ANXIETY

How to Calm Your Worries and Find Peace

HOPE for the HEART

HOPE *for the* HEART

Because hope means everything.

At Hope for the Heart, hope gets real.

We know life is a series of challenges. But finding help shouldn't be.

That's why we create simple, easy-to-use resources. Professionally informed, all rooted in God's Word. We provide clear answers and practical guidance on over 100 real-life issues, helping you understand and apply the Bible to your life and those you serve.

It's all life-giving counsel that's key to living whole and free. For God's heart is to see you live abundantly and share the hope you have in Christ.

So that whatever you're facing—or whoever comes to you—you have every reason for hope, for every challenge in life.

Because hope means everything.

"For everything that was written
in the past was written to teach us,
so that through the endurance
taught in the Scriptures and
the encouragement they provide
we might have hope."
(Romans 15:4)

www.hopefortheheart.org

ANXIETY

Calming the Fearful Heart

What Is God's Heart on Anxiety?

Anxiety inaccurately judges reality. It forgets the past and fears the future. It fails to remember how you've made it through past difficulties and focuses instead on potential threats in the future. Anxiety leaves you with a fight or flight response in the present, vigilantly preparing for possible outcomes or avoiding fearful situations altogether.

The Lord, however, sees all things clearly. He says, *"I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, 'My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please'"* (Isaiah 46:10). God has brought you through the past and holds your future in His hands. And in your present struggle with anxiety, He is with you. The Lord is at work in your life—your anxiety is not without purpose. God longs to be your refuge and help you walk through your fears and troubles.

"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble."
(Psalm 46:1)

10 Biblical Truths When You Become Anxious

God wants you to remember that He is good and gracious—and compassionately cares about you.

"The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made" (Psalm 145:8–9).

God wants you to remember He is with you when you're fearful.

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" (Isaiah 41:10).

God wants you to pray and experience His peace when you're feeling anxious.

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6–7).

> "Anxiety inaccurately judges reality. It forgets the past and fears the future."

God wants you to look to Him and His Word when you're filled with anxiety.

"When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought me joy" (Psalm 94:19).

God wants you to align your thoughts with His truth when you feel anxious.

"Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things" (Philippians 4:8).

God wants you to trust Him when you're anxious—to have faith and not fear.

"When I am afraid, I put my trust in you" (Psalm 56:3).

God wants you to talk to Him about all that causes you to feel anxious.

"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

God wants you to talk to others about your fears and anxieties.

"Where there is no guidance the people fall, But in abundance of counselors there is victory" (Proverbs 11:14 NASB).

God wants you to take care of yourself physically and spiritually.

"For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come" (1 Timothy 4:8).

God wants you to encourage others who struggle with anxiety.

"Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up" (Proverbs 12:25).

Key Verse to Memorize

"Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."
(1 Peter 5:7)

Key Passage to Read

Philippians 4:4–9

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!
5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.
6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer
and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.
7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding,
will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble,
whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—
if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.
9 Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—
put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you."

My Personalized Plan

For those who wrestle with anxiety, the future can feel bleak—void of hope and joy but full of fear and misfortune. But God always offers hope for the future and help for today. He comes alongside you and says, *"Do not fear, for I am with you"* (Isaiah 41:10). To the fearful heart, the Bible says, *"With his love, he will calm all your fears"* (Zephaniah 3:17 NLT). With God's help, you can move forward today and have hope for tomorrow.

"There is surely a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off."
(Proverbs 23:18)

As I seek God's help with my anxiety, I will . . .

Remember God's character

When I'm anxious, I'm tempted to think that God doesn't care about me, He's not in control, or He's not powerful enough to change anything. This can lead me to believe that I have to hold everything together. I need to realize, that my view of God amidst anxiety can either make matters seem worse or help me remain calm and see things clearly.

— I will seek to know God's character by reading His Word and praying for Him to continually reveal Himself to me.

— I will believe that God is good, that He is with me, and that He will help me—and trust that He is in control and has my best interests at heart.

"The LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made. . . . The LORD is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does" (Psalm 145:8–9, 13).

Address physical issues

Anxiety is not just emotional or cognitive but also physical. It can be caused by or result in physical changes, so it is therefore important to address any physical issues that may be contributing to my anxiety.

— I will talk with a doctor about the symptoms I am experiencing and seek treatment.

— I will seek to maintain a healthy lifestyle by eating well, exercising regularly, getting plenty of rest, staying hydrated, avoiding harmful substances, and learning relaxation techniques to manage stress and anxiety.

"I discipline my body and keep it under control" (1 Corinthians 9:27 ESV).

Talk with others

Anxiety can consume my thoughts and emotions and impair my ability to work and go about my daily life. Given the impact it can have on me, sharing my struggles with others and receiving guidance can help me process my experiences and move forward.

— I will seek the help of a professional counselor, supportive group of people in my church or community, and/or talk with trusted friends and family members.

— I will be honest about how I'm feeling and what I'm experiencing.

"Where there is no guidance the people fall, But in abundance of counselors there is victory" (Proverbs 11:14 NASB).

Reorient my thoughts

Much of the experience of anxiety occurs in the mind. It can cloud my judgment and hinder my decision making. Anxiety can cause difficulty concentrating and lead me to believe the future is grim. Addressing my thoughts and thought patterns is critical to managing and even overcoming anxiety.

— I will keep a journal and write down my honest thoughts.

— I will seek to align my thoughts with God's Word, identifying thoughts that are based on lies and replacing them with God's truth.

"Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things" (Philippians 4:8).

Be in community

Anxiety leads many people like me to avoid social interactions. Taken to an extreme, I can become isolated and alone. But God made me to be in relationships with others. Having supportive friendships and relationships can go a long way toward helping me gain a sense of wholeness, wellness, and normalcy amidst anxiety.

— I will regularly meet with friends and family members to talk, share a meal, or go out together.

— I will look into joining a local church, small group, Bible study, or community support group.

"Two people are better off than one, for they can help each other succeed. If one person falls, the other can reach out and help" (Ecclesiastes 4:9–10 NLT).

Stay active spiritually

God clearly states in His Word that He cares about me. When I'm anxious, He wants to hear from me. He provides help for me through His Word, His people, and most of all, His constant presence.

— I will maintain an active spiritual life by praying, reading God's Word, and meeting with other believers to help me grow.

— I will constantly seek to grow in my relationship with Christ, who loves me and gives me grace each day.

"Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18).

Hang on to hope

It's been said that a person can live weeks without food, days without water, seconds without air, but not a moment without hope. Anxiety leads me to focus on the future, and often not a bright future. How important it is to maintain a hopeful outlook on life.

— I will remember that true, lasting hope is found not in my circumstances but in God and His Word.

— I will mediate on God's promises in the Bible, remembering that I can always have hope.

"Everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope" (Romans 15:4).

4 POINTS OF GOD'S PLAN

Whether you're trying to make sense of your past, trying to overcome something in the present, or trying to make changes for a better future, the Lord cares about you. He loves you. No matter what challenges you or your loved ones are facing, no matter the pain or difficult feelings you may be experiencing, no matter what you've done or what's been done to you, *there is hope*. And that hope is found in Jesus Christ.

God has a plan for your life, and it begins with a personal relationship with Jesus. The most important decision you can ever make is whether you will accept His invitation. If you have never made that decision, these four simple truths can help you start your journey together with Him.

"'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the LORD*,*
'plans to prosper you and not to harm you,
plans to give you hope and a future.'"
(JEREMIAH 29:11)

1. God's Purpose for You: *Salvation*

— What was God's motivation in sending Jesus Christ to earth? To express His love for you by saving you! The Bible says, *"God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him"* (John 3:16–17).

— What was Jesus' purpose in coming to earth? To forgive your sins, to empower you to have victory over sin, and to enable you to live a fulfilled life! Jesus said, *"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full"* (John 10:10).

2. The Problem: *Sin*

— What exactly is sin? Sin is living independently of God's standard—knowing what is wrong and doing it anyway—also knowing what is right and choosing not to do it. The apostle Paul said, *"I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can't. I want to do what is good, but I don't. I don't want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway"* (Romans 7:18–19 NLT).

— What is the major consequence of sin? Spiritual death, eternal separation from God. The Bible says, *"Your iniquities* [sins] *have separated you from your God"* (Isaiah 59:2). Scripture also says, *"The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (Romans 6:23).

3. God's Provision for You: *The Savior*

— Can anything remove the penalty for sin? Yes! Jesus died on the cross to personally pay the penalty for your sins. The Bible says, *"God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us"* (Romans 5:8).

— What is the solution to being separated from God? Belief in (entrusting your life to) Jesus Christ as the only way to God the Father. Jesus said, *"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"* (John 14:6). The Bible says, *"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved . . ."* (Acts 16:31).

4. Your Part: *Surrender*

— Give Christ control of your life, entrusting yourself to Him. Jesus said, *"Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?"* (Matthew 16:24–26).

— Place your faith in (rely on) Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior and reject your "good works" as a means of earning God's approval. The Bible says, *"It is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast"* (Ephesians 2:8–9).

Has there been a time in your life when you know you've humbled your heart and received Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior—giving Him control of your life? You can tell God that you want to surrender your life to Christ in a simple, heartfelt prayer like this:

"God, I want a real relationship with you.
I admit that many times I've chosen to go my own way instead of your way.
Please forgive me for my sins.
Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross to pay the penalty for my sins.
Come into my life to be my Lord and my Savior.
Change me from the inside out and make me
the person you created me to be.
In your holy name I pray. Amen."

What Can You Now Expect?

When you surrender your life to Christ, you receive the Holy Spirit who empowers you to live a life pleasing to God. The Bible says, *"His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life . . ."* (2 Peter 1:3). Jesus assures those who believe with these words:

"Truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life."
(John 5:24)

The information in this resource is intended as guidelines for healthy living. Please consult qualified medical, legal, pastoral, and psychological professionals regarding individual concerns.

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QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

God gives us His Word not just for information but for transformation. The Lord wants you to "*be transformed by the renewing of your mind*" (Romans 12:2). This isn't something you do alone, but something God does in you by His Spirit.

The following questions are designed to help you reflect on the biblical truths in this resource. Take a moment to pray and ask God to settle your mind and quiet your spirit as you reflect on His truth.

"Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you insight into all this."
(2 Timothy 2:7)

What are two key truths, Bible verses, or "takeaways" from this resource that you found helpful—or that you simply needed to be reminded of?

In relation to this topic, what behavior(s) do you need to *begin*, *change*, or *stop* in order to help you grow into the person God created you to be?

In relation to this topic, what is the biggest obstacle you need to overcome in order to move forward?

What might your life look like a few years from now if you do *not* make changes regarding this issue? How might your life be different if you *do* make changes?

Is there anyone in your life who needs help with this topic/issue? How can you pray for them, and what is one thing you can do to encourage them?

What can you give thanks to God for today?

"Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself
and God our Father, who loved us
and by his grace gave us eternal comfort
and a wonderful hope,
comfort you and strengthen you
in every good thing you do and say."
(2 Thessalonians 2:16–17 NLT)

The Complete System of Care

Designed with the whole person in mind, Hope for the Heart's *Complete System of Care* provides a comprehensive library of resources and training tools that are all professionally informed, rooted in God's Word. Centered around our 100+ topic *Keys for Living Library*, these practical, biblical resources ensure you have everything you need when getting to the heart of common life issues.

Whether for personal help or training purposes, it's all key to being completely equipped for effective care and counsel. From practical guidance in our books to deeper insights through courses, events, and media, these tools work together to help you experience freedom and transformation in Christ—and equip you to share that hope with others.

Explore our resources today and get the tools you need to take better care of yourself and others.

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