



## Discussion Guide Anxious For Nothing – Part 3 LEADER GUIDE

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Hey leaders! We hope you were challenged and encouraged by part 3 of “*Anxious For Nothing*”. In a world filled with uncertainty, God invites us to release our anxiety to Him, allowing Him to replace our fears with a peace that surpasses all understanding *THROUGH PRAYER*. This series is encouraging us to share struggles, confront insecurities, and experience the life-giving rest that comes when we trust God with our worries.

*Thank you for shepherding a group of people to Love God, Love Others, and Live Sent!*

NEED A RESOURCE, HAVE A QUESTION, OR WANT TO HAVE A CONVERSATION?  
Let us know how we can help! Contact your groups director or [discipleship@rockbridge.cc](mailto:discipleship@rockbridge.cc)

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**“Prayer is nothing else than being on terms of friendship with God.”**

[Teresa of Avila]

**LEADER RESOURCES** || **Leader Note** We do our best to equip, empower, and encourage you to shepherd your group well. Access a resource by clicking on the underlined title and share them with your group!

- **Passage Summary**
  - By examining Jesus’ prayers in the Garden of Gethesmane, we see how to pray when we are hurting. We also find clues about how praying deeply and honestly when we are in pain can be powerful and transformational when it is rooted in relationship.
- **Matthew 26 Commentary & Jesus's Prayers in the Garden**
  - Use this commentary and short video for background and encouragement. These would be good resources to share before you gather.
- **Talking With God as His Friend**
  - This would be a good resource to share with your group after you gather.

**ENGAGE & CONNECT** || **Leader Note** The goal for the icebreaker is to prepare your group for the conversation ahead by connecting with one another’s hearts and building joy together.

Thanksgiving is this week, so let’s begin with a moment of gratitude! What is one relationship you are grateful for in this season of life? How is that relationship impacting you?

**BEGIN WITH PRAYER** || **Leader Note** Begin your time together by thanking God for his presence and praying His word back to Him. Ask a few people to pray, beginning in a posture of humility and dependence!

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

*“All that he does is splendid and majestic; his righteousness endures forever. He has caused his wondrous works to be remembered. The Lord is gracious and compassionate.”*

[Psalm 11:3-4]

**BIG IDEA** || **Leader Note** Read this aloud so your group knows the theme of today’s reading and discussion.

God's power and favor are experienced through God's nearness, and nearness is experienced in deep prayer!

**PASSAGE & DISCUSSION || Leader Note** Have people read aloud the passage as instructed. Your role is to FACILITATE, so keep your group moving along, encourage multiple people to share, and look for opportunities to point out the grace and glory of God! Here are two reminders: 1) Every question does not have to be answered ... go where the Spirit leads! 2) Answers do not have to be read aloud ... they're for guidance!

Have someone read aloud Matthew 26:36-45. Consider having someone else read the passage again, possibly in a different translation (the CEB and the Message translation provide more modern language).

1. What do we learn about Jesus' humanity in his prayer at Gethsemane? How do his emotions connect with your own experiences of suffering? *Jesus expresses deep sorrow and anguish, showing His full humanity. His honest prayer ("if it is possible, let this cup pass from me") reveals vulnerability and dependence on the Father, while His surrender ("yet not as I will, but as You will") demonstrates divine trust and obedience.*
2. Why do you think that Jesus brought Peter, James, and John with him to pray, even though they fail to stay awake? What does this tell us about the role of community in times of distress? *Jesus values companionship during His anguish, showing that even He sought human support. This highlights the importance of spiritual community for encouragement, even if others may not fully understand or meet our needs.*
3. Why does Jesus pray the same prayer three times? What might this repetition teach us about persistence and trust in prayer? *Repeating the prayer shows Jesus' perseverance in seeking alignment with God's will. It teaches believers that prayer can involve wrestling with emotions and desires, requiring persistence to fully surrender to God.*
4. Deep prayer is relational, not transactional. If taken to heart, how could this shift in perspective affect how we approach prayer, especially during hardships? *Answers will vary: viewing prayer as relational encourages intimacy with God rather than seeking quick fixes. It shifts the focus from receiving answers to experiencing God's presence and developing trust.*
5. How does Jesus' surrender to God's will challenge our understanding of what it means to trust God during difficult times? *Jesus' surrender shows that trust involves letting go of personal desires and believing in God's greater plan. It challenges us to embrace God's will, even when it doesn't align with our preferences or understanding.*
6. In the sermon we heard that when we are having doubts about God's love and power, we should: "Get to the question at the bottom of it (i.e. Is God really good? loving? in charge?) and go to the Gospel (i.e. Measure His love by the crucifixion and His power by the resurrection)." How could exploring these questions encourage you in your times of doubting? *This is a good opportunity to go first!*
7. Jesus faced anguish but remained steadfast in prayer. How can you build spiritual habits during good times that will sustain you during struggles? *Answers will vary: establishing consistent practices like daily prayer, Scripture reading, and community involvement helps create a foundation of faith that can be relied upon during challenges.*
8. How comfortable are you with being fully transparent (honest) with God in your prayers? What steps could help you (or us) grow in this area? *Honest prayer involves sharing fears, doubts, and frustrations with God. Practicing this could include reflecting on the Psalms, writing out prayers, or simply speaking to God as one would to a trusted friend.*

9. What do you think God is teaching you through unanswered prayers or times of silence? How can you remain hopeful in these situations? *Unanswered prayers often build patience, trust, and dependence on God. Remembering past instances of God's faithfulness and leaning on His promises in Scripture can sustain hope.*
10. Reflect on a time when prayer helped you move from fear or frustration to peace. Briefly share this experience to encourage your small group in their faith journey?

**STEP OF OBEDIENCE || Leader Note** *This is an opportunity for people to put into practice what the Spirit is inviting them to do and live in obedience to God for the sake of love! You can encourage your group to be accountable to one another and use these to follow up with one another throughout the week.*

Prayer is a journey that starts with a need and ends in relationship with our Father. And the power of this relationship is built on honesty, presence, and trust! Based on the Holy Spirit's wisdom and guidance, what is a step of obedience that you can take this week? Here are a few additional questions to consider. **As you enter into DEEP prayer, are you willing to ...**

- be radically honest in prayer?
- be vulnerable with soul friends?
- trust God and surrender to His will?
- anchor yourself in God's tender love?
- stay in prayer, even when you don't feel like it?
- believe in God's power to accomplish His purpose?

**Remember ... draw near to God and He will draw near to you!**

*Give your group a few moments to reflect on their answers to the questions above. Then have your group answer the question aloud. Feel free to separate into smaller groups of 3-4 for this question.*

**PRAYER FOCUS || Leader Note** *We want to commit to praying for OTHERS as a unified church who is dependent upon God for everything. Be intentional about saving at least 5-10 minutes for prayer at the end of your gathering each week to pray together. You can pray for one another as well as the prompts below!*

### **Experiencing God's Power and Favor**

- Take a moment to be reminded that God's power and favor flow from His nearness to us, and we experience that nearness most deeply in prayer. When we draw close to Him, we are reminded of His strength, His grace, and His unshakable love for us.
- As we pray together, let's ask God to help us seek His presence with open hearts. Let's invite Him to draw near to us, so that we may experience His power at work in our lives and rest in the favor of His loving care. What a wonderful gift He gives to His children!