



 AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY

PRAYING THROUGH ANXIETY

A 7 Day Reading Plan

overcome anxiety

connect with God



ABOUT THIS PLAN

Anxiety can creep into our lives at any moment. But that doesn't mean it has to stay! No matter what you are facing today, you can overcome anxiety and its destructive effects as you connect with God in prayer through his powerful promises in Scripture. Journey with us through the next few days as we take steps to end anxiety's hold on our lives and draw peace from God's Word.



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DAY 1

REAL BATTLE. REAL RESCUE!

Scripture Verses

“Peace is what I leave with you; it is my own peace that I give you. I do not give it as the world does. Do not be worried and upset; do not be afraid.

John 14:27 GNT

I call to the Lord for help; I plead with him.
I bring him all my complaints; I tell him all my troubles.

Psalms 142:1-2 GNT



DAY 1

REAL BATTLE. REAL RESCUE!

Dear friend,

The battle you are facing is real. The wrestlings of your heart, the fear that paralyzes you, the lies that imprison you—even the unrelenting waves of shame that threaten to drown you as you try to hide it all so no one sees your brokenness.

But there is hope because Jesus's rescue is real too.

Jesus loves you. He does not intend for you to be crushed by anxiety. He overcame death itself! You can live with the assurance that he can overcome anything, including anxiety.

Life is still hard. And things happen. Difficult things. Things that cause us to worry and to fear. But Jesus doesn't abandon us in those hard moments. Jesus isn't angry at you for struggling. He won't run out on you because you haven't changed already.

Instead, with kindness and compassion Jesus says, "I give you peace, the kind of peace only I can give. It isn't like the peace this world can give. So don't be worried or afraid" (John 14:27 CEV).

Jesus wants to give you peace. He wants to heal you and set you free from the stronghold of anxiety.



DAY 1

REAL BATTLE. REAL RESCUE!

It may not happen overnight. And there's no guarantee it will be easy. You will want support from your local church. You may also need help from a licensed counselor or medical professionals. But you can have victory over anxiety.

In this reading plan, we hope to provide you with biblical tools to help you deal with anxiety. You will learn what anxiety is, what Scripture says about worry and anxiety, and what God can do in your struggle. You will also PRAY.

Prayer changes things. We pray because we know God can change our circumstances—and he can change us. As you pray through your anxiety, know that God is listening, and responding to your cries for help.

So, today, if you're struggling with anxiety, don't give up. You are a work in progress. But in Jesus you are also an overcomer.

Today's Prayer:

Father, I confess I want to be free from anxiety. Make me willing to go on this journey and to take the steps necessary to face anxiety head on. I need faith to believe that I can truly be healed. I pray in Jesus's name. Amen.



DAY 2

WHAT IS ANXIETY?

Scripture Verse | Psalm 62:5-8 GNT

5 I depend on God alone;

I put my hope in him.

6 He alone protects and saves me;

he is my defender,

and I shall never be defeated.

7 My salvation and honor depend on God;

he is my strong protector;

he is my shelter.

8 Trust in God at all times, my people.

Tell him all your troubles,

for he is our refuge.



DAY 2

WHAT IS ANXIETY?

Anxiety can rush at us when we are not in control of our circumstances or our future.

It could be what you feel before a school test, an office presentation, a first date, a wedding. Or while awaiting the results of a medical test. Anxiety wants to be your companion when you're facing a financial crisis, or a relationship becomes irreparably damaged.

Feeling anxious is a normal response to sudden unexpected events, looming future uncertainties, or even past traumas. But anxiety often threatens to be more than just a fleeting emotion. When you're not in control, anxiety wants to control you and take up residence in your heart and mind.

Once it settles in, anxiety can cause physical sicknesses, sleepless nights, and deep sadness. It can affect your relationships with others and perpetuate destructive cycles of unhealthy choices. People who struggle with anxiety find that it leaves no room for feelings of joy and peace.

But God doesn't want you to live with anxiety. God promises to give you inward peace in exchange for your concerns (Psalm 62:5 CEV). He wants to be your refuge, the one you run to for shelter and protection from distress. What a tradeoff!

REAL BATTLE. REAL RESCUE!

If you feel trapped in a constant swirl of anxious thoughts, God wants to calm the storm within you. And he has the power to do it! He knows the future, and today—now! —he stands ready to step into your circumstances and be your place of safety.

Here are some action steps to help you identify anxiety in your life and trade it for God's peace.

- Read Psalm 62:5-8. Can you imagine what it would be like to depend on God alone? How would putting your hope in a powerful and loving God affect you in any anxiety-causing event you are currently facing?
- The psalmist urges God's people to tell God all their troubles. Have you done that? What are you promised in return for putting your trust in God?
- What will it look like for you to take a step toward depending on God today?

Today's Prayer:

Father, thank you for being a safe place for me to bring all my concerns. I am anxious again as I face _____. Help me depend on you, God, to be my strong protector. I pray for your peace as I face circumstances I can't control. Today, I place my hope in you and your infinite wisdom and power. In Jesus's name. Amen.



DAY 3

WHEN WORRY GETS OUT OF CONTROL

Scripture Verse | Matthew 6:25-34 GNT

25 “This is why I tell you: do not be worried about the food and drink you need in order to stay alive, or about clothes for your body. After all, isn’t life worth more than food? And isn’t the body worth more than clothes? 26 Look at the birds: they do not plant seeds, gather a harvest and put it in barns; yet your Father in heaven takes care of them! Aren’t you worth much more than birds? 27 Can any of you live a bit longer by worrying about it?

28 “And why worry about clothes? Look how the wild flowers grow: they do not work or make clothes for themselves. 29 But I tell you that not even King Solomon with all his wealth had clothes as beautiful as one of these flowers. 30 It is God who clothes the wild grass—grass that is here today and gone tomorrow, burned up in the oven. Won’t he be all the more sure to clothe you? What little faith you have!



DAY 3

WHEN WORRY GETS OUT OF CONTROL

Scripture Verse (continued) | Matthew 6:25-34 GNT

31 “So do not start worrying: ‘Where will my food come from? or my drink? or my clothes?’ 32 (These are the things the pagans are always concerned about.) Your Father in heaven knows that you need all these things. 33 Instead, be concerned above everything else with the Kingdom of God and with what he requires of you, and he will provide you with all these other things. 34 So do not worry about tomorrow; it will have enough worries of its own. There is no need to add to the troubles each day brings.

WHEN WORRY GETS OUT OF CONTROL

The Bible often mentions worrying. Probably because we invest so much time doing it. A 2022 American Psychiatric Association study showed overall anxiety levels increasing steadily every year, with two in five people ranking their mental health as poor.

Is your worry on the rise, too?

Life's pressures pull us toward worry for the future whenever we are not guarding our hearts. Worry is easily triggered. If not interrupted through ongoing engagement with God's Word and prayer, worry can spiral down to debilitating anxiety. The more we worry, the more it makes us worry!

But Jesus has some strong and hopeful thoughts about worry for us today. He makes it clear we are not to worry. He encourages us to turn all our worries over to him (1 Peter 5:7). And in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus's longest and most detailed teaching in the Gospels, he tells us so five times.

The call to "fear not" is found in the Bible 365 times. Knowing our tendency to worry, perhaps God desires to remind you that every day of the year you can trust him to handle your fears. What triggers you to begin worrying? Jesus says we should be most concerned about what God wants of us. He promises that God will take care of the rest (Matthew 6:33).

How is his approach different from the way you live your life now? Think back.

WHEN WORRY GETS OUT OF CONTROL

What were you worried about today? What about last week, last month, even last year? Has anything changed? What are you learning from God's Word that will help you not to worry even if things don't change right away?

Here are some action steps to keep your focus on God throughout today and every day of the year:

- Read Matthew 6:25-34. How does this passage speak to you about your personal worries? What worries demand your attention? Give each of them to God.
- If Jesus stood before you now and told you He has the provision for your need, how would you feel? Be still before the Lord in prayer as you reflect on today's passage.
- Wait in silence for a few moments in God's presence. Receive the gift of His peace in exchange for your fear. How would you feel if you carried this peace with you throughout the rest of the day?

Today's Prayer:

Lord, if worrying were an Olympic event, I would be a medal winner! Teach me not to worry or lose sight of the bigger picture of Your love and purpose for my life. Fear has left me feeling trapped, but today, I want to exchange my worries for Your peace. Reassure my heart today of Your everlasting love and provision for my every need. In Jesus's name. Amen.



DAY 4

ANXIETY AND LONELINESS

Scripture Verse | Psalm 94:18-19 GNT

18 I said, “I am falling”;
but your constant love, O Lord, held me up.
19 Whenever I am anxious and worried,
you comfort me and make me glad.

ANXIETY AND LONELINESS

One destructive outcome of anxiety is to convince you not only that you are stuck in a hopeless situation but that you are alone in your fear. It's not true! We saw yesterday how anxiety is all too common. Yet we are still tempted to isolate ourselves when anxiety strikes. We entertain thoughts like: I don't want to burden anyone with my problems. What would others think of me if I tell them my struggles?

But loneliness only makes difficult circumstances worse. You are not meant to deal with life's troubles alone.

Jesus provides a beautiful model for confronting fear and anxiety in Mark 14:32-42 as he reaches out to God—and others—in the most difficult time in his life. On the eve of his crucifixion, as Jesus is praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, he becomes greatly distressed and troubled. And He turns to his friends. He tells Peter, James, and John of his sorrow and asks them to stay with him. He also turns to God in prayer.

Jesus shows that reaching out to others in anxiety-inducing moments is not only okay but necessary. If the Son of God reached out for support in His hour of greatest need, how much more do we need to connect with God and others in our anxiety?

When you're feeling anxious, reaching out to a friend can help. A kind voice or a reassuring text can help defuse the situation. Another person's presence—even through technology—can make a difference.

DAY 4

ANXIETY AND LONELINESS

Even when we have no friend to turn to, the Bible assures us that God is always present. He waits patiently for us to look to him for help: “God is our shelter and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble” (Psalm 46:1 GNT).

Here are some action steps to help you think about inviting others to help you in anxious moments.

- Read Psalm 94:18–19. What can God do when you’re anxious?
- How does it help to have someone nearby? How have you sensed God’s love in times of anxiety? Do you have someone you normally reach out to when you are anxious and alone?
- How will you approach God with your anxiety? What do you expect?

Today’s Prayer:

Lord, I’m anxious and alone. I need Your comfort. As I express my sorrows to you, draw near to me. Please reassure me that You will never abandon me when I need You most. And God, help me find a supportive community. Teach me to be open and vulnerable so that I can receive the help I need. In Jesus’s name. Amen.





DAY 5

STRIKING DOWN ANXIETY'S LIES

Scripture Verses

18 There is no fear in love; perfect love drives out all fear. So then, love has not been made perfect in anyone who is afraid, because fear has to do with punishment.

1 John 4:18 GNT

6 Be determined and confident. Do not be afraid of them. Your God, the Lord himself, will be with you. He will not fail you or abandon you.”

Deuteronomy 31:6 GNT

28 We know that in all things God works for good with those who love him, those whom he has called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:28 GNT



DAY 5

STRIKING DOWN ANXIETY'S LIES

Scripture Verses (continued)

The Lord Our Protector

121 I look to the mountains;

where will my help come from?

2 My help will come from the Lord,

who made heaven and earth.

3 He will not let you fall;

your protector is always awake.

4 The protector of Israel

never dozes or sleeps.

5 The Lord will guard you;

he is by your side to protect you.

6 The sun will not hurt you during the day,

nor the moon during the night.

7 The Lord will protect you from all danger;

he will keep you safe.

8 He will protect you as you come and go

now and forever.

Psalm 121

STRIKING DOWN ANXIETY'S LIES

Anxiety lies to us. It makes us feel weird in our bodies, fills us with fear and shame, and isolates us. Like a schoolyard bully, it torments us daily by telling us things like, God doesn't care about you, disaster is inevitable, you can't escape it, you can't trust anyone.

Anxiety isn't rooted in truth. An anxious mind is a mind that has fallen for lies about yourself, your circumstances, your future, and about God. Those lies disguise themselves in our imaginations and can feel like realistic scenarios.

But we can combat anxiety's lies with the help of the Holy Spirit and with the power of Scripture.

Let the truths from God's Word realign your thoughts so you can experience greater freedom and joy. Here are four truths you can embrace today:

- God loves me and he cares. Do you believe that God loves you unconditionally? He does! God loves you so much. And He cares about what you're going through. He wants to be your place of safety and refuge. As you come to understand and embrace God's love for you, fear will stop tormenting you because there is no fear in love; perfect love drives out all fear (1 John 4:18).

ANXIETY AND LONELINESS

- God is in control. Anxiety comes when we can't control our circumstances and forget to trust God. But God is sovereign, and He rules with wisdom. Despite appearances, we can trust that God is in control and that He never stops paying attention (Psalm 121:4).
- God will never abandon me. Anxiety wants us to believe we are very much alone in our circumstances. But God promises He will not leave us nor abandon us (Deuteronomy 31:6). In every season, whatever situation we face, He is with us every step of the way. Knowing that God is always with you and that you don't have to face anything alone will bring you peace.
- God has my good in mind. When facing difficult circumstances, we may be tempted to believe that God isn't on our side. If God is for me, how can He allow bad things to happen to me? But Scripture reminds us that God is always at work for the good of everyone one who loves him (Romans 8:28). God is good and it is His character to be good to you. Even when circumstances don't seem to change, God is still working in you to produce faith, hope, and trust through every storm of life.

Today's Prayer:

Lord, I know you love me and care for me and so today I begin to wean myself from worry. My trust in you is growing. Even when things are uncertain, I will place my hope in You and Your good purposes for my life. Help me break false patterns of thinking and lead me in Your path of truth. In Jesus's name. Amen.



DAY 6

BREAKING THE ANXIETY CYCLE

Scripture Verses

23 Examine me, O God, and know my mind;
test me, and discover my thoughts.

24 Find out if there is any evil in me
and guide me in the everlasting way.

Psalm 139:23-24 GNT

7 For the Spirit that God has given us does not make us timid;
instead, his Spirit fills us with power, love, and self-control.

2 Timothy 1:7 GNT

8 In conclusion, my friends, fill your minds with those things that
are good and that deserve praise: things that are true, noble, right,
pure, lovely, and honorable.

Philippians 4:8 GNT



DAY 6

BREAKING THE ANXIETY CYCLE

How are you dealing with your anxiety? Are you depending on someone or something to get you through? Do you ignore your anxious thoughts and hope they'll just go away?

Anxiety won't go away on its own and we can't just WILL it away. Anxiety brings chaos to body, mind, and spirit. It wears you out. When you wake up tired, each new day's worries lead to more anxiety. You need to get off the "hamster wheel"!

Dealing with anxiety takes work. It takes dealing with lies you have believed, hurts you have held on to, and wrong patterns of thinking you have embraced.

Dealing with anxiety also requires God's intervention and help. Jesus encourages us to yoke ourselves to Him, so that we can find rest from carrying heavy burdens (Matthew 11:28-30). He doesn't want you to face life's trials and worries alone. He offers to walk alongside you as your comfort, strength, and hope.

Today, if you're struggling with anxiety, be willing to accept from Jesus the courage to face your worries head on. Here are some steps to take to break anxiety's grip and begin your journey towards freedom:



DAY 6

BREAKING THE ANXIETY CYCLE

- Uncover the sources of your anxiety (Psalm 139:23-24). Set time aside to pray. Instead of asking God to remove your anxiety, ask Him to show you what is causing it. Do you struggle to trust God? Do you believe He loves you enough to help you? Do you believe God is mighty enough to deal with your challenging situations? Let God reveal the areas in your thinking and behavior that need to be aligned with His truth.
- Stop fearing fear (2 Timothy 1:7). Fear feeds on itself. The more we think about it, the bigger fear becomes in our minds. You combat fear with faith. Instead of focusing on what you are afraid of, focus on God and His power to help you overcome the anxieties that consume you.
- Ask God to renew your mind (Philippians 4:8). Ask God to replace unhealthy patterns of thinking with his truths. On a piece of paper, write down and meditate on these five Scriptures: Philippians 4:6-8, Colossians 3:2, Isaiah 41:10, Psalm 4:8, and Joshua 1:9. Let God's Word soak in and strengthen you.
- Offer up your prayers and requests to God (1 Peter 5:7). Share your concerns and fears with God. God hears, and He wants to help. His Spirit will empower you to overcome your fears as soon as you cast all your cares on Him.



DAY 6

BREAKING THE ANXIETY CYCLE

Today's Prayer:

Lord, empower me to look beyond my circumstances. Overcome my anxiety. Help me exchange my attempts at control, escape, and worry for your perfect peace. I choose to trust You and Your wisdom in every circumstance. I choose to cast all my cares on You because I know You care for me. Today, I surrender—again! —the things that have kept me imprisoned inside my heart. Walk with me, Lord, into freedom and victory over anxiety. In Jesus's name. Amen.



DAY 7

CHOOSE YOUR FOCUS, AND RENEW YOUR MIND

Scripture Verses

6 Don't worry about anything, but in all your prayers ask God for what you need, always asking him with a thankful heart. 7 And God's peace, which is far beyond human understanding, will keep your hearts and minds safe in union with Christ Jesus.

8 In conclusion, my friends, fill your minds with those things that are good and that deserve praise: things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and honorable.

Philippians 4:6-8 GNT

Keep your minds fixed on things there, not on things here on earth.

2 Colossians 3:2 GNT



DAY 7

CHOOSE YOUR FOCUS, AND RENEW YOUR MIND

Scripture Verses (continued)

10 Do not be afraid—I am with you!

I am your God—let nothing terrify you!

I will make you strong and help you;

I will protect you and save you.

Philippians 4:6-8 GNT

8 When I lie down, I go to sleep in peace;

you alone, O Lord, keep me perfectly safe.

Psalms 4:8 GNT

9 Remember that I have commanded you to be determined and confident! Do not be afraid or discouraged, for I, the Lord your God, am with you wherever you go.”

Joshua 1:9 GNT

CHOOSE YOUR FOCUS, AND RENEW YOUR MIND

Here for your convenience are the five Scriptures we mentioned yesterday. Read them again today. Did you write them down yet? Memorize them! Add in any other Scriptures from this plan that stood out to you.

Whenever you're tempted to start worrying, pray these verses back to God.

Remember: God cares for you, so turn all your worries over to him. (1 Peter 5:7 CEV)

Remember: Christ gives me the strength to face anything. (Philippians 4:13 CEV)

Today's Prayer:

Lord, thank you for giving me strength to face all conditions—including anxiety. I pray that whenever I feel anxiety creeping in, I will find strength in the truths in Your Word. May Your words fill me with hope in anxious moments. May they shine light in the darkness of fear and sorrow. And may their truths chase away every lie, every thought that isn't from You. In Jesus's name I pray. Amen.



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