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GOD'S GUIDANCE WHEN I'M ANXIOUS



Suffering seems pointless. Suffering of any kind can feel like it has no end and it has no purpose. It usually feels this way in times when I have been anxious. Sometimes I don't even know why I feel anxious, making that pointless feeling even worse. It was during one of these times, a friend who didn't even realize I was feeling this way pointed me to Romans 5:3-5.

"And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance, and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us."

The end result is hope due to God's love through the Holy Spirit. I know God is with me. I know He loves me. I have hope because of this. It gives me a new perspective, knowing that there is a purpose to suffering.

Sometimes we forget that God has a plan and He knows what He is doing. We need reminders to go back to His Word and see His plan for us. Suffering may seem pointless and anxiousness may seem endless, but I know that God has a plan to use it and He is with me at all times.—**Mark Thonsgaard**, *Second Year FLBC Student, Louise, TX*



Every day that I wake up and live out that day, I am faced with a new or existing anxiety that haunts or tests me. Sometimes, it will be something that happens in the day that reminds me of my past and what I've done.

On one side, I could say that I have already forgiven what has happened, but that stress is still there. On the other, Jesus reminds us that our sins are forgiven, past, present, and future; so I can fall on that as my security. Both have their truths, so my life has always been in a whirlwind of sin and God's forgiveness that just leaves me in shame and humbleness, not really expecting anything more than what I deserve.

John 8:36 says that "Who the Son sets free: is free indeed". I gave my life to Christ when I was 17 and even as a 21-year-old adult, I still find my faith being tested and my sin still lingering on, bringing up the anxiety again. My biggest struggle right now is letting go of what I knew before I came to Christ because that's all I knew and felt comforted by. But even Abraham and Jacob had pantheons with them when they followed Christ, and they're not remembered for that, but by being faithful servants of God's word and calling in their life.

As I fight and wrestle with my past self to pluck out the dead branches, the ones that leave me with anxious thoughts and feelings of unease and restlessness, I pray that God will stay with me as I keep running to him. —**Joshua Moe**, *Second Year FLBC Student, Arlington, WA*



I am currently in one of the most anxious seasons of my life. I have always dealt with anxiety, however, this is the worst it has ever been. As I am sitting here writing this, things are actually beginning to look up in my mental health. Throughout this season I have been intentional with my devotional life.

As the anxiety began to creep up, without thinking I would open my Bible.

God has taught me a lot through this. The biggest thing He taught me and strengthened my knowledge in, is the mere power of His Word. He speaks to us through His Word, even if we can't necessarily see or feel it.

Throughout this season, I have felt a lot like David in the Psalms. I have cried to God, believing that He has forsaken me. After time to cool down, I realized He has been there the whole time... that He indeed never leaves me. God is always sitting on His throne, leading us and helping us. I guess it took a quite a while to realize that He is our comfort when all else seems to be falling. Psalm 16:8 has been such a blessing to me. In this verse it talks about how God is with us, always. He is our foundation and through that, we will never be shaken. —**Jackie Bingham**, *Second Year FLBC Student, Sioux Falls, SD*



Growing up I have always been an anxious person, some of the simplest tasks would make me nervous even something as easy as checking my email. It was enough to prevent me from doing certain things.

A little while ago I was talking with a friend and she had mentioned memorizing a few Bible verses to recite to myself in my times of anxiety. I began to do this, I started with a simple idea from Matthew 6:25-34 that God feeds the birds and He clothes the fields so how much more would He provide for me.

Since then, I have taken time to memorize other verses and now when I am nervous or anxious, I speak God's truth to myself. I remind myself that God is in control and He is always providing for me! I allow the Holy Spirit to work on my heart and calm me. In these moments Jesus meets me where I am and reminds me of His love for me, he works on my anx-

ious heart to fill me with His word and bring me His peace that surpasses all understanding. He gives me his strength to be confident in the times of my worry. Through Christ I have confidence that in these moments of fear I am provided and cared for by the good God.—**Reba Cox**, *Second Year FLBC Student, Originally from Bethel Park, PA*



I recently read in the Book "Ordinary" by Michael Horton that describes my anxiety quite well. "The Titanic has hit the iceberg. But the music is still playing." In the book, it is talking about walking through life in a vocation that seems to appear "Ordinary" on the surface. In a sense, it can be. But even the ordinary days of living for Christ can be overwhelming and exhausting.

In the ordinary everyday hardships, is where I find my anxiety most prominent. When your back is against the wall and you've hit the "iceberg" but life keeps going...that music keeps playing. Life will not stop for you when you're anxious and it can cripple you! But that is where the Lord's guidance shines through all the more. I think of the Lord's guidance for Noah.

To stick with the boat theme, Noah wasn't given much. He was living a rather ordinary life, living for the Lord. When the Lord put him in a tough situation. A rather daunting task to build the ark was set before him and he had to make a decision. Instead of letting the present anxiety of the task set before him to overcome him. He allowed the Lord to guide and provide for him. With his example in mind and the guidance of the Word of God, we can choose his guidance through our anxiety as well.—**Coltin Cox**, *Second Year FLBC Student, Originally from Monongahela, PA*

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Jesus in Matthew 5 expresses six times the idea, "You have heard that it was said...but I say to you." Our Savior King wants his disciples (Matt. 5:1) to understand through this chapter that they will encounter different messages in their culture, but to be sure to listen to the Lord.

Today's youth culture is the same. You will encounter tons of different messages within it, but as children of God through faith in Jesus, we are called to go back to God's Word to discern.

This column will feature some sacred and some secular media. It will grab a message or a line from a particular media piece and seek to begin the conversation on it, in order to drive us all back to Scripture.



This installment is looking at "Holy" by Justin Bieber. The song entered at #3 on Billboards Hot 100 and peaked at #1 on airplay at the end of January. Here are some lyrics:

That the way you hold me, hold me, hold me, hold me, hold me / Feels so holy, holy, holy, holy, holy / On God / Runnin' to the altar like a track star / Can't wait another second / 'Cause the way you hold

me, hold me, hold me, hold me, hold me, hold me / Feels so holy.

- How does the singer feel about being held by his girl?
- What does the song say about holiness? About God?
- What does God's Word say about relationships and holiness?
- What is your faith-informed response to these areas based on God's Word?

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