

## ANXIETY or PEACE?

Dear Bible Study Friends;

I send love and greetings to each one of you! Fall is finally here and that just perks me up. I love the fall season! It just makes me think of cozy warm sweaters, hot coffee by the fire, and the earth settling in for winter. It is a great time of reflection. This year has given us a lot to reflect upon, hasn't it? It has been like nothing I have experienced in my lifetime. I hope you are staying focused on the Lord and His Word and NOT on the craziness that is going on around us!

ANXIETY! Never have I ever seen so much anxiety. But that should not be so with us, as members of the body of Christ Jesus-the church.

You know how I like to get the definition of a word so I looked up the definition of anxiety. ANXIETY: a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease, typically about an imminent event or something with an uncertain outcome. It is worry, nervousness, unease. That about sums up 2020, doesn't it? But that's not us, Believers!

I'm currently reading in the Gospel of Luke and in chapter 12 Jesus is speaking, "**Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on.**" Luke 12:22. We may not worry about what to eat or wear, but I know it is easy to watch the news and WORRY!! Anxiety can creep in but what good does worry do?? Three verses later, Jesus says, "**And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? If you then are not able to do the least, why are you anxious for the rest?**" Luke 12:25-26. I'm sure you already know that worry accomplishes ZERO. We just keep our mind in a state of agitation and there is nothing positive about it. God doesn't want us to be anxious or worry because He is in complete control ALL THE TIME. Nothing can touch us that has not first passed through God's gracious, loving hands. Further down in this same chapter, Jesus tells us that God knows all the things we need and worry about and gives us the answer: "**But seek the kingdom of God and all these things shall be added to you. Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.**" Luke 12:31-32 If we seek God and His kingdom, by worship, Bible reading, prayer, and personal communion with Him, God will give us

everything we need to live here and eventually, we will inherit eternal life in glory! What more could we ask for from Him? In Matthew's account, Jesus adds to **seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness**. Seeking God's righteousness is always a good thing. We want to be in right relationship to our loving Father in heaven. Did you notice this sweet term of endearment Jesus used here? "Little flock". It reminds me of all the precious things we learned about Jesus, our Good Shepherd in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. It's kind of like hearing Jesus tell us not to fear because He is caring for us as His beloved sheep.

Let's be practical. How do we do this? Paul gives us sound principles in the book of Philippians. I would recommend spending a little time memorizing this scripture. It took me a while to memorize it, but it helps to call upon it when my mind starts to worry. Maybe it will help you, too. **Philippians 4:6-7** "**Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**"

**To sum it up: DON'T WORRY, PRAY!** When we take the things we are worrying about to God in prayer, He will give us peace. Is there anything better than laying your head on your pillow at night and being able to go to sleep in peace? We can if we leave all these anxieties with the Lord. Pray about your needs, pray for the needs of others (supplication), and be sure to add in plenty of thanksgiving and praise. God deserves our praise!

Here are a couple of other scriptures that can help us as well:

**II Timothy 1:7** "**For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.**" The fear and anxiety we can experience is not from God! His Spirit gives us power and love and soundness of mind. That all adds up to PEACE.

**I John 4:18** "**There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love.**" I think John is saying that if we are living in fear, we haven't come into the full, perfect love of God in Christ Jesus. I'm not sure it is possible to fully comprehend the love of God this side of Glory. But the Bible gives us lots of insight to contemplate.

**Romans 5:5 “Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”**

**Romans 5:8 “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”**

**Romans 8:32 “He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”**

God gave us His only Son. What could show more love than that? We can count on His love and nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**Romans 8:38-39 “For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”**

That really covers it all, right? We don't know what lies ahead, but NOTHING can separate us from God's love in Jesus! When we know this truth, we can take all our needs and anxieties to God, lay them at the foot of the cross, and be at peace. We serve a great and mighty God and there is nothing He does not know about us, about the future, or about this world we live in. We can trust in Him and know we are secure!

Here's my prayer for you: *Lord, I ask that You would give each one of us a clear revelation of Your love for us. Help us to remember to come to You in prayer when we start to worry about anything. Show us how to think of pure and right things so our minds don't stray to worry. And give us Your wonderful peace through Christ Jesus that will keep us from fear. AMEN*

Love in Christ Jesus,

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