

## **Introduction**

In the previous article, anxiety as a clinical disorder along with its types, causes, and its interrelationship with people's biological and psychological propensities have been discussed. This article addresses the harms caused by anxiety as well as the therapies offered by both the Holy Bible and secular psychology.

## **Characteristics of Anxiety**

1. Robber of Joy: Because of the concern over tomorrow, anxiety robs one of the ability to enjoy his present moment that might be potentially full of God's peace, goodness and blessings.
2. Waster of Time: Anxiety over tomorrow consumes valuable time which, if invested in positive proactive thinking, would be more profitable. There is a big difference between anxiety and caution. The first leads to preoccupying pain and preempted failure while the second leads to careful planning, wise choices and ultimate success.

3. Inhibitor of Sound Thinking: Preoccupation with tomorrow's unseen and consequently unrevealed, yet-to-happen incidents undermine the value of today's blessings trivializing their value and blurring our judgment.
  
4. Exterminator of Faith: Anxiety cancels Faith from the heart. By definition, Faith is "*the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*" (Hebrews 11:1).
  
5. Paradoxical in Nature: The anxiety that overwhelms and overtakes people while striving to attain a better, more comfortable life is the same anxiety that causes diseases and perhaps shorten life, and the riches people are anxious to collect get spent on doctors, drugs and hospitals.
  
6. Source of Sin: Lack of Faith in God is a sin. Our Lord never performed a miracle before checking on people's faith. "*But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a*

*rewarder of those who diligently seek Him"*  
(Hebrews 11:6).

## **Treatment of Anxiety**

Anxiety therapy has its roots established in the Holy Bible long before secular psychology knew it as a discipline and science. Our Lord Jesus Christ specified and summarized humanity's anxiety as basically being caused by concern over "what to eat, what to drink and what to wear". Mathew 6 offers the Lord's therapy to anxiety by first liberating the mind from anxiety and then our actions will be delivered and straightened. Later on, psychologists classified anxiety based on the dichotomy of cognitive and behavioral therapy.

1. Cognitive therapy: focuses on thoughts as the seat of either positive or negative attitude. So, Cognitive Therapy embarks upon changing the negative anxious thoughts. That is exactly what St. Paul has recommended, "*Be transformed by the renewing of your mind*" (Romans 12:2).
2. Behavioral Therapy: actually renewal of the mind leads to change of behavior. Acceptance & Commitment Therapy (ACT) offers a model designed to help patients differentiate between and separate themselves from their thoughts by

externalizing the anxious thoughts and then deal with them separately outside of their being. They suggest writing down those thoughts and storing them in a box to be accessed later on at a special assigned time for thinking them over and finding a solution to them. The ACT offered five steps to be followed sequentially in order to overcome anxiety.

The following table shows the strong correlation between the five steps suggested by our Lord in Mathew 6 and those of the ACT.

The ACT Model	Biblical Equivalence	Comment
Specify the anxiety-causing thoughts and write them down	<i>"Do not worry"</i> (Matthew 6:25)	God associated anxiety with lack of Faith
Do not let those thoughts control you	<i>"look at the birds of the air"</i> (Matthew 6:26)	The Didaskalia (the teachings of the Apostles) recommends

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removing guilt and sin by enlightenment and teaching

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Replace defeat with assurance that your thoughts are under your control

*"Are you not of more value than they (birds of the air)?"* (Matthew 6:26)

Nehemiah put that into practice, "So I answered them, and said to them, *"The God of heaven Himself will prosper us; therefore we His servants will arise and build, but you have no heritage or right or memorial in Jerusalem"* (Nehemiah 2:20)

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Live in your present moment

*"Sufficient for the day is its own trouble"* (Matthew 6:34)

You are the son's of God. He will not desert you

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Act  
towards  
solving  
those  
problems

*"But seek first  
the kingdom of  
God and His  
righteousness,  
and all these  
things shall be  
added to you"*  
(Matthew 6:33)

Seeking the  
kingdom of God  
should be a  
priority.  
Everything else  
will follow

## **Conclusion**

In order to live a happy, anxious-free life we need to live in our present moment, submitting tomorrow in the hands of God knowing that his faithfulness and goodness endure forever. We need to learn to prioritize, organize and plan ahead. We also need to live a sin-free life because it is sin that brings about confusion, and lack of clarity of thinking. The four friends were puzzled at the Lord's forgiveness of their friend's sins when he needed to get up and "carry His bed and walk". They did not know that the forgiveness of sin was the Lord's number one priority for which He came to earth and was about to bear much pain and sufferings before He could procure it. What would that man profit if he was granted physical healing only to die later on and go to hell with his sins un-forgiven.

Some questions to check your thoughts and behavior against:

- What are your priorities?
- Whom are you trying to please?
- Whom do you want to see glorified, you or God?

Some verses that serve as remedy against anxiety:

- *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 4:6-7).
- *"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"* (Matthew 11:28).
- *"Listen to Me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, who have been upheld by Me from birth, who have been carried from the womb: even to your old age, I am He, and even to gray hairs I will carry you! I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you. 'To whom will you liken Me, and make Me equal and compare Me, that we should be alike?'"* (Isaiah 46:3-5).

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