

# Anxiety and the Christian (When Panic Attacks)



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# ANXIETY AND THE CHRISTIAN

- A natural response of the sympathetic nervous system
- Driven by fears – real or imagined
- Commonly referred to as stress
- Can be controlled by changing what we tell ourselves and what we dwell on

# Anxiety

- Some anxiety and worry is normal.
- These normal amounts of anxiety can actually help you respond to threats and feel motivated to get things done.



# Defining Anxiety Types

- Separation Anxiety
- Selective Mutism
- Generalized Anxiety
- Social Anxiety
- Phobias
- Acute Stress Disorders
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder ((PTSD)

# 3 More

- Hoarding
- Body Dysmorphic Disorder
- Trichotillomania (irresistible urges to pull out body hair)

# *Commandments*

Matthew 6: 25

Philippians 4: 6-7

1 Peter 5:7

## ***Matthew 6:25***

“For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, *as to* what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, *as to* what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?”

## ***1 Peter 5:7***

“casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.”

## *Philippians 4:6-7*

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. **7** And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.



# *Examples:*

## *Passages To Consider*

***All people worry:***

**Paul** – 2Cor. 1: 8-19, 4: 8-10, 7: 5, 11: 3, 28

**Epaphroditus** – Phil. 2: 25, 26

**Elijah** – 1 Kings 19

## 2 Corinthians 4:8-10

“we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; **9** persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; **10** always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.”

## 2 Corinthians 7:5

“For even when we came into Macedonia our flesh had no rest, but we were afflicted on every side: conflicts without, fears within.”

## 2 Corinthians 11:28

“Apart from *such* external things, there is the daily pressure on me *of* concern for all the churches.”

# *Epaphroditus*

## *Philippians 2:25-26*

“But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus ... **26** because he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick.”

# *Anxiety & Distress*

“But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished!” *Luke*

*12:50* NASB

“You have been distressed by various trials” *1*

*Peter 1:6* NASB

# *Passages To Consider*

***Causes of worry:***

**Daily difficulties** – Numbers 21: 4-5

**Family Concerns** – 1 Kings 9:5, 10:2

**Ungodly living** – Psalm 32: 3-4, Hebrews 5:  
12-14

# *Daily Difficulties*

## *Numbers 21:4-5*

“and the people became impatient because of the journey. **5** The people spoke against God and Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this miserable food.”

# *Family Concerns*

## *Legitimate / Understandable Anxiety*

Saul said to his servant who was with him, “Come, and let us return, or else my father will cease to be concerned about the donkeys and will become anxious for us.” **1 Samuel 9:5**, *NASB*

“...your father has ceased to be concerned about the donkeys and is anxious for you, saying, “What shall I do about my son?” ’

**1 Samuel 10:2** *NASB*



# *Ungodly Living*

## *Psalm 32:3-4*

When I kept silent *about my sin*, my body wasted away Through my groaning all day long. **4** For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was drained away *as with the fever heat of summer*.

See *Romans 4:6-8*

# Proverbs 12:25

Anxiety in a man's heart weighs it down, But a good word makes it glad. **NASB**

Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down, but a good word makes him glad.

**ESV**

Anxiety in a man's heart weighs it down, but a good word cheers it up. **HCSB**

Anxiety weighs down the human heart, but a good word cheers it up. **NRSV**

Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up. **NIV**

**de a gah** – “restlessness, worry; an attitude or emotion of distress”

DBL - **Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains**

# Psalm 38:18

For I confess my iniquity; I am full of anxiety because of my sin. *NASB*

So I confess my guilt; I am anxious because of my sin. *HCSB*

I confess my iniquity; I am troubled by my sin. *NIV*

I confess my iniquity; I am sorry for my sin. *ESV*

*da ag* – “have worry, be troubled”

*DBL - Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains*

*ISBE-R* – “worry, care grief, troubled, greatly alarmed”

# Symptoms of anxiety

## *Emotional symptoms of anxiety*

- Feelings of apprehension or dread
- Trouble concentrating
- Feeling tense and jumpy
- Anticipating the worst
- Irritability
- Restlessness
- Watching for signs of danger
- Feeling like your mind's gone blank

# Roots Causes of Anxiety

- Fear (be labeled, judged, look foolish, disfavor)
- Perfectionism
- Deeper issues of value we place on ourselves
- Or, how we think others perceive us
- Recorded messages across time (not good enough, others do it better, loser, can't do anything right, or high expectations to excel)
- Legitimate concerns for welfare and safety

# Physical symptoms of anxiety

- Pounding heart
- Sweating
- Stomach upset or dizziness
- Frequent urination or diarrhea
- Shortness of breath
- Tremors and twitches
- Muscle tension
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Insomnia

# What is an Anxiety attack?

- Surge of overwhelming panic
- Feeling of losing control or going crazy
- Heart palpitations or chest pain
- Feeling like you're going to pass out
- Trouble breathing or choking sensation
- Hyperventilation
- Hot flashes or chills
- Trembling or shaking
- Nausea or stomach cramps
- Feeling detached or unreal



*Leaving The Pit*

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# What causes an anxiety attack?

- Playing the 'what if' game – negative self talk which sets us up for failure
- Poor self esteem – thinking of self as unworthy
- Too much pressure to be perfect
- Focusing too much on self vs. others
- Eating poorly – too much caffeine
- Not exercising
- Full exposure to phobias
- Holding in feelings





# Questions to ask yourself?

- Do you make time each day for yourself?  
Have too much time on your hands?
- Are you getting the emotional support that you need?
- Are you taking care of your body?
- Are you overloaded with responsibility?
- Do you ask for help when you need it?
- Do you know how to bring your life into balance?

# What NOT to say...

- “This will make you stronger”
- “Time heals all wounds”
- “ I know how you feel”
- “It could be worse”
- “It will work itself out”

# How to help

- LISTEN
- Address the cognitive distortion of “danger”
- Show empathy and concern
- Offer to call or talk to a parent, counselor, or other trusted adult *with them*
- Encourage them to get ongoing help for their anxiety
- If they are immediately at-risk, call a suicide hotline or 911

## *Some Suggested Solutions*

- ✓ **Pray to God for strength and guidance**
- ✓ **Confess any sin/misbehavior causing the anxiety**
- ✓ **Do something (else) productive**

## *Some Suggested Solutions*

- ✓ **Proper nutrition/hydration – Elijah**
- ✓ **Appropriate medications (if indicated)**
- ✓ **Give and receive positive feedback, encouragement**
- ✓ **Change the “channel”**

# *Changing Channels*

- ✓ Re-focus on the positive things in our lives
- ✓ Change the “channel” (our “remote control” may be stuck on the bad) to the
  - ✓ Gratitude channel (Rom.1)
  - ✓ Beauty channel (Phil. 4:8)
  - ✓ Love channel (1 Cor. 13)
- ✓ Escape the Tyranny of *Unenforceable Expectations*
- ✓ *Be still and know that He is God!*

# HOPE AND HELP

