

Leader Conversation Guide – Most Requested: Stress & Anxiety

Main Idea

Stress and anxiety are realities we all face. Jesus never promised us a trouble-free life, but He did promise that we could experience His peace in the middle of our trouble. When the pressure of life feels greater than our capacity to handle it, our natural response can be to worry, replay problems in our minds, and try to carry burdens we were never meant to carry alone.

Philippians 4 gives us a different way to respond. Instead of allowing worry to control us, we can bring everything to God in prayer, choose gratitude, focus our thoughts on what is good, and learn to be content in every circumstance. Peace doesn't necessarily come because our circumstances change—it comes as we learn to trust God in the middle of them.

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

PHILIPPIANS 4:7

Make it Practical:

Turn your worry into prayer.

- Instead of allowing worry to consume your thoughts, bring what you need to God.
- Philippians 4:6

Redirect your thoughts toward what is good.

- Choose to focus your mind on what is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy.
- Philippians 4:8; Isaiah 26:3

Learn contentment in every circumstance.

- Peace isn't dependent on having perfect circumstances; we can learn to trust God whether we have plenty or are in need.
- Philippians 4:11–12

Talk About It

What tends to create the most stress or anxiety in your life right now, and how do you typically respond when you feel overwhelmed?

Jesus asks in Matthew 6:27, "Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?" What is something you have spent time worrying about that was ultimately outside of your control?

What would it look like for God's peace to "guard" your heart and mind in a situation you are currently walking through?

If we prayed as much as we worry,
we would have much less to worry about.

Prayer

God, thank You that Your peace is greater than the pressure we face. Help us recognize when worry begins to take over and teach us to bring everything to You in prayer. Guard our hearts and minds, help us focus on what is good, and teach us to trust You in every circumstance. In Jesus' name, amen.

Next Steps

Identify your biggest worry and intentionally give it to God in prayer each day this week.

Practice gratitude by writing down three things you can thank God for each day.

Guard your thoughts by replacing one recurring anxious thought with a truth from Scripture.