

SERMON SERIES GRAPHIC

{all together; one slide}

AGE OF ANXIETY

~29% of Americans → symptoms of anxiety disorder

For 18-29 year olds → almost 43%

- 2012 ...

Name "it" to **tame** it ... → _____

{come up one line at a time; same slide}

Have you **prayed** about it?

→ *Really* ... have you prayed about it?!?

Philippians 4:6-7

Don't **worry** about anything, but **in everything**, through **prayer** and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the **peace of God**, which surpasses all understanding, will **guard** your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

{one slide; come up one at a time}

What We've Been Told (Taught) and Believed:

- We are self-sufficient; masters of our destiny
- Identity is an achievement
- Moralistic Therapeutic Deism
 - Good people trying to live the good life
 - God's here to help if He can

{come up one at a time}

2 Truths About Prayer:

- Most people pray.
- Very few people *really* pray.

Shallow End of pool image

https://c1.staticflickr.com/9/8159/7653750446_87579559f9_b.jpg

{come up one at a time ... one slide}

20,000 Christians:

Following the culture of achievement → hurry & overload

- God is marginalized = relationship with Him suffers
 - More vulnerable to secular assumptions
 - More conformity to the world

I've prayed about "it" ... *What does that REALLY mean?*

{one slide ... #'s come up one at a time}

3 Forces Keeping Us in the Shallow End:

- 1) Prayer means **trust** ... submission.
- 2) Fear of **silence** ... [addicted to noise]
- 3) Fear of doing prayer **wrong**

Psalm 42:7

Deep calls to deep in the roar of Your waterfalls; all Your breakers and Your billows have swept over me.

Philippians 4:4-5a

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: **Rejoice!** ⁵ Let your **graciousness** (= *gentleness*) be known to everyone.

- 1) We pray because God is **"happifying"** in Himself.
(= God alone can make us happy & joyful.)

God has the character & capacity to DISPLACE and/or OVERWHELM every "it" = *care, anxiety, problem, fear* ... WITHOUT removing "it"!!

- 2) We pray in order to **become**.
Gracious, gentle, reasonable, patient ...

Versus demanding God DO something—

Versus our culture of REACTIVITY –

Philippians 4:5b-6

... The Lord is **near**. ⁶ Don't **worry** about anything, but in everything, through prayer **and** petition with thanksgiving, present your requests **to God**.

- 3) We pray because we are **overwhelmed** (or insufficient).

"Anxiety shrinks the power of the gospel because it presents a false gospel – one of self-reliance rather than reliance on God ..."

{all together; one slide}

We pray what is IN us; not what ought to be in us.

We pray as we **CAN**, not as we **CAN'T**.

{all together; one slide}

Peace is the RESULT, not the command.

→ The command: be present WITH God and present requests TO Him.

4) We pray because (sometimes with struggle) we trust **God's character**.

God is not grading essays.
He's interacting with His children!

Philippians 4:7

And the peace **of** God, which **surpasses** all understanding, will **guard** your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

{one slide; come up one at a time}

5) We pray to experience God's **presence**.

The "enemy" of presence = **HURRY**

Prayer is more than asking and more than mantras;
Prayer *really* is drawing **near to a Person**—God!

God wants us to experience **His love**.
Unhurried is a prerequisite.

{one slide; come up one at a time}

Prayer has a tone (a demeanor) → **Thanksgiving**.

Anxiety can cling to gifts we think God owes us.

{come up one at a time; one slide}

"Guard ..." → What does this mean?

- Battle
- In my understanding, I'll have reasons to worry & to fear ...
- My 'flesh' wants to be in control
 - Bear the burden & figure "it" out

{all one slide; all together}

Our anxieties & fears talk to us.

- Don't talk back to them.
 - Talk to God ... Be with God.

The peace of God goes beyond what my thinking & feeling can produce.
→ So I set my mind upon God through prayer and He does something!

Really ... have you *really* prayed about "it"?