

The Truth Will Set You Free from Anxiety

Satan is the father of lies (**John 8:44**). He desires to fill us with lies. If he can get us to believe these lies, he knows we will be held captive our entire lives. After all, if the truth will set us free (**John 8:32**), then lies will keep us captive. We've already discovered this concept of truth is more than just doctrinal truth. It is emotional, psychological, spiritual truth. Further, it sets us free from sin, but also from the emotional and psychological quagmires in which Satan tries to bog us down. We have learned how truth can set us free from depression. The truth will also set us free from anxiety.

Anxiety is to fear what depression is to sadness. It is not wrong to have fear. Fear is a sound emotion based on true events. **Psalm 55:4-5** demonstrates that fear is a true emotion. In the face of fatal sickness, we may fear death. In the face of company downsizing, we may fear unemployment. Anxiety however, is more than fear. Fear is concern based on evidence that something unpleasant or dangerous might occur. Anxiety is an overwhelming concern based on unreal expectations of danger. Fear can be healthy and even protect us from danger. Anxiety is destructive and paralyzes us. Fear can be based on real events. Anxiety is based on the lies we tell ourselves blowing our fears out of proportion. Fear lasts while we are in real danger. Anxiety endures whether we are in danger or not because it is not based on reality.

Consider some examples of how this works.

Some live in the constant anxiety of poverty. They are constantly worried that increased taxes are going to ruin them, increasing inflation will destroy them, a falling market will break them, a mistake on the job will get them fired. They spin their wheels trying to increase their wealth and material goods. They spend an overabundant amount of time trying to protect and insure what they do have. They monitor the stock market, inflation, and interest rates like their lives depend on them. They fear sharing, generosity, and hospitality because they want to make sure they have enough to take care of themselves down the line. They have bought into the lie that money is what takes care of us. They have told themselves that without money life would be just awful and not worth living.

Consider some truths that will help. First, life is not made up of our possessions (**Luke 12:15**). Having lots and lots of money and stuff does not provide abundant living. In fact, the pursuit of that can ruin our lives (**Ecclesiastes 5:10-12**). Second, if we are poor, we will not die. Jesus said the poor will always be with us (**Matthew 26:11**). We may not enjoy some of the things others do, but we won't die. Third, they have forgotten the promise of God (**Matthew 6:25-33**). God has promised to take care of His children who seek the kingdom of God first. Rather than believing the lies of the devil that money will take care of us, we need to remember these truths. They can set us free from the anxieties that center around our finances.

Some live in constant anxiety of death. Certainly, it is true that death will come to all of us (**Hebrews 9:27**). Certainly, we have no idea when it will happen (**Ecclesiastes 9:11-12**). But is it something to be anxious about? Some live in an overwhelming fear of it. They refuse to fly because they might die in a plane. Some even refuse to leave their homes because they fear they might die if they do. Most of us don't take it that far. Certainly, we shouldn't do stupid things like trying to climb the fence on top of the Empire State Building. But we don't have to live in constant anxiety that we might get diagnosed with cancer, have a heart attack, or get run over by a stray bulldozer.

Consider the truth we need to remember that will help us. The reason we don't have to live in anxiety over this is not because we won't die. We will. The reason is because for Christians, death really isn't all that bad. Oh, I know many of us fear the actual process. It might be painful. But even if it is, it will still be momentary in the face of the eternity that is ahead of us in the presence of God. As **Romans 8:18**, our suffering here is not worthy to be compared with the glory that will be revealed to us in eternity. As Paul said in **Philippians 1:21-23**, death is gain for us. It means being with the Lord. Death is not an end for us. It is a beginning. We don't have to live in anxiety.

Of course, some Christians live in anxiety of talking to other people about the gospel. They are anxious that someone will reject them. They are anxious that someone will mock them. In fact, sometimes you might think that some people are anxious that if they share the gospel with anyone, they might die. Some are anxious that they will do or say the wrong thing. Some are anxious that they will be labeled a freak or weirdo. So they constantly consider doing something to help spread the gospel, but they never do.

Let's consider some truths that will help us abandon this anxiety. It may be that many will be against us as we present the gospel message. But God is for us, the opposition of anyone else doesn't really matter (**Romans 8:31**). Consider Moses' life. At 40, he thought he would single-handedly lead an exodus of God's people, but it failed. Then

at 80, God called him with the burning bush, and Moses demonstrated great anxiety. “I can’t do it. Send someone else.” But in time he did lead the exodus. What changed? He eventually believed the message God gave in **Exodus 4:12**. He believed God was with him. Believe this truth. God is with you. He will not abandon you (**Hebrews 13:5-6**). If you really believe God is with you, what would you do? One of the greatest truths to remember is in **Romans 1:16**—the gospel is the power of God for salvation. You are not that power. Your approach is not the power. Your formulation is not the power. God’s gospel is the power. Thus, if you speak the gospel truth in love, you can’t go wrong (**Ephesians 4:15**).

Whatever anxieties you are facing, get into the Word. Listen to the truth from God, and let it eradicate your anxieties.

—Edwin L. Crozier