

DON'T PANIC! Part 4 - Choose a Different Approach

Scripture used: Philippians 4:2-9 (NLT), Ephesians 6:4 (NLT), Psalm 16:11 (NLT)

OVERVIEW

In part 4 of the "Don't Panic!" series, Pastor Hurmon continued to teach on anxiety. While anxiety affects each person differently, God's remedy is the same for all: rejoice and pray about everything! We know how to rejoice when all is going well, but when things are not, we tend to focus on the bad things and neglect all of the good. Focusing on the circumstances leaves little room for acknowledging the beautiful life around us. Instead of being crippled by worry, we can choose a different approach: God's approach. "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again - Rejoice!" (Phil. 4:4).

KEY POINTS

Big Idea: A growing relationship with Jesus enables us to daily overcome our anxieties.

- 1) **Anxiety (dominating fears & worries) are often hidden within conflict.** Beneath many conflictual relationships is anxiety. There is something that one or both parties are worried about, or afraid of. For example, while anxiety may present itself as someone who lies, the truth is they lied because they were afraid that person would not love them.
- 2) **Anxiety often reflects the absence of joy.** Where there is anxiety, joy cannot exist. Spiritual joy flows from a relationship with Jesus. We can have spiritual joy in the midst of sadness. If we know who we are in Christ, life can knock us down but we are buoyant; we get right back up!
- 3) **Absent joy can reveal misplaced affections.** When we experience joy only when life is optimal, then we rest in the blessings but not the One who blesses. Things which cause pleasure are only samplings of something far better, like frosting on a cake.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** Read Psalm 16:5-11. What are the blessings we have as children of God? What is the difference between joy and happiness?
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** Read Philippians 4:8-9 together. Make a list of each thing we are to think of, or dwell on, when we are anxious. Take that list and write beside each word an example of it in your life today. Share your lists with one another.
- 3) **DO & PRAY** This week, take 30 minutes each day to share your feelings with God. Find a quiet place where you can pray and/or write out your feelings in a journal. Follow the outline below:

Talk to God:

- Share my feelings & (identify my needs)
- Expand my focus (thankfulness)
- Reshape my perspective (see the positive)