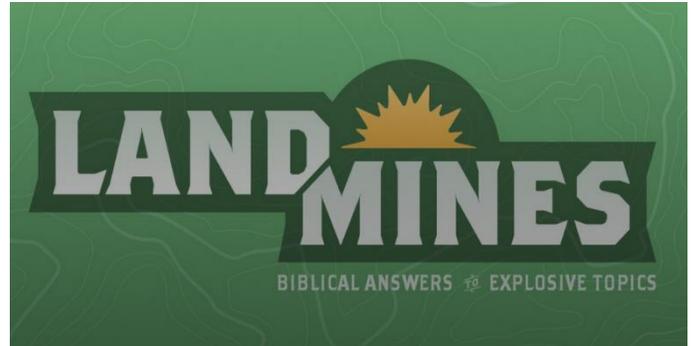




VILLAGE BIBLE CHURCH
SUGAR GROVE CAMPUS

LANDMINES: Biblical Answers to Explosive Topics



Antidote for Anxious Hearts Tim Badal | May 12, 2019

We're in a series we've called "Landmines" where we're trying to understand and disarm the landmines our world has and which the Bible speaks to. There are myriads of them which can cause us great sorrow and pain and difficulty if we don't disarm them in the proper ways.

Because it's Mother's Day, I want to focus on a landmine that many women find themselves struggling with. I do this with some fear and trepidation myself, because I realize that anxiety is something that affects all of us. But a recent study by the American Medical Association revealed this: "While men can be anxious and struggle with anxiety at times, studies tell us overwhelmingly that from the time a girl reaches puberty until about the age of 50, she is three times more likely to struggle with anxiety as would a man."

That doesn't mean that all women have anxiety nor that no men will have anxiety. I would link it similarly to the issue of lust we talk about in the church. It's usually labeled as a guy issue, but it doesn't mean that women don't struggle with lust. For some reason, however, some things are more prevalent in one gender than the other. So today I want to talk primarily to the women in our congregation, realizing that all of us can take what God's Word says on this subject and begin to use it, if we will listen and submit ourselves to it, to bring great help, solace and peace in our anxious times.

Before I read the text, I want to remind you that with each of these topics, I have no ability to address all of the contingencies, scenarios and situations that each topic entails. I realize I'm speaking in generalities to a group of individuals who have varied levels of anxiety and varied reasons for anxiety. I want to talk through those, but I do not presume to have the ability to speak to your particular situation. Therefore, I would encourage you to take what I say to God and to others who are close to you to help you discern how to apply these things we look at today. It's always possible to misapply these principles in ways that are not helpful. I also want to remind you that I'm looking at these various landmines not with the intention of judging, but to offer my comments with a deep compassion for those who struggle with them.

Anxiety is an issue that impacts far too many people today and my hope is that in some small way today we can find in God's Word a measure of relief through the promises He gives us. I'll be reading these words from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, from Matthew 6 beginning in verse 25:

²⁵ "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? ²⁸ And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹ yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? ³¹ Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³² For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. ³³ But seek first the

kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. ³⁴“Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

We need to identify our foe.

We’re going to look at the subject of anxiety using three principles through which we can find the antidote. The first principle is that we need to identify our foe. Like a good boxer, we’re entering this ring and looking at our opponent in the other corner. In this case, our opponent is anxiety, worry, concern and distress over the things we’re uncertain about. It’s a strong opponent that can wreak havoc in our lives. We need to identify the strengths and weaknesses we have in order to defeat this opponent we’re facing. We also need to know as much as we can about our opponent.

This involves understanding its definition.

Anxiety is a state of worry or uncertainty over actual or perceived problems. That’s a good definition that helps us understand some things, but the Bible goes a little deeper in its definition. When the Bible talks about worry and anxiety, it uses a Greek word that means to think about or consider. Therefore, when we’re anxious, we are in the process of considering one of two things: either actual realities or hypothetical situations that could happen in the future. Those are like Murphy’s Law: “If something can go wrong, it will.”

This involves its double-minded nature.

Anxiety creates in us double mindedness that we need to be aware of. When the Bible speaks of anxiety, it’s saying we are double-minded, vacillating between two thoughts—what’s before us and what could happen in the future. The problem with that, as the Bible points out, is that we become unstable in all we do. If we’re honest, the last time we were anxious about something probably resulted in instability in our lives. We were wavering, being tossed to and fro, wondering about what was going on and what would happen.

Jesus has told us in Matthew 6 that we cannot serve two masters. If we try, we’ll love one and hate the other. He’s talking specifically about money, but this principle is true regarding anxiety. If we are anxious, either we’re going to love our anxiety or love the truth of where God has us. We can’t vacillate between the two—we’re going to choose one or the other. Jesus tells us, “You need to choose Me and My Kingdom, so your anxious thoughts don’t run amok and ruin your life.”

This involves some important disclaimers.

Before we get into what Jesus is saying, we need to see what kind of anxiety He is talking about. The word “anxiety” is an umbrella term that can be used for different things depending on the person. What makes one person anxious might be completely different from that which makes the next person anxious. Because we use the same word in both cases, it helps to add some modifiers so we don’t misapply Jesus’ words.

We’re going to look at four types of anxiety. There may be more, but these are the ones I’m going to address. The first anxiety we have is what I’d call “natural anxiety.” That means it’s the anxious feeling you have when confronted with a troubling situation. I might walk out to my car, which is next to Bliss Woods, and all of a sudden—just go with my illustration here—a mountain lion comes out. In that moment, I wish I could tell you I would be calm and strong. But as that crouching mountain lion comes from Bliss Woods, some anxiety will fill my heart. That’s a God-given anxiety. It’s telling me, “Hey, big boy, you’d better start running, because you’re not as fast as that lion is. This is not a good situation and you need to get out of it as quickly as possible because you are in danger.”

This week you’ll encounter situations where your heart will start beating quickly, where your stomach will start churning, where your mind is going to start racing, and that’s a good anxiety to have because it’s telling you, “Get out. Danger, Will Robinson. Run for your life!” God has created that switch to be turned on in your life so you’ll flee from situations that could cause you great harm.

This is not what Jesus is referring to. He’s not saying, “Tim, as you’re about to get in your car and the mountain lion is about to pounce on you, don’t be anxious about anything.” “All right, eat me. I’m going to stand right here and take my lumps, because Jesus said, ‘Don’t be anxious about anything.’” That’s not what He means.

The second type of anxiety we need to understand is what I call a natural consequence of sinful behavior. Some here today are anxious because you’ve done something unwise or disobedient, so as a result you’re concerned about the natural outcome of

what you did. Young person, you've gotten in trouble at school or you've failed a test. You knew you were supposed to stay out of trouble or study for that test. You know Mom and Dad are going to find out about it, so you're feeling anxiety and fear of reprisal. God is not telling you, "Don't be anxious about that." No, He's saying, "You should be anxious about that. You've created a scenario where the natural consequences of life are things you need to be worried about. The reason you feel troubled right now is that instead of following Me or doing what you knew to be right, you chose to go your own way."

It's the man or woman who has been unfaithful to their spouse. Now they're concerned about being found out, and what the family might say, and whatever else this ugly situation might produce. But again, it's a God-given anxiety. You've blown it, and now you have to figure out how to extricate yourself from the situation. It's the gambler who's gambled all his money away, and now he's anxious, wondering how he's going to pay his bills. It's the anxiety that results from sinful behavior.

The third anxiety we need to understand is the run-of-the-mill anxiety that comes mainly to believers. We know that God will never leave us or forsake us, that He will provide for us and care for us, and that He has it all figured out and knows the end from the beginning. Nevertheless, we worry about this, that and the other thing of life. God says, "I'm going to take care of that. You don't need to be concerned about those things. Those are Mine to worry about." But we say, "No, God. Either You're not doing things the way I want them done, or I don't believe You're capable of doing what I need. So I'm going to try to this on my own." Now we're juggling all our different challenges and we're anxious about what will happen when the balls start falling to the ground. "What am I going to do when I grow tired? I can't keep juggling all these things."

I will tell you, most of us are dealing with this type of anxiety. We're dealing with the details of life that we haven't given over to God. We aren't saying, "God, do whatever You want to do in my life. I'm willing to follow You and be obedient to You. I will know that whatever comes my way comes from the hand of a good, gracious and loving God, so I won't worry about it."

What Jesus is talking about in Matthew 6 are the second and third types of anxiety. But there's also a fourth anxiety and I want to be clear with this one. This is where people can get nervous. "Wait a minute, Tim. There's another anxiety? That's making me anxious." We know from medical professionals and counselors that there can be physiological sources for anxiety. These actually plague women more than they do men.

I did some reading on this both from a Christian perspective and from a secular one, and there is general agreement about this kind of anxiety. Especially in women, this anxiety can be connected to hormone imbalances. A world-renowned woman counselor wrote in a key article that this anxiety without question has physiological connections, but she adds that there's something in a woman's nature itself that contributes to anxiety. She explains, "We are by nature smaller in stature, we are weaker in our strength, so we walk around in perpetual fear in a way men don't."

Some time ago I asked my wife about an unfamiliar situation she found herself in. She told me, "I was a little fearful about what was going on." I said, "Honey, I've never asked you this, but how often are you afraid?" She responded, "Probably more than I'd ever want to admit. In parking lots and places like that, I'm always wondering who's around me." My wife doesn't struggle with deep-seated anxiety, but she does have regular concerns.

Guys, if we were really honest, when was the last time we were worried in a parking lot? There's a vulnerability in women that we should appreciate. It doesn't mean all women are afraid in parking lots, but what this writer was saying was there's something about this that requires us to pay attention.

This fourth idea of anxiety is one Jesus is not addressing. If there are physiological reasons why you find yourself anxious, He's not just saying to you, "Stop it." That would be like Him saying to me, "Stop being 6 foot 3 inches tall. You need to be 5-11. Cut that out." "I can't God. You created me this way. You've allowed my body to be this way." So Jesus isn't being a jerk, telling you to stop something that's part of your physiology.

Let me tell you a couple more things. Six out of ten women in America right now, according to the American Medical Association, are on anti-anxiety medications. Can I just tell you something in all love? That's way too many. Part of my concern is that we're trying to let medicine do everything for us. While I can't tell the world how to live their lives, I can speak with compassion concerning these six out of ten women. Do all of them really need to be on medication? Probably not. One of my concerns, especially for Christians, is that we turn to medication instead of the Lord. But I'm not telling you just to throw out your medicine. Hear me clearly. Rather, I'm asking you, as a follower of Jesus Christ to ask yourself which kind of anxiety are you dealing with? Each of these anxieties can manifest themselves in very similar ways.

If you're having anxiety but you're not sure which kind, then find some people you trust who care about you. Ask them to speak to you and ask some hard questions of yourself. And if it's right to take medication, then be grateful God has provided it and don't have any guilt for doing so. But be careful—and this is true regarding any medication—medication only deals with physiological issues, not spiritual ones. The answer to our spiritual issues is Jesus Christ and Him alone. We've got to be able to discern the nature of our anxieties, because if we don't accurately identify our foe, then we may well be fighting our battles on the wrong battle front.

Jesus addresses anxiety types two and three. He deals with the natural consequences of sinful decisions. He tells us to turn to Him for forgiveness, throwing all our weariness and struggles on Him, because He will give us rest. He doesn't want us to be anxious about our sins and failures, but rather we should give them to Him as our Savior. Secondly, He also wants us to rely on Him instead of being anxious about the details of our lives. He will comfort and care for us, providing all these things we need but are worrying about. That's what Jesus is talking about.

Anxiety isn't the same as contemplating a decision.

The King James Version of the Bible, which is still a widely used translation, throws us for a loop in Matthew 6:34. Instead of saying, *"Do not be anxious about tomorrow,"* that version says, *"Take therefore no thought for the morrow."* Many people have taken that to mean that it's wrong to plan. On the contrary, it's altogether good for us to plan. You might want to have a good retirement one day, so you plan accordingly. That's not being anxious about the future; that's being wise.

The Bible speaks often about how wise we are when we discern what is needed for the future. In fact, God Himself has been unfolding His plan since the beginning of time. In Galatians 4:4 it says in just the right time and in just the right way, God sent His Son to be born of a woman. God has set up a plan and now He's watching it work out. He calls us to do the same thing.

Anxiety isn't the same as concern for the future.

I'm not telling you not to think about what your kids are going to do next year. I'm not telling you as a small business owner not to be concerned about tomorrow's economic climate. I'm not telling you not to be concerned about who your kids marry or where you're going to live and what you're going to do in the future. You should absolutely be concerned about the important things in life—but that is not anxiety.

In fact, some of Jesus' final words when He was on the cross represented a concern. The Apostle John was the only disciple watching His last moments of life, along with His mother Mary. Jesus said to John, "Behold your mother," and to Mary He said, "Woman, behold your son." John of course wasn't her actual son, but as the firstborn, it was His responsibility to care for His mother. His father Joseph was probably no longer living, and Jesus was concerned that His mother would be cared for and not left alone. Jesus wasn't anxious about anything. The God of the universe can't be anxious, because if He's anxious, then He has ceased to be God. But He gave directions to John and His mother because He knew she would need help in the future.

Not only is it not wrong to think about these things, it's altogether right for us to care for our kids and our marriage and our work. But if planning and thinking about the future aren't anxiety, then what is it?

Anxiety involves confliction.

First, anxiety means being conflicted. We talked about the double-minded nature of a person who is anxious. It pulls us in two directions and we're constantly wavering between two thoughts or choices. In fact, the Latin word for anxiety literally means to strangle or to suffocate. If your contemplation of the future is making your neck feel really tight or like you can't breathe, you've probably moved from a right concern about the future to anxiety. You've moved from godly concern to ungodly anxiety.

Anxiety involves consumption.

Second, anxiety makes us feel consumed. Anxiety is addressed 22 times in the Bible and it's never spoken of in a positive light. God never says, "Good work—you're anxious. Way to go, kid!" It's always spoken of as something that reduces us from the wholeness God desires for us.

If we're being conflicted and consumed by our worries, then we have a problem. The devil loves us to be there. He wants us to worry to the point that we're conflicted, consumed and disoriented. He wants us focused on our own worries. Jesus tells us we have a choice to make: "You can either trust yourself or you can trust Me." He says in Matthew 6:32–33, *"The Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God."*

The unbelieving world has decided there is no God, therefore they've put themselves "on the hook" to figure out their lives. They have to make everything work, because they can't rely on someone else. But for believers, we know something they don't. We don't have to rely on ourselves. We don't need to worry about the things God can take care of, because He is trustworthy.

We must encounter anxiety face to face.

I'm speaking to followers of Jesus Christ here, because as an unbeliever, you may be sitting there saying, "Yeah, I've got lots to worry about." Can I tell you something? You do. You have a ton to worry about, because you have said in your heart, "There is no God." And if there is no God, there is no help and no hope that things are going to turn out the way you want them to. It's all on you. So you'd better be on your game 24-7. You'd better be on your game 12 months out of the year. You'd better be on your game for the rest of your life, because it will all depend on you. When you start thinking about it, your family also depends on you. Your marriage depends on you. Your job depends on you. Your health depends on you. Your emotional wellbeing depends on you. Your relationships depend on you. I'm already getting anxious, because I know there's no way I can keep all those balls in the air on my own.

But as a believer, the Bible says all those things can be given to God for Him to take care of. "If you obey Me, I'll take care of the rest." Oh, the great grace that comes when God's people recognize and live as if there truly is a God Who loves and cares for them. But here's what anxiety does.

Anxiety makes us unfaithful to our focus.

Matthew 6:33 says our job is to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. But what is it that we worry about? This is where we know we're moving into anxiety, because the first part of that passage describes the things we do seek: what we'll eat and drink and wear, or about our lives in general. The word "life" in verse 25 is an all-inclusive term. We worry about every element of life. Jesus is saying we don't need to worry about any of that stuff. What we need to worry about is one thing: to seek Him and His Kingdom first. What does He mean by that? We're to seek His agenda for us in this world. That should be our number one goal and focus.

I tell kids under age 18 all the time that being a kid is the easiest thing in the world, and they snicker at me. Then I tell them, "Here's why. Your mom, dad and other adults in your life have a lot of things the Bible says they have to do, and things they are not to do. Love this, don't love that. But for the kid in the house, there's one verse: "Obey Mom and Dad" (Ephesians 6:1).

The problem is that young kids want to be adults. So they disobey their parents and the other authorities around them, getting into all kinds of trouble. I come back to them with all love and compassion and say, "You didn't do the one thing well. Instead, you traded the one easy thing for a million hard things."

Let's not stay on kids too long, although they're an easy target. But let's turn to us with our heavenly Father. God has said, "You've got to do one thing well in this world: seek first Me and My Kingdom." What do we say? "I don't want to do that, God. I'm going to go do all these other things." We're doing something else, not seeking His Kingdom, juggling all these different things, so we're exhausted. We're scared to death we're going to drop one of them, knowing the pain and sorrow that will bring. We're out of breath, out of hope, hurting and dying, but God says, "You only needed one ball and that was to seek Me first and My Kingdom."

Here's the problem: we choose the harder life over the one God has for us. That's why Jesus said, "Come to me, all who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. My yoke is easy and my burden is light." It's one thing. "Seek Me and My Kingdom." Notice that He does not say, "And we'll figure it out." Rather He says, "All those things you're worried about will be added to you."

Are you worried about your life? He's got it covered. Are you worried about your health? He's got it covered. Are you worried about what you're going to eat? He's got it covered. You're worried about all these things, but He has them covered. We must focus on the one thing He's called us to do: seek first His Kingdom.

Anxiety is unnecessary because of our Father.

Not only does anxiety make us unfaithful to our focus, it also is unnecessary because of our Father. The image Jesus uses in Matthew 6 is that of the relationship of a father to his children. In verse 26 He says, "*Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them.*" Underline the words "heavenly Father." There's a theme here. "*Are you not of more value than they?*" The answer is yes. He goes on:

And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.

He brings up all these things that concern us and puts two slices of heavenly bread around this sandwich. So all of your concerns are there, but then He says, "But your heavenly Father—He'll take care of that." As a Christian, you have a Father in heaven Who loves you. Who will never leave or forsake you. Who is deeply concerned about you and is committed to you. He even gave His one and only Son to redeem you back to Himself. He also says, "You reside in the palm of My hand and nothing can separate you from My love" (John 10:29; Romans 8:38–39).

We have a loving heavenly Father—but let me illustrate something. My middle son Josh is a great kid who's now 13 years old. When he was much younger, when he got hungry, he got angry. We called it "hangry." Some of you are smiling, because you have a kid like that. He was five or six years old, and we were on a long trip. Josh said, "Dad, I'm hungry." I said, "Okay, son, we're going to be stopping soon. Don't worry about it. Just enjoy the ride. I'm on it." Three or four minutes later, "Da-ad, I'm hungry. My stomach is starting to hurt. I'm really hungry. It's growling. When are we going to stop?" I said, "Son, I've got a plan. I know where we're going to stop. Hang in there. I've got it taken care of." A minute later, "Da-a-ad! Don't you love us? We're so hungry back here, we're dying. We're starving." I said, "Son, son. I'm on it. I know exactly where we're going to stop. Everything is fine. Just hang in there. Don't worry about it—your Dad's on it."

A minute later, "Dad, I used to love you. I used to think you were great. But I don't think you understand—I'm dying back here. I've got to eat. This is terrible." I said, "Son, son—have you ever missed a meal?" "No." "Are you concerned that you're going to go hungry?" "Not until today." I said, "Son, we're going to stop and get something to eat." And do you know what happened? Josh died of starvation that day.

No, Josh is here. Noah, you're here and you're alive too. We fed you along the way.

Let me connect something for you. When we worry like Josh in the back seat of the car, God says, "I've got it taken care of. Your worrying about it cannot add a single hour to your day. It's not yours." When we are anxious and worry, we try to do two things that we're incapable of doing. We worry about the future, over which we have no control, then we worry about outcomes we have no idea about. The future is neither ours, nor is it here.

I want you to hear this. With anxiety categories two and three, the Christian lives as if there's no God, therefore you have to become God. You say, "I don't have a god who's capable of dealing with whatever is concerning me. God can't deal with it. He's either too far away or unconcerned or unable to address what concerns me in this moment. Therefore, God, get off Your throne. I will deal with this myself." The problem is you can't. So in your anxious moments, remember that you have a heavenly Father Who loves you.

In my anxious moments one night, I was deeply anxious about all manner of things. I've got a lot of irons in the fire, as many of you do, and nothing was going the way it needed to. I was thinking, "What about this? What about that?" My anxiety hits me late in the night. I opened the Scriptures—I don't know why, because I'm usually not that holy—but that night I did. And for whatever reason, I came upon this passage in 1 Chronicles 29:11–15. David is praising God and I remember these things standing out bright as day to me. In these verses, David pronounces three things about our God.

First, he tells us God owns everything; second, God is the Ruler of everything; and three, God is the Provider of everything. I began to read those things and said, "I'm going to believe one of two things. Either I'm going to believe these three statements to be true—God is the Owner, God is the Ruler and God is the Provider of all things, including my life—or I'm going to go on my own."

I was amazed. For every one of the anxious thoughts I had, when I put them next to that Scripture, I heard God say, "I've got it under control. Go to bed, boy. You have nothing to worry about. Do you know that I care for you? Do you know that I love you? Do you know that I've got the cattle on a thousand hills? Do you know that I created the world through the power of My words? Do you know...do you know...do you know? Do you know I know the end from the beginning? Do you know that all things are possible through Christ Who gives you strength?"

Do we know that we are more than conquerors through Christ Jesus (Romans 8:37)? Do we know that nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:39)? Do we know that God loves us and paid a great price for us and that He

will never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5)? Do we know we have a heavenly Father Who loves us (Matthew 6:25–34)? If we know that to be true, we will not be anxious. We will not worry. Because if God is for us, who can be against us (Romans 8:31)?

This is so important. In those anxious moments, you must never focus in on your worries; you must focus on Him. If you stay in your worries, you'll die. I'll die. But when I focus in on God in my times of struggle, my back stiffens up a little more. My head's held a little bit higher. I say, "I'm a child of the most high God. Bring it, life. Bring it, devil. Whatever you're going to throw my way, whatever I'm anxious about, bring it. I've got the great I AM behind me and He says He'll be with me every step of the way."

Anxiety is unreasonable because of our faith.

The reason unbelievers struggle with anxiety is that they don't have a God. But we do. We've got to put our faith and trust in Him. We've got to depend on Him. If we don't, we will be Christians who will turn away from the only answer we have, turning to utter futility on our part. So how do we get there?

We must fight anxiety to prevent failure.

How do we fight anxiety? Well, we have a God Who loves us and Who has given us gifts. He's given us abilities. So how do we fight it?

We fight anxiety by declaring a system of priorities.

What is our priority? We are to seek first the Kingdom of God. I'm going to declare to God and to everything I'm anxious about that God is my focus. He is going to be my direction. God is going to be the One I turn to. Not my anxiety, not my worry, but I'm going to focus on God and do what He calls me to do.

We fight anxiety by developing a strategic program.

Matthew 6:34 tells us two things: *"Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."* If you want to be freed from anxiety, don't dwell on tomorrow's stress. Also, don't dwell on today's mess.

Don't dwell on tomorrow's stress, because you have no idea what's going to happen tomorrow—good, bad or ugly. The answer to your prayer may be on Monday's doorstep. Or the greatest trial you've ever experienced may be there on Tuesday. But you can't dwell on that. Vance Havner put it this way: "Anxiety is like being in a rocking chair. It gives you something to do, but it gets you nowhere."

Some of you are sitting in the rocking chair of anxiety and worry, but you're just busying yourself doing nothing. You also can't dwell on today's mess. Maybe today your life is a mess and garbage is all around you. You're bogged down by the mess of today. Corrie Ten Boom, who was chased down in Nazi occupied Europe, said the following about anxious thoughts: "Anxiety is an old man who carries around a load of feathers, believing them to be lead."

Let me ask you in closing, "What feathers have you allowed to become lead in your life? What issues, what struggles, what concerns have you allowed to go from a healthy place to an unhealthy one?" God has called you to not live that way, to not be anxious or filled with worry. Instead, He calls you to be victorious.

So what do we do? Philippians 4:6–7 says, *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*

What are you worried about? What are you anxious about that falls under those categories of anxiety two and three? Give them to the Lord. First Peter 5:7 tells us to cast all our anxieties on Jesus, because He cares for us. Are you willing to do that? Are you willing to throw them His way, trusting that He loves you and has a great plan for you, that He will never leave or forsake you until He calls you home? Even in that—we can be anxious about death. But Jesus says, "Absent from the body means you're present with Me." We have nothing to fear. We have nothing to be anxious about—if we'll give it to the Lord.