontent with (in our minds) not being able to keep up or measure up with others. Matthew 6 Jesus teaches us God is sovereign and He is good. We can’t add a single hour to our lifespan. God, our Father, supplies our daily bread. Whatever He allows or refuses in our lives is ultimately for our good. He made you to be you, not them, that in your unique way your life would bring Him glory! Do not be anxious about anything.

b. But, rather, instead in everything by prayer – in everything – whatever you are in, a mess or a stress – do not be anxious about it as if there is nothing you can do but worry – pray!

i. Take it to your Father – prayer and supplication. Pour out your heart to God. 3 things.

1. Prayer – talk to God about what it is, why you’re anxious. What’s got your heart troubled.
2. Supplication – ask Him for grace, ask Him for faith, ask Him for peace, ask Him for wisdom.
3. Thanksgiving – thank Him for who He is, for all He has done, for His rich promises, for His past faithfulness. Turns our eyes to God.

- c. Make plenty of room in your life for sweet fellowship with your Father in prayer. Turn the phone off, get to a quiet space, and enjoy God in prayer. There is a powerful promise that comes as a result of pouring our hearts out to God in prayer.
- d. V7 – The peace of God which is able to build a fortress around your heart and mind that keeps anxiety out comes to us through prayer!
 - i. Prayer is an awesome privilege that has been given to us by our Father. All other religions pray, but to what end? There are no other gods, so what happens when someone prays to a false god? Nothing! Remember Elijah and the prophets of Baal in 1 Kings 18?!
 - ii. But the one true God tells us, because Christ has opened the way for us to approach God, He says in Heb 4 – Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.!
 - iii. The promise is peace. When the heart is in turmoil, fellowship with God in prayer with thanksgiving yields the peace of God!
- e. You see anxiety arises in the heart and dwells in the mind, so God tells us to pour out our hearts to him in prayer and fill up our minds with praise!

II. Filling the Mind with Praise-worthy Thoughts

- a. Once you give your anxious thoughts to God – you cast your cares on Him because He cares for you – once you do that, you have to replace those thoughts with other thoughts. Remove anxiety from the heart through prayer and replace anxious thoughts in the mind with praise-worthy thoughts.
- b. It is up to us what we allow to dwell in our minds. We either choose to expose our minds to ungodly or unwise thoughts or when those thoughts pop into our minds, we choose to not take out the garbage.
- c. We need to build a grid of godliness over our minds, and if the thought doesn't fit the grid, it is not allowed in or if it sneaks in, it is removed quickly.
- d. Mind grid
 - i. True – reality, God's Word above all other words – including mine
 - ii. Honorable – dishonors you or your neighbor, throw it out

- iii. Just – if it represents doing to others as you would have done to you
- iv. Pure – impure, sinful thoughts feed anxiety – anything from lust to materialism
- v. Lovely – morally attractive and winsome
- vi. Commendable – is it something you could recommend to your spouse, child, loved one?
- vii. Excellent, worthy of praise – think on these things
- e. Memorize Scripture. Sound Bible teaching. Songs that direct your thoughts to God. Reading good books. Podcasts.
- f. Maybe you say it's not so much anxious thoughts but anxious feelings. The same applies. Prayer and godly thoughts
- g. The answer to the strong giant of anxiety is really simple – maybe not easy – but it is simple (ill. Goliath) – (1) run to God in prayer – as you cast your anxieties on Him, He will fill you with His peace, (2) pour in to your minds godly and good thoughts. If our hearts are full of the peace of God and our minds are full of the things of God – anxiety has nowhere to take root.

III. Following Godly Examples

- a. Get busy living for Jesus. Fill up your mind with thoughts of God and fill up your time with service to God. The world says – you need to treat yourself, love yourself, pamper yourself. But the truth is the more we focus on ourselves, the more anxious we get. God says, focus on others. Serve others. Love others. Pray for others. Share the gospel with others. Befriend others. Speak encouragement and do acts of kindness. Live strong for Jesus.
- b. The heart, the mind, and our time. We can remove every place where anxiety can land and replace it with God.
- c. Hear the promise – the God of peace will be with you! He will not only give you His peace; He will give you Himself! That takes us right back up to v5!

Conclusion – practical things you can do to fight anxiety. *Sever what leads you to anxiety. It's amazing how quickly we get addicted to what we know harms us. Replace it. As I stated last week, the more money we have, the more we use

social media, the busier we are going and doing, the more anxious we become –
SO..

*Don't pursue wealth, pursue Jesus.

*unplug, disconnect and connect with your Father.

*simplify your life.

*you need quality sleep.

*exercise, healthy diet, sunshine.

All of these things can assist, but the cure is the peace of God through prayer, and
the God of peace through godly thoughts and godly living.