



I Changed My Mind About Worry and Anxiety

Focus We can overcome fear, anxiety and worry because God is our loving Father.

Open If you could visit any place in the world, where would it be?

Read God created us to live in peace, not in fear. In Scripture, we are commanded not to fear, worry or be anxious. God would not command us to live this way if it were impossible for us to do so. We have to change the way we think about fear, anxiety and worry (Romans 12:1–2).

We worry when we have chronic concern or mentally dwell on a difficulty. We have anxiety when we are uneasy about things we can't control. Fear is a negative emotion caused by a real or perceived threat. These three emotions share the same core and are just different levels of emotional intensity.

The root of all chronic fear, anxiety and worry is an orphan spirit. We have an orphan spirit when we don't understand how much God loves us, that He loves to be our Father and that He is taking care of us. The central lie an orphan spirit tries to communicate is that we are on our own and have to solve our own problems.

We *can* overcome worry and anxiety. We must consider worry and anxiety as agents the Enemy uses to destroy our lives and steal our joy. We don't have to accept worry and anxiety as normal and inevitable; they exist in our lives only because we allow them.

We must turn every anxious thought into prayer. We can attack worry every morning and not allow it to dominate our lives all day. The things we worry about are what we should pray about (Philippians 4:6–7). As we pray, we

can thank God that He loves us, He hears us, and He will answer our prayers. We must keep praying until we have peace.

We must also believe and confess, by faith, that God is our loving Dad and He will always care for us (Matthew 6:31–32). He wants to Father us throughout our lives. He is the answer to every problem.

1. Read Romans 12:2. Consider your recent thought life. In what areas is your mind being renewed? In what ways are you being challenged to think differently?
2. Of the three emotions—worry, anxiety and fear—which do you think is most common in our culture? Which of the three do you fight most often?
3. Why do you think we have the tendency to accept worry and anxiety as normal and inevitable?
4. Have you heard the term “orphan spirit” before? How does having an orphan spirit affect our lives? How does it impact our decisions? Our relationships? How we handle finances? Our work?
5. Read Philippians 4:6–7. Tell the group about a time when, through prayer, you experienced “the peace of God, which transcends all understanding.”

Live Read Matthew 6:25–34. Sometimes we worry or are anxious because it’s a habit. Ask the Holy Spirit to make you more aware of each time you fall into a pattern of worry. Then, as He shows you, stop and pray about each anxious thought. Give your concerns to God and expect His peace.

Pray Thank You, Lord, that You created us to live in peace! We praise You that You are the best Father in the universe. Please help us to believe that You love us, and that You will always care for us. Help us to live free from worry, anxiety and fear.