

DEVOTIONAL

Hollywood Prayer Network

ANXIETY & WORRY

This week we're facing one of the most powerful and debilitating emotions that we experience: ANXIETY/WORRY. God tells us over and over again in His Word that we are not to worry, we're not to feel anxious, and yet we struggle with it every day. If you could truly trust God to give you wisdom, guide your thoughts and conversations, and have the faith to let Him take care of the details of your life, you would feel freedom and joy, despite your circumstances. Try to master a sense of peace by giving your anxiety and worry to Him this week!

DAY 1

GIVE YOUR ANXIETY TO HIM!

"AN UNPEACEFUL MIND CANNOT OPERATE NORMALLY. HENCE THE APOSTLE TEACHES US TO 'HAVE NO ANXIETY ABOUT ANYTHING.' DELIVER ALL ANXIOUS THOUGHTS TO GOD AS SOON AS THEY ARISE. LET THE PEACE OF GOD MAINTAIN YOUR HEART AND MIND."
-WATCHMAN NEE

New International Version

1 Peter 5:7

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

DAY 1

PRAY: Lord, would You fill me with Your peace and take away all of my anxiety? I know that You love me and don't want me to worry, but I need Your help to control my emotions and to trust completely in You. Thank You that You care so deeply for me and let me rest in Your arms. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

REFLECT: Our world is too full of anxiety and worry. It must be because we don't cast all of our anxieties and worries onto the Lord. If you feel anxious, do you really believe that God truly and deeply cares for you? How does He show His care, His love, His concern? Are you aware of the little things that He does to encourage you, guide you and care for you? Does that relieve your worry or anxiety? As you cast your worries on to Him, are you more free to care for others? Could it be that as we care for others we will feel more of God's love and care for us and be free of anxiety and worry?

ACT: Try reaching out to someone today whom you know and show them in some way that you care. Then ask God to let you see the ways that He cares for you. If you know someone in the media or creative entertainment industry, they probably need to know that someone cares, and especially that God cares. We are all emotionally needy, but when we reach out to God and to others, we truly feel less anxiety, less worry and more loved ourselves.

DAY 2

DON'T WORRY ABOUT TOMORROW!

"WORRYING ALWAYS RESULTS IN SIN. WE TEND TO THINK THAT A LITTLE ANXIETY AND WORRY ARE SIMPLY AN INDICATION OF HOW WISE WE REALLY ARE, YET IT IS ACTUALLY A MUCH BETTER INDICATION OF JUST HOW WICKED WE ARE. FRETTING RISES FROM OUR DETERMINATION TO HAVE OUR OWN WAY. OUR LORD NEVER WORRIED AND WAS NEVER ANXIOUS, BECAUSE HIS PURPOSE WAS NEVER TO ACCOMPLISH HIS OWN PLANS BUT TO FULFILL GOD'S PLANS. FRETTING IS WICKEDNESS FOR A CHILD OF GOD."

-OSWALD CHAMBERS

New International Version

Matthew 6:34

Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

DAY 2

PRAY: Dear Lord, You tell me not to worry and yet I keep doing it. Thank You for reminding me that even though each day will have its own troubles and I can expect hard times, I still don't have to worry. I need You every moment of every day to help me and change me so that I can replace worry with joy and peace. Please change my heart and my thoughts so that I will not worry about tomorrow, but only focus on today and Your provision for me. I have to let tomorrow worry about itself. Amen.

REFLECT: What good does it do to worry about tomorrow – or to worry about anything, for that matter? Why do we keep worrying when God tells us over and over that we don't have to? There has to be some way that God can change our thoughts so that we can plan for tomorrow but not worry about it. What could that possibly be? He wants to free us of worry!

ACT: Define the one thing you worry most about. Now, know that you can control that "thing" by memorizing Matthew 6:34 that tells you not to worry about tomorrow. After you memorize it and bring it to mind each time you start to worry, God will start to melt away the worry and replace it with peace! God tells us to live our lives today without worrying about tomorrow, but He doesn't mean that we shouldn't plan for tomorrow. So, you don't necessarily have to change your actions, only your thoughts. Worry is a state of mind that comes from a lack of trust or faith in God. Tackle that "one thing" now by giving it to God.

DAY 3

DON'T BE ANXIOUS — SEEK HIM!

"IF YOU ASK WHAT IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT KEY TO LONGEVITY, I WOULD HAVE TO SAY IT IS AVOIDING WORRY, STRESS AND TENSION. AND IF YOU DIDN'T ASK ME, I'D STILL HAVE TO SAY IT."

-GEORGE F. BURNS

New International Version

Luke 12:29-31

And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

DAY 3

PRAY: Lord, don't let me focus on the things of this world when I could be seeking Your kingdom and all the things that You have for me. Please help me to stop worrying about money, my health, and the material things in my life. I don't want to be like the world. I want to trust You to supply all that I need. Thank You that as I seek Your Kingdom, You will supply everything that I need. Amen.

REFLECT: When you think of Hollywood, what do you think of? A pagan city? Creative TV shows, great music, and powerful films, or rich celebrities who stand for things you disagree with, compromising programming, and a city lacking God? Christians often focus on godly thoughts in their own life, but they focus on the things of this world when it comes to our media and entertainment. Can you see loving, creative children of God in Hollywood? Can you imagine people of integrity offering creative stories to the world? Would you trust God that He is also in Hollywood, supplying the people who impact our culture with everything that they need? Can you stop worrying about Hollywood?

DAY 3

ACT: Commit to focusing on the things of God, both in your own life and in the lives of others. Seek His kingdom. If God can give you everything that you need, then He is doing the same in every city in the world, so don't worry! As you set your heart on His kingdom, not on the things of this world, pray that the people in Hollywood will also not set their hearts on the things of this world, but on the God of the universe who knows what they need and wants to give it to them. And He wants to give them to you as well! So, don't worry!

DAY 4

HAVE CONFIDENCE IN HIM!

"HAVE YOU BEEN PROPPING UP THAT
FOOLISH SOUL OF YOURS WITH THE IDEA
THAT YOUR CIRCUMSTANCES ARE TOO
MUCH FOR GOD TO HANDLE?"

-OSWALD CHAMBERS

New International Version

Jeremiah 17:7-8

But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.

DAY 4

PRAY: Dear Heavenly Father, I want to be blessed! I want to have more confidence in You. Please help me to be like a tree planted by the water. Show me what I need to do to have no worries in hard times and to always be bearing fruit. Change my thoughts so that I can trust fully in You and not be anxious. Help me to have no worries when I don't have a job and to bear fruit even in hard times. I want to always be healthy and joyful as if I have green, fresh leaves. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

REFLECT: Think about a beautiful tree in your neighborhood, or one that you've seen, and its beauty, perfection, or lush growth has caught your breath. How can you be like that tree, even in hard times, dry seasons, or through a storm? Can you imagine having deep spiritual roots that are always fed by God's word and bearing rich fruit with green leaves that comes from your faith, so that you never fear or feel anxious, and you have no worries in a year of drought, and you never fail to bear fruit? Now that's living a blessed life!

ACT: If you are going through a hard time right now, what can you do to shift your thoughts and actions so that you can have no worries, no matter how difficult your life situation is? How can you act in faith and not react to your circumstances, so that you break the cycle of anxiety and worry and start flourishing, despite your current struggles or hardships? Make a choice to break the cycle today by turning to God for guidance and strength. Put your confidence in Him and you will be blessed.

DAY 5

HAVE CONFIDENCE IN HIM!

"I AM NO LONGER ANXIOUS ABOUT ANYTHING, AS I REALIZE THE LORD IS ABLE TO CARRY OUT HIS WILL, AND HIS WILL IS MINE. IT MAKES NO MATTER WHERE HE PLACES ME, OR HOW. THAT IS RATHER FOR HIM TO CONSIDER THAN FOR ME; FOR IN THE EASIEST POSITIONS HE MUST GIVE ME HIS GRACE, AND IN THE MOST DIFFICULT, HIS GRACE IS SUFFICIENT."

-HUDSON TAYLOR

New International Version
Matthew 6:25-27

Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

DAY 5

PRAY: Dear God, I need help with my worry. I can't shake the fear of having no money, being in bad health, or losing close relationships. Can You please reveal to me today how to overcome my worry by truly embracing the truth that You are taking care of me? You are the one who supplies my daily needs, and I am wasting time by worrying about what You are already taking care of. Thank You that I am more valuable than the birds of the air! Amen.

REFLECT: Imagine being a bird who wakes up in the morning, flies to the ground to find breakfast, then spends the day soaring through the beautiful sky with his/her family and friends. That bird has no worries, no obligations, no bills, no employment. God tells us that even in our world we can feel as free as the birds. Can you imagine letting go of all of the heaviness that comes from your obligations, bills, and responsibilities, and allowing yourself to feel free, despite your circumstances "to soar, as on wings of eagles"? God tells us that's possible.

ACT: Commit right now to stop your brain from thinking about anything that questions God's provision and His promises to take care of you. Find a way to train your brain to break old habits of worry and concern. You'll know what works for you, but don't allow the same patterns of question and worry to control your life. Today is the day to get your brain and your heart to find peace in God's care for you. You are SO valuable in His eyes and He doesn't want you to waste your life by worrying, for it can't add one hour to your life!

DAY 6

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS WITH YOU!

"WORRY IS A THIN STREAM OF FEAR
TRICKLING THROUGH THE MIND. IF
ENCOURAGED, IT CUTS A CHANNEL INTO
WHICH ALL OTHER THOUGHTS ARE
DRAINED."

-ARTHUR SOMERS ROCHE

New International Version

Luke 12:11-12

When you are brought before synagogues,
rulers and authorities, do not worry about
how you will defend yourselves or what
you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach
you at that time what you should say.

DAY 6

PRAY: Dear Jesus, thank You that You are my defender. And thank You, Holy Spirit, for giving me the words to say when I stand before Kings—or my boss, or an angry neighbor—and try to talk about my faith. I want You to teach me to have complete confidence in You so that You will give me the words to say, and the steps to take, to clearly express my faith. If I can fully trust in You to guide me and give me all that I need in every circumstance, then I will not feel anxious about any conversation I will have about You. Thank you, Jesus! Amen.

REFLECT: When was the last time you had to talk about Jesus or defend your faith in front of other people? Was it a private conversation or did you give your testimony in front of a crowd? How did you handle it? Were you scared to death? Can you say that God gave you the words or directed your thoughts? Do you feel that He prepared the listener to hear the truth? What would you do differently now? How would you prepare to be even more effective next time? Or, if you've never talked about your faith with someone, why not?

DAY 6

ACT: One of the greatest fears of the Christian faith is to tell others about Jesus. And yet it's a command. We are not to force Jesus on anyone, but we are to be prepared to give an account for the faith that we have within us. Pray for the Lord to bring someone into your life whom you can talk to about Jesus. And then ask the Holy Spirit to give you the words, and the peace to help you not back down or stay silent out of fear. He will prepare you to stand before Kings if you ask Him. And then you can be a part of His work to reach everyone with the truth of His gospel without any worry at all. In fact, you'll have fun!

DAY 7

THE HOLY SPIRIT IS WITH YOU!

"WHY WORRY? IF YOU'VE DONE THE VERY
BEST YOU CAN, WORRYING WON'T MAKE
IT ANY BETTER."

-WALT DISNEY

New International Version

Proverbs 12:25

An anxious heart weighs a man down,
but a kind word cheers him up.

DAY 7

PRAY: Dear Father, thank You so much for the gift of words that can change lives and circumstances. Thank You that when I feel anxious You can send someone to me to cheer me up. Would You please use me to cheer up others with a kind word, so that I can be a part of helping them to feel less anxious? I don't want a heavy heart, and I don't want the people I love to have heavy hearts. Please guide my tongue, fill me up with kind words that will cheer up others, and don't let me be weighed down by an anxious heart. Amen.

REFLECT: Think about when someone changed your whole day by saying something kind to you. Do you know any people around you who have the gift of encouragement? Are you someone who lifts up others through your words? Reflect on ways you can lessen your anxiety, or others' anxiety, by speaking words of kindness, truth, and joy to people around you, and to yourself. Choose not to have an anxious heart to weigh you down.

ACT: Choose to use only kind words today and see if you can encourage a family member, a co-worker, or a close friend. We all feel anxious, and you could relieve the anxiety in others by going out of your way to say something encouraging and uplifting to them. And if you are feeling anxious today, don't spend time with people who are negative or complain, for that will heighten your anxiety. Use your words carefully, and be generous with kindness, and your kind words will cheer others up and make their hearts lighter. Then your heart will lighten as well.