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*“Anxiety is a signal alerting you that it’s time to pray.”*  
[Craig Groeschel]

## ENGAGE & CONNECT

Describe a time when you were overjoyed simply to be with someone (i.e. in their presence without doing anything special).

## BEGIN WITH PRAYER

Spend a moment praying this passage, beginning your time together in humility and gratitude!

*“Hey I lie down and sleep; I wake again because the Lord sustains me. I will not be afraid of thousands of people who have taken their stand against me on every side.”*  
[Psalm 3:5-6]

## BIG IDEA

When prayer is more about God’s presence and experiencing His divine love, we can become people of incredible, inexplicable peace.

## PASSAGE & DISCUSSION

Philippians 4:4-9

1. Paul calls believers to “let your graciousness be known to everyone” and to “don’t worry about anything”. How do these instructions work together?
2. What does Paul mean by “the Lord is near”? Why is this phrase significant in the context of anxiety?
3. In the sermon we heard, *“We pray in order to become (gracious, gentle, reasonable, patient, etc.) versus demanding God DO something.”* How does this challenge your “typical” way of praying?
4. Verse 7 describes “the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding.” How is this different from peace that comes through worldly solutions?
5. Why does Paul pair prayer with thanksgiving? How can a heart of thankfulness affect anxiety? Be specific!
6. In the sermon we heard, *“Prayer really is drawing near to a Person—God!”* If prayer is presence before petition, how could this change how we approach prayer, especially when we are anxious?
7. How can our small group foster an environment where members can “cast their anxieties” in community? What impact does community have on anxiety?

8. In what areas of life are you prone to feel anxious? How might bringing these to God in prayer lead to greater peace?
9. Read verse 8 again. How does thinking about these kinds of things help in combating specific anxieties in your life? Let's encourage one another by sharing a specific way this could apply to our lives!
10. Think about a recent situation where you felt anxious. What was your immediate reaction? How might applying this passage change how you respond in the future?

## STEP OF OBEDIENCE

The peace of God goes beyond what our thinking and feelings can produce, **so we resolve to set our minds upon God through prayer!** When anxiety comes, we ask ... *"Have I really prayed about this?"* Based on the Holy Spirit's wisdom, what is a step of obedience that you can take this week?

Here are a few questions to ask yourself about prayer and anxiety. Do you truly believe that ...

- God alone makes us **happy and joyful** through prayer?
- prayer helps us become more filled by the **fruit of the Spirit**?
- we can pray **when we're overwhelmed**, recognizing that God gives us peace?
- God's character means we can trust His desire **to interact with us**?
- **unhurried prayer** draws us nearer to God to experience His love?

*Remember ... our anxieties and fears talk to us. Don't talk back ... talk to and be with God in prayer!*

## PRAYER FOCUS

### Letting Go of Worry

- Let's consider how prayer is an invitation to simply be with God—to experience His presence and be filled with His divine love. When we center ourselves in His love, we find a peace that surpasses understanding, a peace that frees us from the anxieties and worries of this world.
- Let's ask God to help us release our fears and concerns, allowing His love to calm our hearts and minds. May we open ourselves to His presence, trusting that His peace will sustain us through all things.

## PRAYER FOR POST ELECTION

We can confidently rest and rejoice in the **sovereignty of God!** As we move forward with a newly elected president, we are reminded that how God's Kingdom is revealed and moves forward is through **sacrificial love**, as demonstrated by our Lord Jesus Christ. May we follow HIS example!

*God, thank you for the privilege we have of engaging in our political system. Thank you that the government is a gift from you, designed for our benefit. We understand that there will be times when people who also love our country, and may even share our love for Jesus, have different political views than we do.*

*Help us remember that they are not our enemy, as our enemy is not flesh and blood. Help us to remember that every person is created in your image, and every person has dignity, worth, and value. Teach us to love and pray for those we disagree with (Matthew 5:43-48).*

*Help our love and respect to not just be empty words, but help us to demonstrate that love and respect in tangible ways. God, help us to not be the cause of division, but rather to be active at living in peace with everyone. Amen.*

(Adapted from Faith Co/Op's "The Posture of Our Politics" Prayer Guide)

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Philippians 4 Commentary & How to Overcome Anxiety](#)
  - Use these for background and encouragement before your group gathers.
- [Help For Anxiety & Panic Attacks](#)
  - This would be a good resource to use after your group gathers.