

Wellness Sunday

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[0 : 00] Thank you, Brother Cornwell. If you will, take your Bibles and turn to Philippians chapter 4. And I was thinking, as your pastor was talking about the test, I like that. I think that's a great word there.

I make a mistake often in pastoring, I will say. Now, as you know, last week we studied on, and there's just like this glaze over the eyes of our church. And so we may implement the test.

That might be a way to push back against that. And good to see you this morning. Philippians chapter 4, let's read two verses, and we'll look at a few more as it relates to the text today, but kind of the heart or the core of our text today.

Philippians 4, verse 6 and 7 has been our joy to be with you this weekend. And as your pastor mentioned, this is one of our first wellness weekends that we've been a part of. We've been hosting them at our church for several years now, and we'll be in nine other churches this year while also still pastoring, so that's a new season for us.

We pray for our church as we process that and some other men that preach and teach and lead there. But we're honored to be with you this morning. Philippians 4, let's look, if you will, at verse 6. Be careful for nothing, Paul says, but in everything, in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be known unto God.

[1 : 11] And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. So we want to look at today this subject, the gospel in anxiety.

The gospel in anxiety. Let's pray together. Lord, thank you for your goodness. Thank you for this rich worship, Lord, that is grounded in your word and causes not just our minds but our hearts to soar as we grasp and process, Lord, the implications of these truths and our relationship with you and others that we can invite into that same relationship.

Lord, we come now to this moment in time, and Lord, I know there is much in this room that is represented, challenges, burdens. Lord, many of those are not on a bone level or a body level.

They're on a soul level. And I pray that you would help us today to speak into that with the gospel, the good news, the death, the burial, the resurrection of Jesus Christ and all that that means for us.

Lord, there's hope, there's peace, there is a future. Lord, that ultimately will shake off all that plagues us and burdens us down in the here and now. And I pray that you would renew, you would refresh, you would maybe for the first time introduce to those in this room the good news that is theirs despite the anxiousness that plagues our world.

[2 : 28] Bless this study, we pray in Christ's name, amen. This morning as I came in, some of your greeters were giving me options. We came in not necessarily planning to be a part of your life groups, but they were giving us the option.

And they said, if you want to feel younger, go this direction. If you want to feel older. And I said, well, I know I don't want to feel the older, so that's out. Whatever group maybe you were in that was described as that.

But the other day, I heard this contrast between childhood injuries and adult injuries. And here was kind of the contrast. So childhood injuries would include falling off our bikes, falling out of a tree, twisting our ankle, you know, those kinds of things.

And then here are a few adult injuries as we age. Number one, I slept wrong. Maybe that's you this morning. Number two, I sat down for too long.

Have you ever had that? And then my favorite is this. Number three, I sneezed too hard. That was the one that took me out. Can I just say to you as we begin today, our injuries are much more than just on a body level.

[3 : 34] And I think as we consider anxiety today and its implications in our lives, the impact it has, it's much more to do with our soul, that which is the interior recesses of our being.

And so I look at today this idea of dealing with anxiety through the gospel of Jesus Christ. Now, may I say as we begin today, we're not minimizing outside help or support or encouragement that you may require, but what does the word of God have to say as it relates to anxiety?

If you go back to verse six, the second word of verse six is a key word where it says, be careful for nothing. And the word there could also be translated anxious, being careful or anxious for nothing.

And the word has this idea in the original. It has the idea of being anxious to be troubled with cares. Or number two, interestingly, to seek to promote one's self-interest.

So being anxious has both the idea of I'm over caring on things or I'm too self-absorbed on things that need to be surrendered to the provision and oversight of the Lord.

[4 : 37] So the good news of Jesus is the only truly enduring antidote for the cares that often are selfish, the cares that are troubled. God thankfully gives us a gospel that can clean up and can address every anxious corner of our hearts, our lives, our homes, the list goes on and on.

The gospel has the antidotes. So let's talk about today two hope-filled antidotes. And you should have, I think we gave you, did we give you a handout today? Did we get those out? I don't know if we did. That's all right. We don't have to do that. We're in the back.

That's fine. You can get them when you leave today. And Phil, if you want to take notes today, that's great. Let's talk about, first of all, the anatomy of human anxiety. The anatomy of human anxiety.

I want to talk for a few minutes before we look at the text of some of the profile of anxiety for you and I to consider where maybe it's manifesting itself in our lives.

May I say this, first of all, as we consider anxiety, why does the church need to speak to this? I don't know. And I just want to commend your pastor for allowing us to come in and speak to this and others that did so yesterday.

[5 : 41] Why does the church need to speak to this idea of anxiety? Can I give you a few things just to consider today in general? Number one, anxiety is having a serious effect.

It's having a toll on our homes, our hearts, our minds, and our society. Of all the things that our world is navigating, it's not the physical threats. It's not the physical maladies that ultimately are our greatest threat.

It's all that's going on inside the hearts and minds and souls of human beings. Number two, anxiety largely in the broader sense is diagnosed based on symptoms.

So whatever, if you've run into someone who's been diagnosed with a certain anxiety disorder, it is based not upon a blood test. There's no empirical data that, okay, you've tested positive for this version of anxiety.

It is a symptom-based diagnosis, and therefore, there's a lot of subjectivity. And so we want to make sure that God's word speaks to this. We're not diminishing it. We're just making sure that we're being honest where it actually exists.

[6 : 45] Thirdly, studies show, this is key today, that talk therapy as it relates to anxiety is often just as effective as using prescription therapy.

And so a lot of our anxiety, though some may need and require certain things, hormone, chemical imbalances, et cetera, much of it just requires talk therapy. And so we talk through this with the help of God's word.

And then lastly, I would say this, why does the church need to address anxiety? It's because we are medicating what is actually normal to the human experience. Today in our society, I just came across this study the other day, updated my numbers.

There was an article that said upwards of 85% of Americans battle either anxiety or depression or both. 85% of Americans. And so we have to be very careful to not overreact to what is just a part, excuse me, a part of living in a fallen world.

And so I just want to caution you with those kind of introductory comments of why we as a church need to speak to it to make sure that we have identified properly the anatomy of human anxiety.

[7 : 55] All right, let's talk about a couple of things as it relates to that. Number one, we need to recognize what is the human experience as it relates to anxiety. Have you ever been walking and you think you're to the bottom of a set of stairs and you're not?

You know where I'm going with this? The other day someone said this, don't you hate when you're going down the stairs and you forget the last one? It's like, hello, you just had a seven inch heart attack. You know, just that feeling.

And so anxiety is a, it's a common thing that we experience either in that kind of a setting or otherwise. And so we need to identify that with the help of the Lord. I want to give you just two areas where personally we feel vulnerable and we need to be willing to identify that.

And as you're getting those outlines there, maybe you can catch up with us. First, the anatomy of the human anxiety. Number one, recognize the human experience. Let's talk for a minute about where we feel personally vulnerable.

Psychologically, God has given us a psyche, right? A mind. And the mind often is the main source of and sustainer of what we would describe as being anxious.

[9 : 07] Anxiety is the result. This is the best definition I've ever heard of anxiety as it relates to our thinking. Anxiety is the result of a mind that has gone off the rails. It just rages.

It just wanders. It just meanders into all kinds of side things. And so anxiety has been described as vigilance that's out of control, the what-ifs of life. It's toxic scanning.

You're looking for threats and things that would maybe attack and cause harm physically, emotionally, spiritually. In summary, psychologically, anxiety is vigilant thoughts or careful thoughts minus faith in God.

And so we have to make sure that our psychological processing of life and anxiety includes God. And we'll talk more about that in just a moment. Second, number two, there's a biological part.

And by that, I mean our bodies. We have to be very careful to not diminish where the mind and the body interact. One of the things I often find as I'm counseling and as I'm learning in this area as well is that there's this gray area where the physical part of a person and the psychological part of a person interact or merge.

[10 : 19] And it's hard to distinguish is it a physical source or is it a psychological source or even maybe is it a spiritual source. And so we have to own or maybe there are biological contributing factors that have led to anxiety.

And one of the things we tend to do is we spiritualize, if we're not careful, things that are physical. And so I want to encourage you, if that's you, if you've not seen your doctor lately, if you're not sleeping at night, my first question when I counsel is this, how much sleep have you been getting?

If they say I haven't slept in a week, we're wasting our time. Let's get some rest before we address some of these other things that may still be present. So we have to be careful to understand where we are vulnerable as it relates to this physical challenge.

This last comment, we'll move to our second point this morning. I hear often anxiety, depression, stress, burnout, described as sin, where it's a direct equal sign.

Anxiety equals sin. Depression equals sin. I was just there, and I'll show you a picture a minute if we have time. I was just in the Garden of Gethsemane.

[11 : 29] I was where they, which is one possible site of Jesus praying. And then we went to the Garden Tomb, the hill of Golgotha. But Jesus suffered depression.

Did he not? The garden, as he was pressed out, as literally there was so much stress that the blood capillaries burst in his forehead and he sweated great drops of blood.

He was depressed. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? On the cross, I believe he suffered great anxiety. Can I remind you of something? Jesus didn't sin. And so there's at least one exception to the narrative maybe you have heard or you've caught yourself maybe even promoting in well-meaning, sincere approach to these things.

There's at least one being who was depressed and anxious and never sinned. And so I think we have to be very careful not again to dismiss these psychological or these biological sources of anxiety as we seek to minister out God's gospel, first to our own hearts and souls, as well as to those around us.

Now, may I say this conversely just for a moment? So I gave you first personal vulnerability. Number two, there is personal responsibility. One of the symptoms of anxiety is what is called panic attacks.

[12 : 41] Have you heard of this? And there's a litany of descriptions that would sum up that term. This could involve heart palpitations, sweating, trembling, shaking, shortness of breath, feeling smothered or feeling choked, derealization or depersonalization, fear of losing control or going crazy, fear of dying, hot flashes, paralysis.

There's all kinds of things, all generated by just the mind wandering in this direction. And so we have to be careful with that. Though panic attack, that's how it feels, we still have a responsibility to respond to that in a way that's shaped by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And so we're going to talk about that more in just a moment. I just wanted to stress today that we're identifying maybe sources biologically or psychologically. There is still personal responsibility because we have the hope of Jesus Christ.

All right, number two. And then we'll get to our text today in specific ways that it speaks to this challenge. Number two, remember the heavenly perspective. So number one, recognize the human experience.

Number two, remember the heavenly perspective. We were joking with the Cornwells. We were talking about our kids and what they like to eat. We have teenage boys. Literally, they never stop eating.

[13 : 59] Do you sense that? We're like cleaning up, you know, from the meal and they'll say to Heidi, my wife, you know, what can we have now? And she's like, let me at least finish up this, you know, back off, you know.

And they're just always eating, always consuming. Someone was talking about the idea of how a kid is trying to finagle toward a certain priority with food and a parent many times is going the opposite direction.

And here was the contrast. Every time you have McDonald's as a kid, it's a victory. Every time you have it as an adult, it's a defeat.

You feel like a failure, right? Isn't that funny how that works? Can I just for a moment, in all seriousness, tell you that God often has a different perspective on anxiety than we do.

Like God is working all things together for good. The things by themselves aren't so great and glorious, especially these kind of things, the wounds of the soul. But God's perspective on anxiety needs to be a part of our broader perspective as we look at it.

[15 : 05] So I want to give you just a couple things, again, bringing us up to speed with how God has brought us to this moment through the gospel. Can we talk about first, the first garden? So in your notes, they're in the garden.

So we're talking about the Garden of Eden here. Can we go back to the genesis of the human experience, pre-fall and what that was like? And then how is God trying to restore and reconcile that to himself?

So let's talk for a moment about in the garden. We don't have time to go to genesis and talk in detail, but here's the theory. Here's the premise of our point this morning. Everything that we experience and that we are today in our fallenness is an inverted or an opposite of how God initially intended it.

Have you noticed, we talked about, we joked about food. The things we love to eat are the worst things for us. The thing that I naturally want to do that I feel like will help me is usually the most harmful thing to me.

In our fallenness, we are prone to go the opposite of where God originally intended us and where he's trying to redeem us toward it. So we have to understand that everything is inverted and the gospel alone can recalibrate that.

[16 : 12] And here would be the thought as it relates to anxiety. Remember in Genesis chapter 2 and verse 15 where it tells Adam that he is to tend the garden. He is to tend. The word there has the idea of careful oversight or vigilance would be the word.

That he was to watch carefully. He was to oversee and tend and take care of and keep, guard, protect what God had assigned to him. In one sense, he was the sentry.

He was the one guarding the garden. He was the one overseeing what God had entrusted to his care. And what has happened is through the fall, we've lost that ability.

It now has become the opposite of vigilance, which is anxiety. So vigilance motivates us to be a warrior for God. Anxiety produces in us a worrier.

So if we can view this properly, actually your tendency to be anxious with God's help can actually be redeemed into something beneficial and a blessing and an ally in what God is trying to do in our world.

[17 : 16] The other day, I heard this from a counselor, a friend of mine. He was sharing about a counselee that he was stressing to them that anxiety can be redeemed. It can be used in a way that pleases and honors the Lord.

And he responded with this. Think of this. And maybe this is you today as you process this. He said, that changes everything. Whenever I face a threat and respond with fear, I'm then attacked and overwhelmed by shame.

I feel so weak, so puny when the feelings of fear arise. But now I can say, okay, this feeling is God sent. A God-given warning to kick me into high gear so I'll spring into action on the behalf of others in God's power.

It won't eliminate my anxiety, but it sure knocks out the shame. And so I just want to encourage you today, if you'll let God, if you give God, the God of the gospel, your anxiety, it can remove the shame and actually give you a purpose to use that for the benefit of others, not just in a selfish way.

That was the original intention before the fall. And so moods were in order during that period. Now, after the fall, as we know, Satan tempts his wife.

[18 : 22] And what does Adam do? Instead of standing guard, he stands next to her. He also partakes with his eyes wide open. He abdicates the role of sentry.

And immediately, what does Adam then do? He hides. And we have anxiety, anxiety, anxiety. And so that is the origin of both the positive as well as the negative.

Now, can we talk for a minute about a second garden? I was just there a week ago, which is crazy just to think where I was a week ago. The second garden, that would be the garden of Gethsemane and what God did for us in that second garden.

First at the cross, we see God reordering our moods. Think of Jesus in the garden. So you have two contrasting views of this crisis moment.

Jesus is about to be betrayed and crucified and buried and resurrected. That's the gospel. And you have the disciples who are panicky and even just checking out, sleepy, dozing off.

[19 : 26] And yet you have Jesus who goes a little further and he's praying and he's vigilant and he's focused on what God has called him to do. And this contrast in the garden of the feeble disciples and the faithful Savior, the one willing to drink of the cup with all that was before him.

I want to show this picture if the guys can pull it up here. We were in the garden of Gethsemane and it was interesting on that slide there, you'll notice at the bottom. So two things. One, on the picture you'll notice kind of to the left of the tree, this olive tree is likely north of a thousand years old and they actually have propped it up.

Can you see that there? Kind of that stone all the way to the right there or I guess it'd be to your left kind of there. And then in the front in stone they have the word peace. They had peace there just in the pattern of the stones.

Can I just remind you that though in the first garden we failed the Lord and we have in our own sense we have failed the Lord with our anxiety, there is one who has come to bring us peace.

He knelt in this garden, he prayed in this garden, he went a little further than any other person was willing to do and through that gospel in the second garden everything that had been undone in the first garden has now been offered to us anew and afresh.

[20 : 48] And though we may not fully experience it here in this life, because of what went down in that garden and the surrender and the sacrifice that resulted, someday all anxiety will be annihilated.

And we will be restored to a place of service and vigilance and care and provision for others as we serve in the kingdom with Jesus Christ. Don't forget the second garden while we live after the first one.

We're in between at this point in some senses and the full reality of that will one day be ours through Jesus Christ. Alright, this last thought and we'll move to our second point and back to the text today.

You and I today are currently living between the already of the gospel and the not yet of the gospel, the future and what God has for us. Nothing, listen to me, is more godly than facing our fears with this biblical perspective even while we wait for it to be eliminated.

God gets glory when we do things by faith. And so may I encourage you as you interact with anxiety and as others around you do, would you live for that? Would you look forward to that with the anatomy of human anxiety?

[21 : 59] Alright, go back to our text now to verse number one. And let's talk about a few things now of how God gives us in the second half of our study today. Number two, the answer of divine gospel.

So I'm thankful that God gives us one of the key verses in our counseling ministry is 2 Peter 1.3 that says that God has given us in His word all things that pertain to life and godliness.

God gives us answers. His word is sufficient. And so if you will here, look at verse number one. Let's talk about a few areas in which the gospel answers our needs.

Before we do that, I was, the World Health Organization has fallen on hard times, okay? We have to own that with everything that they've been through recently. But they recently released a study that said this.

People spend, on average, 93% of their lives indoors. Doesn't that just depress you? Like, you know, my boys, get outside, you know, get off your video games and Xboxes, you know, you just, you're always trying to get them outside.

[23 : 01] But we spend, on average, especially during these desperately cold times you're in right now as Georgia people, 93%. In Ohio, about right now, we spend 100% of our time indoors, okay?

But 93% of our lives indoors. That's amazing to me. Can I tell you, we need, as it relates to anxiety, a voice outside of our experience.

One of the things I notice is often in therapy, and especially in this area and others, it's just commiseration. I'm not saying we don't provoke one another to love and good works and challenge, but the last thing I need is for other people that are anxious, for us just to pile on each other.

I get more anxious when I'm in that setting. As a counselor, I have to battle that as well. And so, we need a voice outside of ourselves, which is God Himself. All right, notice if you will here in verse 1, He says this, Therefore, my brethren, dearly beloved, and long for my joy and crown, stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.

Go, if you will, down to verse number 5. He says this, the Lord is at hand. Let's talk about three steps. These are practical, but they're theological as well today that will help us avail ourselves of the antidotes and answers of God's gospel.

[24 : 17] Number one, jot this down, commit to God-given relationships. Commit to God-given relationships. Number one, jot this down in relationship with God.

And we just read the end of verse 1. We read the end of verse number 5. It's interesting that verse 6 that we'll get to in just a moment that speaks to being anxious or careful for nothing, that He sandwiches that command between two reminders of our relationship with God.

In verse 5, He says the Lord is at hand. If you go down to verse 9, the end of verse, He says the God of peace will be with you. And so the way that we experience the answer of heaven to our anxiety is to spend a lot of time with God.

I know that sounds super spiritual and abstract, but even today what we're doing, we're pushing back against the darkness. I don't know about you, some of the songs we just sang, I felt less anxious after I sang it than I did before it.

Being in His Word, being in prayer, and so being in God's presence. Has God ever been anxious? No. Will He ever be anxious? We tend to become like who we're around.

[25 : 28] God is the God of all peace and comfort. And so we need to lean into that relationship. And may I say today, not over-spiritualizing it at the expense of what we just said, could your anxiety in one sense be a symptom, a warning that God wants to be closer to you and you need to be closer to Him.

And so be very careful to own where that relationship needs to go. When anxiety strikes, we tend to focus on the situation and our feelings, and that produces a skewed view, a distant relationship with God.

Instead, may we lean into that very relationship. All right, go back to verse 2. I beseech Iodias and beseech Sintichi that they be of the same mind in the Lord.

I entreat thee also, true yoke fellow. You guys emphasize this word in your ministry. I appreciate that. Help those women which labored with me in the gospel, with Clement Alston and with others, my fellow laborers whose names are in the book of life.

Number two, we need to work in our relationship with God's people. Relationship with God's people. You ever notice that anxiety doesn't help your relationship with others?

[26 : 37] My anxiety, I struggle with it in certain areas as well, makes me antisocial. I have to be honest about that. You know what? I got enough. I can't deal with your baggage or your attitude or your outlook on things.

And often it's counterintuitive, but we must lean into those relationships to address our anxiety. The word moderation to all men that's used, that phrase there in verse five, let your moderation be known unto all men, has the idea of sweet reasonableness and willingness to give up one's own way.

Giving room for the other. Selflessness. We'll talk about that more if we have time in just a moment, but selflessness is one of the greatest doors we can open to let in this peace that will flood our soul.

To address anxiety, we must relate face-to-face to Christ. We must also relate face-to-face with the body of Christ. We're open with one another. We're transparent.

We're authentic with one another. We could look at it, we don't have time, but Philippians is replete with one another's. in chapter one in verse four and five, verse seven and eight, verse 27 and 28, chapter two, one to five, 19 to 24, chapter three, verse 17, and then these first three verses of chapter four, one another, one another, one another, and then he reaches this climax and don't be anxious.

[28 : 03] And so it's our relationship with one another that often is a part of this processing of anxiety. since mature love casts out fear, we need mature relationships with the body of Christ.

John's clear on that. Perfect love. Mature love casts out fear. We can't love by ourselves. We love one another. We love with one another and so that mature love casts out fear, anxiety, and otherwise.

And here would be just a quick takeaway of that. How do relationships with other believers help us? Here's the two main things. Number one, empathy. The vibe that we give one another that anxiety is not easy to deal with.

And I hope you sense that from this church today if you're visiting or a regular here that we're not diminishing anxiety. It's something that we offer an empathetic shoulder and sharing in that experience.

It's often terrifying. I have counseled folks that can't drive. They hear their heart beating in their chest. They're worried they're going to pass out every time they're in public and it paralyzes them.

[29 : 07] That's terrifying. And the church is a place to offer that empathetic sharing of that experience. Number two, it's also encouragement. Yes, it's terrifying, but it's possible to keep our hope in God and to persist in what He has called us to do and be.

We're getting ready to have this next Sunday at our church what we call our starting point luncheon and it's for newer folks that come and I just, you know, let them have it. Here's who we are and you ought to be here every Sunday and here's why we meet, here's why we gather and here's what we do as a church and I often share with them this quote.

I don't know if this resonates with you but I often hear people talk about, well, you can be a Christian but do we really have to go to church and, you know, if you're home watching this today by live stream, we're not picking on you but the idea of just abandoning the assembly of the believers and a guy said this, sure you can be a Christian and not go to church, kind of like a zebra separated from his herd gets eaten by cheetahs is still a zebra, okay?

Yeah, yeah, you're still, you're still a zebra. Isn't that true? We need to gather together and anxiety is wrecking havoc on homes and hearts and lives and souls because we've abandoned this gift of relationship, this gift of Christian community.

All right, let's spend the balance of our time now in these last few verses. Look at verse six. Be careful for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made, notice this word, known unto God.

[30 : 41] Number two, meditate on Christ-honoring thoughts. So number one, how do we deal with, what's the answer of God in his gospel to our anxiety? We commit to God-given relationships.

Number two, we meditate on Christ-honoring thoughts. If I were to ask you today, how do you feel when you're anxious? I guarantee you could rattle off all kinds of symptoms and experiences, but if I said to you, what's the thought process of your anxiety?

Often our thoughts are not as easily articulated. We haven't processed that. We know how we feel, but there's also a thought side of our anxiety.

And so victory and dealing with anxiety is largely putting off the lies and putting on the truth that we see referenced here in the text. All right, let me give you two things under that.

Number one, thoughts as it relates to our identity. Thoughts as it relates to our identity. I was telling my wife this morning, I don't know if you've heard this before, but back in the day, Hollywood actors and actresses would change their name to some showbiz name.

[31 : 49] And the most common practice was they would take the name of their pet, their dog, and the maiden name of their mom, and that was their show name. Have you heard this? And so I did that in my own life.

We have a dog, his name is Mo Bacon. His middle name is Bacon. Last name's Snowed, of course, Mo. And so my name, my mom's main name is Haynam. So Pastor Trent could have introduced me as Mo Haynam.

That's my show name. I don't know, just not sure about how I feel about that. I don't know what your name is today. Fuzzy, Bear, you know, whatever the name of your dog, Fido. Our identity often is very, we're very loose on that where God's word is very precise on that.

And so our thoughts about our identity, who am I, often affect how successful or unsuccessfully I navigate anxiety. Paul in verse 6, as we just read, is very careful to exhort the believers to instead of being anxious to do what?

Pray. I don't know about you, one of the greatest battles of prayer is not my emotions, it's my thoughts that wander. It's my thoughts that are distorted by previous assumptions and philosophy and faulty thinking.

[33 : 03] And so the answer to much of our anxiety is to pray where we are tempted to be anxious. We don't have time to break down verse 6, but he gives four forms of this prayer. Prayer, the approach to God, supplication, requesting specific needs be answered, thanksgiving, the attitude of the heart that accompanies the prayer.

Request specific, definitive things that we ask God for. Here would be a thought to jot down, anxiety is what happens when you don't pray. I'm not saying all anxiety is the result of prayerlessness.

I know some great prayer warriors in the faith that still battle this demon, this burden of anxiety, but much of anxiety is what happens when we pray to ourselves or when we do not pray.

I love this idea, if you will, there at the end of verse 6, be made known unto God. Here's what we need. We need some way to offload, to give to another whose mind and heart and power can handle things that overwhelm us.

We need to give it to them. And who is that person? It's our God. If someone who is anxious just knows that someone knows, that helps.

[34 : 16] And nothing helps more than knowing that God knows. Prayer about the same anxious thought and direction of thought and feeling that we all deal with, just knowing that God knows.

And by praying, I remind myself, God knows, gives to us often what we need in that moment. All right, verse 7. So as we do that, the peace of God, which passes all understanding, that's interesting, shall keep your hearts, notice, and minds through Christ Jesus.

Number two, in thoughts of identity, number two, in thoughts of worthiness. Thoughts of worthiness. And so as we allow God's peace to come, it produces in us these thoughts of worthiness.

And notice how he describes them now in verse number 8. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things.

And so the peace of God keeps out that which is impure and allows us to retain what is the right kind of thoughts. We talked about anxiety looks like toxic scanning, just scanning the horizon.

[35 : 27] The Word of God gives us something to focus on that is worthy and pleasing to the Lord. I would encourage you on your own time in verse 8, that list of things really is a description of what book?

The Bible. Isn't it? What can you think of in the Bible that is not true? What can you think of in the Bible that's not honest or just or pure or lovely or of good report?

That's interesting. You almost see the profile of Scripture being unpacked there in verse 8. And so our thoughts must be worthy thoughts and the only thoughts that are worthy thoughts are the thoughts found in the Word of God, aligned with God's Word.

Will you allow this morning the sufficient Word of God to give you peace in the midst of anxiety with a fresh sense of identity and worthy thoughts found in His Word alone?

All right, lastly, number three, go if you will, down to verse number nine. And the third thing we must do as believers is engage in spirit-applied actions.

[36 : 36] This would be now the handlebars, if you will. This is the practical takeaways of our study this morning, engage in spirit-applied actions. The picture I put up on the slide this morning is of a guy.

He had this caption, the doctor, do we have it there, guys? I'm keeping them hopping back there. Here's the picture. The doctor asked me to spend at least one hour per day on the treadmill.

He did, right? He did what the doctor prescribed. Can I tell you often that's how we're interacting with this malady of anxiety as well as others?

We're just putting in our time. Well, I read the Bible today. I'm in church today. Where's the action? Where's the action that the Spirit has led us to take as it relates to anxiety?

Nothing frees us from it more than acting courageously based upon the Word of God. And we don't have time to break down these at length, but in verse 9, look at it. Those things which you've both learned, received, and heard, and seen in me, what's the word?

[37 : 43] Do. And the God of peace shall be with you. We just, we buzz over that word. And so number one, we need to be involved in action that is selfless.

But we're doing that which is selfless. We're serving others. We're focused on others, not just ourselves, in the midst of that anxiety. On your own time, go back to Philippians chapter 2 where it says, let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, right?

He gave up everything. And he gave up everything through the gospel to give to us this peace that is now ours. When are we healed from anxiety? When we are tending and protecting others, even when we still feel anxious.

That's key. All right, lastly, verse 13. Paul says this, probably one of the most favorite verses we have in the book of Philippians. I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me.

Lastly, an action that is confident. Action that is confident. All of this is preceded by processing anxiety and focusing on others and doing what God has called.

[38 : 46] The action, the steps now don't possess anxiety. They possess confidence. Kind of this thought as we bring this to conclusion today.

I heard someone say this the other day and I think this summarizes often our battle with anxiety. Our anxiety comes not from thinking about the future but wanting to control it.

Our anxiety does not come from thinking about the future. It's the desire to control it. That's a God complex where I'm setting God aside and listen to me that's why we feel so anxious.

I can't handle all the news. I can't handle all the trends. I can't handle where my boys are going to be in 20 years. All I know is God can and the moment I put him back at the central of all that there's a peace that comes and so much of our anxiety brethren is not just the human experience or that's been normalized or just needs to be medicated though all those things need to be addressed.

It's often we have failed to see God and keep God in his proper place. All right I want to show you these last two pictures as I mentioned I was in Israel and this kind of thought that I hope will soothe your heart.

[39 : 59] The first picture you see there is of the outside I would have been this was taken from the Mount of Olives looking toward the old city Jerusalem and so this is the outside looking in the man who built the walls that currently surround the old city had heard of the prophecy that the Messiah would come through the eastern gate the also known as the golden gate and so he blocked it off just to make a statement hey blow through this see if you can get through this.

The second picture is from the inside and this would be coming down off the temple mount you have the dome of the rock the shrine that's there and then as we were walking down off of that this the eastern gate was there before so that is from the inside.

as we were processing that and thinking on that one of the men who was leading the group made this statement to us he said someday you'll remember when you were here you're going to come back and go through that gate with Jesus as he lands his feet on the Mount of Olives and the whole topography is leveled and we ride with Jesus through that gate.

Can I remind you today the future is secure and when we get to this moment and we ride through this gate and we watch what Jesus is doing we'll wonder why was I ever anxious why was I ever worried how this was going to play out?

Is our focus is our faith is our confidence in Jesus Christ? Here's the question and we'll pray. We allow the gospel to reveal anxiety's anatomy and we allow God's gospel to reveal the answer that God alone has.

[41 : 39] Let's pray together. Father thank you for your word today. Lord thank you for the kind, careful and gracious attention of these dear folks. Lord I thank you that what I just said is not just a pep talk it's not just something to make us all feel a bit better with all the darkness and clamor around us.

It's built upon your word. It's been proven true every time it's been tested. It's built upon your unchanging character and holiness and love and truth.

Lord we ask you today that you would renew us you would refresh us you would cause us to see where our anxiety is not as much a physiological or psychological but a theological need.

Lord may that not discourage us may that give us hope today to then turn to a world that is flooded and overwhelmed with anxiety from every angle and to offer up the same glorious story the story that we serve and believe in a Jesus who died was buried and as we just sang came out of that tomb.

Lord because of that good news there's no anxiety we can't persevere through and even at times get victory over as we keep our faith and confidence in you.

[42 : 59] Bless now the application of your word in Christ's name we pray. Amen. Amen.