

- Anxiety.
 - Buried alive in a box.
 - A skit starring Bob Newhart as a therapist.
 - Everyone understands when it comes to anxiety, you cannot just “stop it.”
 - God has given us the answer
 - Philippians 4:6–7: “do not be anxious about anything, 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 your minds in Christ Jesus.”
- Prayer.
 - Prayer.
 - A Petition addressed to God (BDAG).
 - Luke 1:8–10: “Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense.”
 - The “hour of incense” was the hour of prayer.
 - Psalms 141:1–2: “O Lord, I call upon you; hasten to me! Give ear to my voice when I call to you! Let my prayer be counted as incense before you, and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice!”
 - We usually associate incense with other religions.
 - The smell of incense was typical in my house.
 - My mother and father always burned incense, especially during their meditations.
 - They bought incense at the temple (either Buddhist, Hindu, or Shinto), where they would go to listen to the Swami and meditate.
 - I love the smell of incense; from a young age, I have connected it to foreign religions.
 - But, burning incense originated in Judaism, in the temple.
 - Exodus 30:1: “You shall make an altar on which to burn incense; you shall make it of acacia wood.”
 - The illustration of burning incense finds its way into Christianity as well.
 - Revelation 5:8: “And when he had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each holding a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.”
 - Revelation 8:3: “And another angel came and stood at the altar with a golden censer, and he was given much incense to offer with the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar before the throne,”
 - We are encouraged to petition the Father at all times.
 - As Paul describes prayer as part of God’s armor.
 - Ephesians 6:17–18: “and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,”

- 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18: “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”
- It is through prayer to the Father that we find an answer to our anxiousness. Simply talking to God and asking Him to intercede (believing that He will) can put a stop to our anxiety.
- Supplication.
 - An urgent request to meet a need addressed directly to God. (BDAG)
 - Luke 18:1–7: “And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. He said, “In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, ‘Give me justice against my adversary.’ For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, ‘Though I neither fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.’” And the Lord said, “Hear what the unrighteous judge says. And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them?”
 - I’m afraid that we have a habit of losing heart.
 - God doesn’t answer us in the allotted time we have allowed Him, so we lose heart.
 - God doesn’t answer us as we want Him to, so we lose heart.
 - This is an “us” problem, not a “God” one.
 - God wants us to pour our hearts out to Him, to continually petition Him to intervene in our lives.
 - God’s answer is always the right answer at the right time.
 - James 1:17: “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.”
 - Matthew 7:7–11: “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!”
- Thanksgiving.
 - Being grateful with the implication of the appropriate attitude, gratitude. (BDAG)
 - Thanksgiving and prayer go hand in hand.
 - Ephesians 5:20: “giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,”
 - Colossians 4:2: “Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.”
 - 1 Timothy 2:1: “First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people,”
 - And we already read 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18: “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

- Luke tells us about a time when Jesus met ten lepers.
 - Luke 17:11–19: “On the way to Jerusalem he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices, saying, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.” When he saw them he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” And as they went they were cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus’ feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus answered, “Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” And he said to him, “Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well.”
 - The last verse implies that the other nine were no longer well because they did not return to praise (give thanks to) God.
- Peace.
 - Philippians 4:7: “And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”
 - Peace.
 - A state of agreement, harmony. (BDAG)
 - We agree with God about His Son’s shed blood that cleanses our sins.
 - Through prayer, petition, and thanksgiving, we achieve harmony with God.
 - Harmony is the opposite of anxiety.
 - This harmony (or peace) protects, watches over, and keeps (guards) us. (BDAG)
 - I spent most of my military career guarding resources and people.
 - As a young airman, I would drive circles around the aircraft parked on the ramp.
 - I would protect, keep safe, and watch over the people and resources, giving them peace of mind.
 - My guarding protected people and resources.
 - God’s guarding protects hearts and minds.
 - God’s peace (harmony) relieves us of our anxiousness through prayer and thankfulness.
- Do not be anxious.
 - Prayer (the incense of the saints) all the time.
 - God’s will for us is to be thankful in all circumstances.
 - God’s peace (harmony) will relieve our anxiousness.