

## DON'T PANIC! Part 1- Trusting God

Scripture used: Philippians 1:3-6 (NIV)

### OVERVIEW

We begin a new sermon series this week. The focus is on anxiety, and its roles in our lives. The modern world is full of things that provoke anxiety, which often traps many of us into feeling anxious all the time. Anxiety should never define our lives, since it leaves no room for God.

The Apostle Paul has something important to say to us about anxiety in the early parts of his letter to the church in Philippi. Despite years of trials, Paul developed a discipline of trusting God. Even when he was jailed for two years with the possibility of being put to death by the Roman Emperor Nero! Clearly, Paul was able to overcome the situation. His faith conquered his anxiety. Today's sermon investigates how Paul learned to trust God entirely, no matter what!

### KEY POINT

**The Big Idea: We can live a life where anxiety doesn't defeat us!**

- 1) Anxiety is natural and understandable - We all have natural responses to negative events. The problem for many of us is that we have switched from feeling anxiety *some* of the time to feeling anxiety *all* of the time. That's why millions of us suffer from anxiety-based disorders such as obsessive compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, phobias, and panic attacks. Then we treat little things in our lives as if they were big things. And our relationships with God and other people are impacted.
- 2) The habit of trusting God means we leave no room for anxiety - Anxiety often arises when we view the future from a negative perspective. Instead we need to claim the bright future that is promised to us in the Bible. And we can work toward that future once we trust fully in God.
- 3) Paul developed this habit of trusting God through 3 steps:
  - a. Entrusting his life to God. Paul knew that God has the last word in everything on this earth. There was nothing that could happen to him that would undermine his faith. He also viewed each Christian as an active partner, not a passive member. (Philippians 1:5)
  - b. Remembering the beginning. God puts greatness in each of us. Every work we pursue in His name will be carried through to completion. (Philippians 1:6) And once these works are completed, they will stand for eternity. We were built to be used by God to do works in His name. This helps other people recognize Grace and Love, bringing them closer to Him.
  - c. Trusting God's providence. Every bad thing can be turned to good by God. There is nothing crooked that cannot be made straight. As an example, Paul's guards rotated standing watch during his two-year arrest. Using this rotating system, Paul was able to spread the gospel to the entire group of soldiers guarding him! (Philippians 1:13)

### DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Paul saw everything that happened in his life as an opportunity. He trusted God completely. Paul never lost his trust in God, even though he was beaten, stoned, and shipwrecked (II Corinthians 11:24-25). How do you react when faced with a difficult situation? Do you turn toward or away from God?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Paul viewed trusting God as a discipline that helped him build spiritual confidence. Do you think about trusting God as a discipline or just a choice? How would your life change if you took the discipline of trusting God more seriously?
- 3) **DO** - When God plants a great work in us, He sees it through. Identify one thing you think God has planted in you. Ask one or two other friends to see if they agree, or if they think God has something else in store. Now identify a personal (dis)ability related to this goal, and ask God to remove all anxiety and replace it with the confidence and dedication to follow through.



