

Tomorrow

Plans and worries are common to the human race. This is the season for graduations and vacations here in America. Graduates are being celebrated. Cheryl from NUMA just graduated with her Master's Degree (Congratulations, Cheryl!), my grandson with his Bachelor's, and I am sure many of you have graduates you are proud of. With these accomplishments people start looking to the future. And for vacations, future short-term plans are being made.

I got to thinking about anxiety; mirriam-webster.com offers a simple definition of *anxious* that fits what is common to all of us: “characterized by extreme uneasiness of mind or brooding fear about some contingency: WORRIED.”



For me, nailing down some vacation plans with reservations relieves some anxiety, but causes others to surface. I know where I am going, where I will be sleeping, but will the weather hold? Will the vehicle make it up and back, etc? As my sister-in-law and I often say to each other, “It’s always something.” We in America, most of us, should be thankful to have such small concerns. Nevertheless, we may find our minds with increasing uneasiness whether our concerns about the future are minor such as these, or are major concerns for health, safety and security, or even floods, droughts and disease. Still, we are, for the most part, a spoiled nation whose people rarely struggle with not having something to eat, clothing to wear, or a place to sleep; although these cares are increasing here in our homeland.

James warns against presumption and arrogance in our plan-making. **Come now, you who say, “Today or tomorrow we will travel to such and such a city and spend a year there and do business and make a profit.” Yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring—what your life will be! For you are like vapor that appears for a little while, then vanishes. Instead, you should say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.”** (James 4:13-15 CSB)

Jesus talked about anxiety telling us not to be worried about our basic needs:

“Therefore I tell you: Don’t worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Isn’t life more than food and the body more than clothing? Consider the birds of the sky: They don’t sow or reap or gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren’t you worth more than they? **Can any of you add one moment to his life span by worrying? And why do you worry about clothes? Observe how the wildflowers of the field grow: They don’t labor or spin thread. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was adorned like one of these. If that’s how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, won’t he do much more for you—**you of little faith?** So don’t worry, saying, ‘What will we**

eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ **For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you. Therefore don’t worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.** (Matthew 6:24-34 CSB)

Cares of this world are robbers of life. If we spend moments, hours or weeks worrying, that is unproductive, fruitless time spent. How much of our lives have been wasted this way?

Cares of this world are reasons for failure when we try to be in control rather than reaching out to God who is always there. We reach out to Him by faith through prayer. In the scripture portion above Jesus points out that anxiety or worry is a faith problem, “you of little faith.” He also addressed lack of faith when the disciples were afraid in the boat during the storm through which Jesus was sleeping. Faith is key—we live by faith, not by sight.

We can worry, or we can turn it over to the One who can do something. It is a choice. The “gift” of freewill (*as Paige calls it*) to mankind, is involved in all matters of faith. We can choose to trust our covenant God, or steep in our problems, real or imagined. This is not to say we shirk responsibility where there is good sense to know what to do in a situation. An example:

A prudent person foresees danger and takes precautions. The simpleton goes blindly on and suffers the consequences. (Proverbs 22:3 NLT)

Satan, the one who opposes all godly order—God’s order for our lives and our world—perpetrates anxiety. It is a primary source of distraction for all people, even Christians on their spiritual path. If anxiety isn’t in the physical realm, it may be in the spiritual realm: “Am I praying enough?” “Am I studying enough?” “Am I fasting enough, sacrificing enough, witnessing enough, etc?” **Stop it! Jesus never meant for us to live that way!** There is an easy yoke and a light burden that Jesus has provided for us. We are yoked through the Holy Spirit to Jesus, the unchanging Jesus, who sits in victory.

We have faith for our salvation *from*. Do we have faith for our salvation *to—its purpose*. God has a purpose for each of us. David knew this. He expressed his faith that God would work out his purpose in one of my favorite Psalms—Psalm 57. Here are some portions from the NLT:

- 1 **Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy!**
I look to you for protection.
I will hide beneath the shadow of your wings
until the danger passes by.
- 2 **I cry out to God Most High,**
to God who will fulfill his purpose for me.
- 3 **He will send help from heaven to rescue me,**
disgracing those who hound me.
My God will send forth his unfailing love and faithfulness.
- 6 **My enemies have set a trap for me.**
I am weary from distress....
- 7 **My heart is confident in you, O God;**
my heart is confident.
No wonder I can sing your praises!

- 8 **Wake up, my heart!**
Wake up, O lyre and harp!
I will wake the dawn with my song.
- 9 **I will thank you, Lord, among all the people.**
I will sing your praises among the nations.
- 10 **For your unfailing love is as high as the heavens.**
Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.
- 11 **Be exalted, O God, above the highest heavens.**
May your glory shine over all the earth.

Most people in America usually have enough food, water and clothing, but recently drought and floods have shaken our security, even more, mankind tampering with and hindering food supply, medications, messing with weather control, wars, terrorism, government betrayal with evil people in high offices, etc. These cause anxiousness. Some may stock up on food and supplies, but no one can stockpile enough to offset the wrath of God, should that be what is taking place. Prophets can warn, but do we take the warning seriously? We need the confidence in God which David had in his distress. We need to know our God.

Faith is a choice. Salvation is determined by *choosing to believe*—available to whomsoever *will*. This is why many evangelists call it a decision. But, as God is not mocked, the decision must be sincere including repentance. When I consider atheists, I realize that they have made a decision not to believe. Their unbelief is a mindful decision once they have been presented with the truth of the gospel of Jesus. Even without this presentation, Romans 1:20 says people are without excuse because they knew God but refused to honor Him.

For his invisible attributes, that is, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen since the creation of the world, being understood through what he has made. As a result, people are without excuse. For though they knew God, they did not glorify him as God or show gratitude. (From Romans 1:20-21 CSB)

For “every word that comes from the mouth of God,” we have a choice to believe it or not to believe it. It’s pretty simple, sometimes hard, as it goes against our inherited (*from Adam*) nature; but entirely possible with the Holy Spirit, and easier as we come to better know our God.

Worry or anxiety accomplish nothing, but prayer hands over the situation to the One to whom nothing is impossible. This is exactly what David did, and all others who lived/live by faith. Here are just a few thoughts to combat those spiritual anxieties:

Praying—turn things over to the Lord and rest in Him (not irresponsibly),

Studying and Fasting—to know Him better, trust and love Him more, and gain wisdom

Keeping His Commandment—to love others through sharing and fellowship,

Witnessing—**the best witness is our praise-filled testimony of a present loving God and what He means to us, and His love and beneficence to all people.**

Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7 NLT)