
Turn Your Worries into Prayers Philippians 4:6-7

Philippians 4:6-7 (NKJV)

⁶*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;*

⁷*and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (NKJV)*

Philippians 4:6–7 (NLT)

⁶*Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.*

⁷*Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 4:6–7 (The Message)

⁶*Don't fret or worry. Instead of worrying, pray. Let petitions and praises shape your worries into prayers, letting God know your concerns.*

⁷*Before you know it, a sense of God's wholeness, everything coming together for good, will come and settle you down. It's wonderful what happens when Christ displaces worry at the center of your life.*

You are to worry about NOTHING – No thing...No one

What Not to Do - WORRY

Jesus says do not worry about anything (Matthew 6:25)

What to Do – PRAY

IN everything we are to pray (v6)

“It didn’t say in every situation, post...I suggest you pray **before** you post.” – Pastor Billy Johnson

Supplication

An urgent request

Some things are urgent, and some things are important. They may not always be both.

Thanksgiving

Reflects that attitude in which you are going to God.

1 John 5:14-15

Be confident in your request.

“Some of us are dribbling the ball down the court but we are out of bounds.”

Our prayers **MUST** be in line with God’s will.

What Will Happen – PEACE (v7)

Peace – be at one again

“When you pray the first thing that’s going to show up in your life is peace.” – Pastor Billy Johnson

Peace will mount guard around your life to keep whatever is trying to keep you from believing that your prayers have been answered away from you.

How to Pray When You're Feeling Anxious or Depressed

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Five Helpful Words

Prayer is hard at the best of times, but it's hardest during anxious or depressed times. During such seasons, most of us find it hard to concentrate, we feel God is far away, and we despair of God hearing or helping us. All of this makes prayer so difficult and discouraging.

How can we make prayer easier and more encouraging to us in such dark and disturbing spells? Here are **FIVE WORDS** I give to people to help them with the **HOW OF PRAYER** when they are anxious or depressed:

- **SHORT:** Better one minute of real, concentrated prayer than fifteen minutes of distracted, wandering prayer.
- **FREQUENT:** Try to pray these short prayers throughout the day to keep you in contact with God. Perhaps set an hourly timer on your phone.
- **SIMPLE:** Pray like a hurting child to a loving father. You don't need complex theological compositions.
- **SCRIPTURAL:** When you can't find any words of your own, use the words God has provided in the Psalms, in the Lord's Prayer, or in Paul's prayers.
- **TOGETHER:** Ask someone to pray with you when you can't pray for yourself. Perhaps they can pray over the phone with you and you can piggy-back to the throne of grace on their words.

If these five words help us with the *how* of prayer, let me give you **FIVE PHRASES** to guide you in the **WHAT OF PRAYER**.

YOU ARE

You are sovereign, Lord. You are good, wise, strong, gracious, and faithful. You are my rock, my shepherd, my peace.

Depression and anxiety turn us in upon ourselves so that we get self-centered and sometimes self-obsessed. We see all our lacks and hurts. Prayer helps us to put God at the center of our lives instead, which not only gives us something better to look at than ourselves but also helps us to see everything else better, including ourselves. That's why we want to start prayer with worship, reminding ourselves of who God is and what God has done. We praise him using descriptions of his attributes and biblical images of his character. This changes what we see and how we see, giving us a God-centered view of our world and ourselves. That in itself is an encouraging and calming perspective.

I AM

I am the opposite of who you are, Lord. I am sad, anxious, and weak. I feel hopeless, helpless, and lonely. At times I don't want to live. I know this is wrong, and I confess this to you. I am not who I want to be. I am not where I want to be.

Having begun with a God-centered worldview, we can then admit who and what we are and are not. Confession is simply telling God honestly who we are and where we're at. God already knows, of course, without our telling him, but he still asks us to pour out our hearts to him. It honors God as the sympathizer with weakness and the forgiver of sins. It is therapeutic for us to hear ourselves describe ourselves in the presence of the God who understands our frailties and who forgives our transgressions. Depression and anxiety bring a ton of guilt upon us (both false and real guilt), an oppressive load that crushes our spirits and closes our lips. Being honest and transparent about it before God begins to shift that load off our shoulders and on to Christ's.

I TRUST

Faithful God, although I don't feel much faith or confidence in you, I will not be guided by my feelings. I trust you, Lord. I trust your word, your character, your faithfulness. I believe all that the Bible says about you, and I will recall your past faithfulness. I trust you, therefore, that you have not changed, though I have; that you are still here, though I don't sense you; that you are my God, though I don't feel like I'm your child. I trust your plan for me, and I rest in you as you carry me through these dark and disturbing days.

As songs like Psalm 42, 43, 37, and 73 demonstrate, expressions of trust build trust. The more we articulate our confidence in God, the stronger that confidence grows. And when we can't say it with 100% certainty, we can always say, "I believe, help my unbelief" ([Mark 9:24](#)). Perhaps you can recall past times of God's faithfulness to make your faith fuller. God is honored and pleased with faith, especially when we are walking in darkness and have no light ([Isa. 50:10](#)). Some of my spiritual heroes are Christians who have battled serious mental illness and have held on to God and his word, even with the fingernail of their little finger. That's far more difficult than trusting God when everything is going well for us, both internally and externally. It's also more God-glorifying.

God can supply all our needs in the blink of an eye without our asking.

I NEED

All-sufficient Provider, I am desperately needy. I need you above all. But I also need peace, joy, hope, patience, sanity, and so much more. I beg you to help me even just to get through this day. Will you help my family and friends as they struggle to understand me? Teach them how to love me. But help me also to love them, especially when I feel so flat. Help me to do my daily duties even when I find no joy in them. I pray for the needs of other depressed and anxious people, too.

God can supply all our needs in the blink of an eye without our asking ([Matt. 6:8](#)). However, he asks us to ask and to look to him for everything we need. We can bring to him our physical needs, emotional needs, mental needs, spiritual needs, social needs, and vocational needs. Nothing is too big, and nothing is too small.

I THANK

Giver of every good and perfect gift, I thank you for all you have done, are doing, and will do. I thank you for all you have given, are giving, and will give. I thank you that I am not even worse than I am. I thank you for moments of joy and peace. I thank you for pastors, for brothers and sisters in Christ, for counselors, for doctors, for psychologists, for psychiatrists, and for medications.

Depression and anxiety focus our attention on what we lack, so it's important to take time to remember all God has given to us and has done for us, both in redemptive history and in our own personal history. Ask him to help you see what you often are blind to or just take for granted. Even just walk around your kitchen or yard and thank God for all you see and have there. Thanksgiving is life-giving.

Prayer is rarely easy. But I hope these five words and five phrases make it easier in times of depression and anxiety. Let me close with a prayer for you:

Lord, you are full of joy and peace. Many of my readers are not. They are sad and panicky. Help them to see who you are and to worship and praise you. Lead them to confess their sins and their faith. As you know their needs and you can easily supply them, give them supplications that honor your willingness and ability to give. Give them what they lack and give them thanksgiving as they see you more clearly in their lives. Above all, remind your people of Jesus Christ who suffered more and deeper for them, and fill them with gratitude for his grace in coming, your love in sending him, and the Holy Spirit's fellowship that applies all this to the soul. AMEN.

David Murray is the author of [Why Am I Feeling Like This?: A Teen's Guide to Freedom from Anxiety and Depression](#).