

Worry & Anxiety

Jamie Mulvaney & Will van der Hart

Discussion Questions

Read Philippians 4:4-9.

1) What prompts you to worry? How does worry influence your emotions and behaviour? Has this changed at all during lockdown?

2) What's the difference between telling yourself not to be anxious, and in every situation in praise and petition presenting your requests to God? (v6) Have you ever experienced laying down your anxiety before God, and then knowing transcendent peace?

3) In v8, Paul doesn't write that we are to empty our minds but to 'fill our minds and meditate' (MSG) on things that are edifying – how would you put that into practice?

Instead of leaning into anxiety we can confidently give our worries to Jesus and he promises to cover us with his peace like a shield. If there is anything you are anxious about now - claim this promise for one another in prayer.

Worship Suggestions:

God I Look To You - Jenn Johnson

Cast Your Cares - Guvna B

PEACE - Hillsong Young & Free

No One Ever Cared For Me Like Jesus - Steffany Gretzinger

Where I Belong - Cory Asbury

Always Good - Hannah McClure



Other Resources:

Talk: Jago Wynne, Restricted but Advancing – Week 8: <https://www.holytrinityclapham.org/talks/2020/6/5/restricted-but-advancing-week-8>

Mind and Soul Foundation: <https://www.mindandsoulfoundation.org>

Will van der Hart and Rob Waller, The Worry Book <https://www.amazon.co.uk/Worry-Book-Will-Hart-Waller/dp/1844745430>

Podcast: Jon Tyson, Transcendent Peace in a Time of Anxiety: Devotional 1; Church of the City New York (7 mins): <https://podcasts.apple.com/pl/podcast/transcendent-peace-in-a-time-of-anxiety-devotional-1/id1245313998?i=1000471450738>

Quote from Thomas Keating from Guarding of the Heart in Contemplative Prayer:

Another practice to bring the effects of contemplative prayer into daily life is traditionally known as a "guard of the heart." This consists of letting go of every emotional disturbance as it arises and before we start to think about it. Guard of the heart is based on the sense of interior peace that comes when our wills are united by intention with God's will. Whenever that basic sense of peace is disturbed, we reaffirm our intention to be united with God's will by some simple but appropriate act. The attentiveness to abide in this union of wills might be compared to a radio beam that guides an airplane. If the plane moves off course, the signal changes, warning the pilot to readjust his direction.

This is the practice of releasing upsetting emotions into the present moment. This can be done in one of three ways: doing what you are actually doing, turning your attention to some other occupation, or giving the feeling to Christ.

Our first reaction, however, should be openness to what is actually happening so that if our plans are upset, we are not upset. The fruit of guard of the heart is the habitual willingness to change our plans at a moment's notice. It disposes us to accept painful situations as they arise. Then we can decide what to do with them, modifying, correcting or improving them. In other words, the ordinary events of daily life become our practice.

