

WHAT SHOULD I REMEMBER DURING TOUGH TIMES?

ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS

Read **Philippians 4:6–7**.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

In these two short verses, Paul provides the Christian a master class on prayer, especially in the midst of our most anxious times. These instructions from Paul don't serve as a medical diagnosis or provide a finger-snap fix to our problems, but they do give us something to do and to cling to in our most difficult moments.

What we do:

- Choose to pray, even in the midst of our anxiety.
- Ask God for what we need.
- Present a petition to him. Let this word reassure you that he can handle all of your real emotions and most desperate needs.
- Give thanks, even when it's hard to find something to be thankful for.

What he does:

- Provides a guardian—his peace. It shields our hearts and minds in ways we can't fully understand. This isn't a promise to remove our circumstances or even our anxiety, but it is a promise of his peace—and it comes in ways that draw us closer to our Savior. The peace of God is an assurance of his power and presence over every area of our lives. Rather than an expectation to always feel something, you can know something: that he is with you and he is in control.

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THINK ABOUT IT

1. On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being the least anxious and 10 being the most anxious, at what level are you operating during this season of your life?
2. Is there anyone in your life who you're fully honest with about your worries and stresses? Do you have a plan to regularly meet with that person/group?
3. If you could hand God one thing right now and be assured that his will would be done in that area of your life, what would you hand over? Is there anything that you would like to hand over to him fully, but feel afraid to lose control of?

FOR GROUP DISCUSSION (IF DESIRED)

1. Have you ever felt let down by God? What expectations did you have of him and how were they not met?
2. Has your perspective of God changed since that time? What do you think that John would say to someone struggling with this perspective about the truth of who God is?
3. What is one area of your life that induces anxiety for you? Have you asked anyone to pray with or for you in that area? Have you honestly prayed about that area yourself? What would change about your prayers if you approached them as a petition? What would change about your prayers if you gave thanks even in the midst of your pain?