

Life Group Study Guide

From Anxiety to Peace

Review

Anxiety seems to lurk around every corner of our lives—in the bills to be paid, in the upcoming visit to the doctor, or in the deadlines at school or work. When our minds and hearts are a whirlwind of “what-ifs” we often feel lost in the fog of anxiety. Into this gloom, God speaks: “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” (Philippians 4:6-7).

This passage can be divided into three parts: 1) anxiety (4:6a), prayer (4:6b), and peace (4:7). Our study of this passage will reveal this central idea: *we must replace **anxiety** with **prayer** in order for God’s **peace** to guard us.*

Anxiety | “Replace anxiety . . .”

1. The verb translated “be anxious” in 4:6 occurs also in 1 Corinthians 12:25 and Philippians 2:20 (read these verses). Why do you think God *commends* anxiety in these cases, and yet tells us *not* to be anxious in other cases?
2. What things in life tend to give us the most anxiety?

Prayer | “. . . with prayer . . .”

3. When we go to God in prayer, what kinds of things happen that can help dispel anxiety?
4. Read 1 Peter 5:6-7. What does this passage teach us about the reasons for our anxiety and how we can deal with it?
5. Anxiety tends to blur the real and the possible, the present and the future, the known and the unknown. Because of this, our prayers get confused when we are seized by

anxiety. Why is it important to follow the pattern of the Lord's prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) when "making our requests"?

6. Why does anxiety not thrive in an atmosphere of gratitude?
7. When we are anxious, what kinds of things do we forget to thank God for?
8. Read Isaiah 37:14-20. Discuss what makes Hezekiah's prayer a model prayer for expelling anxiety.

Peace | "... and God's peace will guard you."

9. What is the difference between the peace *of* God (Philippians 4:7) and peace *with* God (Romans 5:1).
10. The "peace of God" is supernatural. That means that it is not the kind of peace that can be achieved apart from God. This also means that it is not *natural* for us to seek God when trying to be free from anxiety. What kinds of false remedies for anxiety do we sometimes try?
11. Have you (or someone you know) experienced a mind-boggling kind of peace—the peace that exists in situations that normally would produce intense anxiety?
12. What is the significance of "in Christ Jesus" at the end of verse 7?
13. What are some tangible ways we can seek others' help in this area of anxiety? What are some tangible ways we can help others *with* their anxiety?