

## **Dealing with satanic destructions and traps as a believer (Part 3 – Anxiety / Worry)**

The 5 major distractions and traps that satan uses to keep Christian believers from staying focus in their walk with God and calling includes

Fear

Unbelief

Anxiety / Worry

Satanic Lies

Despair

### **c) Anxiety / Worry and the practical ways to combat this spirit**

Philippians 4:6-7 says, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; <sup>7</sup> and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

The devil use worries to distract Christian believers. Worry has a cost. That cost can be money, time, attention, or contentment. Worry can cost your business, family or organization the chance of accomplishing something great. It is easy for us to immediately worry when things do not go as intended.

### **Worry plays itself out in several ways**

Some people worry that God could never forgive them, so they don't think they're worthy to be saved or to serve Christ. Parents fret over giving their kids everything they want or need. Forgetting the most important thing they can do for their children is to live before them a life so in love with God that it makes knowing and serving Christ irresistible to their kids and the rest of their family.

Wives worry their husbands don't love them enough. Husbands fear their wives don't respect them. So, they spend their energy holding one another emotionally hostage until the other gives them what they think they deserve. Only to one day find that their fear of mistreatment has driven a wedge between them and now they are creating a relationship characterized by manipulation and isolation.

Others fear financial ruin or want to appear successful, so they devote their lives to career and cash. Rather than blessing others with what they've been given, they hoard their wealth in fear of losing what they have earned.

Some worry they won't be able to retire so they spend their lives building their investments only to one day stand before God and realize that they invested in the wrong "retirement."

Do you identify with any of these worries? Worry is not something that only happens to the weak or carnal Christian. It's something that plagues all of us at different seasons of life.

### **Practical Steps to Combat Worry**

1. **Be a man or a woman of prayer:** Often while facing worrisome circumstances Christians will pray, "Why God? Why me? Why us? Why now?" But this is not the right way to pray. Rather than pleading with God to show you "why" ask Him to show you how to walk through the trial in a manner that pleases Him and brings glory to Christ.

Romans 8:34 promises that Jesus, "...is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us." Just as Jesus told Peter He was praying for him when Satan wanted to sift him as wheat, you can rest assured also in knowing that Jesus is praying for you too.

2. **Focus on God's Attributes:** Even David, who the Lord referred to as a man after God's own heart, wrestled with worry. When David felt surrounded by evil, and his heart failed him in fear, he didn't remain stuck

in anxiety. Rather, David looked to God for his help. He prayed, "Be pleased O Lord, make haste to help me! Let them be ashamed" (Psalm 40:12-17).

David also combatted worry by remembering that God was for him no matter what man may try to do. He said, "In God I have put my trust; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?" (Psalm 56:11).

We can learn a lot from David's response to worry and fear. We read that David wasn't a perfect man with a perfect family. He blew it big time later in life. And his kids made horrible choices that caused him grief. But David knew he could trust in God's character. He knew that he was the apple of the Lord's eye and was confident that God was aware of his troubles. And David knew that God was the only One he could turn to for help in his time of need.

The same God who watched over David watches over your life too. Hebrews 4:16 promises that we can "come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. The reason David knew he could trust God was because David had spent a lifetime learning to know and love Him. The same will be true for you if you spend your life discovering the attributes of God through the pages of Scripture.

Because the best way to be victorious over worry is to know God's character so well that when troubles arise, you're ready to trust Him even when life doesn't make sense.

**3. Learn from Others:** Proverbs 19:20-21 "Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end".

We need to remember that there are other people who have greater knowledge and revelations of God's Word than us. When I first came in America, and especially after listening to known Bible scholars, I

realized that I knew very little about God. I wanted to sit under their ministry and learn as much as I could from them. I did NOT want them to

know I was an evangelist preacher in Africa. I submitted myself totally under their ministry for years before God could use me the way He uses me today. They helped me to mature in the things of God especially regarding leadership. Through some of these ministers, God opened doors for me to go to a theologian university where I attained my doctorate degree. I am still learning from others through association.

#### **4. Be Aware of Satan's Schemes**

2 Corinthians 2:11: "...Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices". Christians who don't focus on God's Kingdom tend to pursue comfort, health, and prosperity. So, it's easy for them to believe false prophets who come prophesying to them that they will never face another day of healthy and wealthy challenges in their life. If you hold to some of these teachings or prophesies, you can expect a rude awakening when life doesn't go as prophesied. Satan has ruined countless lives by seducing them to believe God won't let anything bad happen to them—only to later deceive them into questioning God's goodness when trials occur.

To guard against the enemy, you must be aware of his schemes. Ephesians 4:14 warns, "That we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes."

When Satan tempted Eve to distrust God's motives, he got the foothold he needed to trick her into eating the forbidden fruit. And he wants to do the same to you so he can seduce you into rebelling against God (see 2 Corinthians 11:3).

#### **5. Focus on Eternity**

Colossians 3:2 reminds us to set our affections on things above rather than things of earth. When your thoughts are on Christ and His

Kingdom your eternal perspective will help you make sense of worrisome circumstances.

We've all heard stories of believers who glorified God amidst unthinkable trouble. We think I could never endure such trials. But you'd do well to realize that in every generation heroes of the faith have suffered major setbacks due to the gospel. God knows that the world cannot deny the power of Christ when they observe His servants focused on His Kingdom and His purpose—no matter what the cost.

When Peter and the other apostles had been beaten for sharing Christ we read, "So they departed...rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His Name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ" (Acts 5:41-42).

Before you dismiss the apostle's courage as something unattainable, realize the same Holy Spirit that empowered them empowers you too—if you've surrendered to Jesus as your Lord and Master. And as much as God used them to proclaim His gospel in their generation, He wants to draw others to Christ through you and your testimony for His Kingdom and His glory.

## **6. Trust Jesus Alone**

Hebrews 4:15 says, "For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin."

Remember when Lazarus died? Jesus didn't come when Mary and Martha sent for Him. Rather, He waited until after their brother passed away. "Then Jesus said to [the disciples] plainly, 'Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe.'" (John 11:14).

When Jesus arrived, both Mary and Martha mentioned that if He'd come when they sent for Him their brother wouldn't have died. What was Jesus' response? Did he chastise them for questioning His methods? No, instead John 11:35 says, "Jesus wept."

This is the character of Christ. Even though He asks you to trust Him when life doesn't make sense, Jesus feels your pain and grieves with you, even though He knows the good that will one day come from your trial. You can

cast your worries at Jesus' feet and know that He is praying for you; He is an ever-present help in your time of need. And you can rest in God's promise that, in His timing, as Romans 8:28 says, "all things work together for good to those who love Him and are called according to His purpose."

### **A Prayer Not To Worry**

Dear Father, I admit that I often forget that you are with me. I often forget what you're like. Would you please forgive me for that? I need to get to know you better. I need to get to know your Word and your promises better. Help me to put you first in every area of my life. Help me to live one day at a time. Help me to not worry about tomorrow but instead focus on what you're doing in my life right now. I want to trust in your promise to take care of every one of my needs — financial, relational, physical, social, spiritual, and emotional. Help me to trust you more and worry less. I pray in Jesus' Name. Amen.