

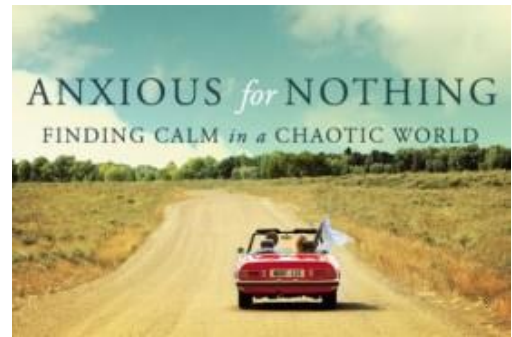


# SPX Small Groups

*Life is Better Together*

Anxious For Nothing: Week 1

October 4: 27<sup>th</sup> Sun. in Ordinary Time



- 1) What interested you about “Anxious for Nothing?” What do you hope to learn or change because of this small group experience?
- 2) What was the last thing that you rejoiced over?
- 3) Have one person read Phil 4:4-8 aloud (see next page). What stood out to you most and/or what is the passage saying to you today?
- 4) In practical terms, what do you think it means when St. Paul says, “rejoice in the Lord always?” Do you find this easy or difficult to do?

Watch the video now

- 5) How is anxiety different from fear? Is either helpful? Do you ever feel anxiety as a physical sensation – if so, how would you describe it?
- 6) Eugene Peterson says, “[the fact] that God’s followers don’t get preferential treatment in life always comes as a surprise.” Have you ever expected special treatment from God? If so, how did it affect your relationship with him when you experienced hard times?
- 7) Fr. Mike said to rejoice in the Lord is a decision not a feeling. We can make this decision most easily when we remember that 1) God is with me and 2) God will deliver me. When have you experienced God’s presence or help during a crisis?
- 8) Read 2 Cor 12:5-10 (see next page). In this passage, Paul talks about a constant trial God would not take away. What is God’s response to Paul’s prayer in verse 9? In your own life, how does God display his strength when you are feeling weak or anxious?
- 9) To rejoice in God regardless of your circumstances, you must learn to change your mindset – instead of worrying of what might happen, you should remember as St. Paul said, “We know that all things work for good for those who love God.” (Rm 8:28)
  - a. Describe a time when God has brought something good out of a hardship you experienced.
  - b. How do you change your mindset to avoid a harmful recurring thought?

Closing Activity – see next page

Phil 4:4-8

Brothers and sisters:

Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice!

Your kindness should be known to all. The Lord is near.

Have no anxiety at all, but in everything,  
by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving,  
make your requests known to God.

Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding  
will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Finally, brothers and sisters,  
whatever is true, whatever is honorable,  
whatever is just, whatever is pure,  
whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious,  
if there is any excellence  
and if there is anything worthy of praise,  
think about these things.

Keep on doing what you have learned and received  
and heard and seen in me.

Then the God of peace will be with you.

2 Cor 12:5-10

5 About this person I will boast, but about myself I will not boast, except about my weaknesses. 6 Although if I should wish to boast, I would not be foolish, for I would be telling the truth. But I refrain, so that no one may think more of me than what he sees in me or hears from me 7 because of the abundance of the revelations. Therefore, that I might not become too elated, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, an angel of Satan, to beat me, to keep me from being too elated. 8 Three times I begged the Lord about this, that it might leave me, 9 but he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." I will rather boast most gladly of my weaknesses, in order that the power of Christ may dwell with me. 10 Therefore, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and constraints, for the sake of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong.

Closing Activity – find a piece of paper and an envelope. Write down 3 instances of "what if" thinking - or other types of "stinking" thinking - that are causing you anxiety or weighing you down right now. Put the paper in the envelope and write on the outside "Do not open until November 2/3/4." At our last session we will open these envelopes to see how God has brought peace to the anxious areas of your life.

Challenge: Memorize Phil 4:4 "Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again: rejoice!"

Bible Study Personal Extra: For those of you who enjoy digging a bit deeper, look up these passages and think about these questions:

- 1) Read Psalm 56:3, Matt 6:25-34, and 1 Peter 5:6-8. What prescription does each give for anxiety?
- 2) Read 2 Cor 11:23-28. What trials did Paul face?
- 3) Read Habakkuk 3:17-19. How does Habakkuk describe God? Why does Habakkuk say he can rejoice in God through the trees wither and the crops fail?
- 4) Read Isaiah 45:9-12. How does Isaiah describe God's sovereignty?
- 5) Read Psalm 145:8-20. How many different character attributes of God can you find? Which of these are the easiest to trust in? the hardest?
- 6) Read Luke 1:26-55. What anxious thoughts could have entered Mary's mind as Gabriel offered his message? How does Mary's response in verse 38 suggest about her trust in God? How can seeing ourselves as a servant of the Lord help us to rejoice like Mary did in the face of unexpected news?

Video link: <https://www.studygateway.com/online-bible-studies/anxious-for-nothing-study-home/session-1-rejoice-in-the-lord-always/>

Questions and Activities adapted from Max Lucado, *Anxious for Nothing Study Guide*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2017).