



Pastor Scott, Laura
And Peter

"Growing Forward"

Grow. Engage. Transform

January/February
2017



With the new year approaching, we make goals, resolutions, and step into the new year with high hopes. But in so many cases going into a new year, brings fear. Not knowing what 2017 may bring in our lives and in the world can be disabling. Jon Bloom wrote this article awhile back and I thought it was worth sharing as we embrace 2017 without fear.

Antidote to Anxiety

But God. God the Son stepped into this dangerous, demonic world, where even man's greatest efforts to ensure safety are ultimately and decidedly defeated by death. And when he did, he made the most audacious claim ever uttered by human lips: for every person who believes in him, everything is going to be ultimately, gloriously, eternally, inexpressibly, wonderfully okay ([John 3:16](#); [11:25-26](#)). Then to demonstrate the reality of his claim, and therefore its trustworthiness, he decidedly defeated death and announced "all authority in heaven and on earth" had been given to him ([Matthew 28:18](#)).

With this authority, he says to everyone who believes in him, "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life" ([Luke 12:22](#)). Jesus — and all the promises that are now Yes in him ([2 Corinthians 1:20](#)) — is the antidote to anxiety. What he accomplishes for us and promises to us is the ultimate triumph over all that terrifies us. He does not promise us escape from misery in this world. He promises that he will redeem every misery ([Romans 8:28](#)), and that in him we will overcome the worst the world can do to us ([John 16:33](#); [Romans 8:35-39](#)).

Impossible Command?

In Christ, everything is going to be ultimately, gloriously, eternally, inexpressibly, wonderfully okay. Therefore, Jesus says to you and me, right now, right where we're at, "Do not be anxious." He says this knowing our past, our temperament, the seriousness of our current crises, and how intense we fear the possible dread may become reality.

"Do not be anxious" can seem like an impossible command. But this should not surprise us. Jesus commands us to believe that "everyone who lives and believes in [him] shall never die" ([John 11:26](#)). Jesus commands us to love one another just like he has loved us ([John 15:12](#)). Jesus commands us to renounce all we have ([Luke 14:33](#)), which can mean selling our abundant possessions and giving them to the poor because we are more confident in the treasures we have in heaven ([Mark 10:21](#)).

Of course, the command to not be anxious is humanly impossible. But as with nearly every other command for the Christian, "With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God" ([Mark 10:27](#)).

The only way we can fulfill this command is "by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving," making our requests known to God, trusting a specific promise. Then his peace, surpassing all our understanding, will guard our hearts and minds in Christ ([Philippians 4:6-7](#)). We cast our anxieties on God ([1 Peter 5:7](#)), and cease to be anxious in the strength he supplies ([1 Peter 4:11](#)).

Don't Talk to Your Anxieties

Your anxieties talk to you. Don't talk back to them. Talk to God.

This is typically hard because anxieties often disguise themselves in our imaginations. They feel like such realistic scenarios and therefore emotionally compelling to dwell upon. Anxieties can even impersonate, taking the form of people — often people we know. These are some of the most insidious to fight.

In real life, these people might be family members or friends or fellow church members or co-workers or acquaintances or people we only know by reputation. They might be people with whom we disagree on an issue, or with whom we have a relational strain, or with whom we are in serious conflict. They might be people we fear misunderstand us, or fear disappointing, or fear exposing our weakness or ignorance in front of, or fear confronting with a hard truth, or whose sin we fear might be a symptom of deep spiritual issues, or whose influence we fear might damage our loved one or our church.

Whoever they really are, something about them provokes anxiety in us. And our anxiety then can come to us in our imagination in the form of that person, and start talking to us. It says provocative things to us, and we reply. Before we know it, we have engaged in a lengthy argument in our heads that arouses all kinds of sinful emotions and leads us to think and feel uncharitably toward the real person. But we haven't talked to them at all. We've talked to our anxiety — we've talked to ourselves and sinned not only in indulging faithless anxiety, but in failing to love that person.

God never instructs us in Scripture to fight anxiety by arguing with it. It never works. Scripture only instructs us to cast our anxieties on God in prayer and trust him to meet our needs, whatever they are ([1 Peter 5:7](#); [Philippians 4:6–7, 19](#)).

Not All Anxiety Is Sin

There is righteous anxiety, like Jesus's in Gethsemane ([Matthew 26:38–39](#)), Paul's for the churches ([2 Corinthians 11:28](#)), and parents' godly concerns over the spiritually dangerous influences their children will face in the world. Christians in America aren't necessarily sinning if they feel a form of "anxiety" over the progression of embraced and institutionalized evil in the nation. The Bible gives us warrant to feel anxious concern, in a sense, over the real or potential destructive effects of evil on precious souls.

What keeps these anxieties from turning sinful is when we, like Jesus and Paul, translate our fear-fueled concerns into prayer requests, weaving them with thanksgiving for graces we've received from God and all the promises he's made to us ([2 Peter 1:4](#)), and give them over to God. When this occurs, a spiritually beautiful exchange takes place: God receives glory as the all-sufficient, abundantly generous object of our faith ([2 Corinthians 9:8](#)), and we receive the joys of experiencing the mind and heart guarding peace that surpasses our understanding before we receive our request ([Philippians 4:6–7](#)), as well as the eventual provision we need.

Prayer is the key to escaping the snare of sinful anxiety. Don't listen to your anxieties, and don't talk back to them. Especially beware of anxieties in disguise. Direct your talk to God and cast all your "what if" concerns on him because only he can give you the assurance that everything will ultimately be okay.

Christ's Birthday Offering!

Thank you church for giving to the Christ's Birthday Offering! The congregational offering was \$583.80, the proceeds from the mailbox was \$51.05. Through your support of the CWC through many projects, the CWC group will include \$500.00 in this offering for a total from the church of \$1,134.85! Thank you!

The Elder Board

Welcome to 2017!

The Elder Board asks for your prayers as we enter this New Year together. Let's pray as we all seek the Lord in the ministries and outreach of the church.

As an outcome of the Growth Tracks teachings from September, Growth Groups are being formed and will begin in January! Three groups are being initiated: Beth Moore Bible study, Wednesday daytime Bible study and cooking classes. More details are being communicated and sign-up sheets are in the hallway for each group.

Annual reports are due in the church office no later than **Sunday, January 15, 2017**. Annual reports will be distributed on Sunday, January 22, 2017 in preparation for the annual business meeting.

The annual business meeting will be held on Wednesday, **January 25, 2017, at 7:00 pm**. The selections for the Elder Board and Ministry Teams will be ratified at this business meeting. We give praise to God for completing the needed roles on the Elder Board and Ministry Teams for this coming year is complete. People have said yes to the Lord and are excited to serve! That is a great blessing!

We look forward to serving together for God's Kingdom!

Next meeting: January 17, 2017



Prayer Thoughts From

Sylvia

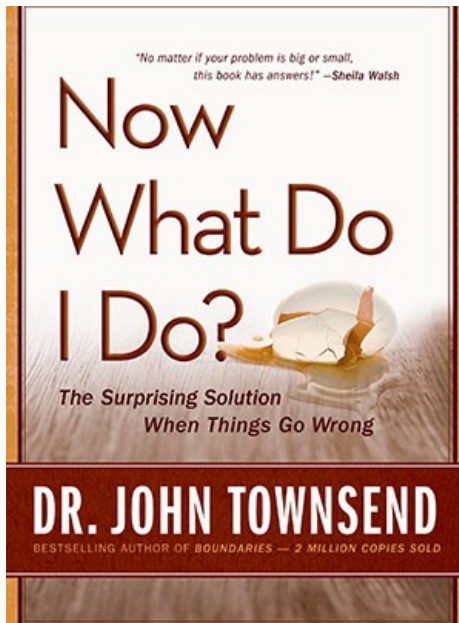


Entering a New Year we will hear many wishes for a Happy New Year. There are little rituals that people will keep to bring good luck and happiness in a new year. It may be black-eyed peas or cabbage! These are just two little rituals of many that come from cultural backgrounds and experiences that become traditions through the years. Sometimes people will talk about things being a coincidence or just the luck of being in the right place at the right time!

In God's economy, it is not coincidence, chance or luck. We say so much that God is in control, so let's give God the credit and acknowledge Him rather than chalking up our blessings to chance or happenstance. When we place ourselves in the palm of God's hand, walk with him or times, allow him to carry us, we have the promise that he will never leave us or forsake us. Let's truly face 2017 with this being our prayer:

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight". Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)

What's Right Now in Right Now Media



Continuing with the theme of Pastor Scott's main article, John Townsend's book "Now What Do I Do?" is a great resource to help solve situations in your life, that happen to take a turn for the worst. Below is a synopsis of the video. "When things go wrong in life and relationships, and with stunning frequency they do, you will connect with this simple yet highly effective inspirational approach to solving problems no matter what the issue: marriage, finances, bad choices, fear, anxiety, emotional hurt, obsessions, addictions, weight issues, and more.

Now What Do I Do? will help you tap into the power of seven key principles that will help you solve everything from crises that explode without warning to chronic issues that have lingered for years. Solving problems isn't instantaneous, but it still can be miraculous!"

Right Now Media is free for all church members. If you would like to access a library of over 80,000 studies, please call the church office and provide an email address and we will send you an invite.

Winter Closing information

- 1) getclearstream.com To enroll in text messaging system text FCOG to 97000
- 2) whsv.com/close

Feel free to use our Facebook page, call, etc. to get the word out to our members about a closing.



The first Meeting of the year will be January Monday the 9 @ the home of Phyllis Brown. All Ladies are welcome.

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Service Times

Sunday School @ 9:45 am
Sunday Morning Worship @ 10:45 am
Wednesday Night Bible Study @ 7:00 pm

Our Vision

GET: Grow, Engage, Transform

Our mission is to ***Grow*** in our relationship with Christ, ***Engage*** in our community to share His love and ***Transform*** our world into His likeness.

Grow: We strive to grow in our relationship with Christ through the divine inspiration of the Holy Bible, prayer, encouragement and fellowship with one another of the church. We believe that as we grow the Holy Spirit empowers us live out God's will. Ephesians 1:17-18, Philippians 2:1-5, 2 Peter 3:18

Engage: As Jesus commissioned the disciples to go outland make disciples, we must do likewise. By engaging with our community we have an opportunity to extend helping hand and the love of Christ to the lost, hurt and broken people around us.

Matthew 25:42-45, Matthew 28:19

Transform: As we grow and engage, we are transformed by the Holy Spirit into the image of Jesus Christ. Through this transformation and with the love of Christ, we can be vessels to further the Kingdom of God by our witness and example. Romans 12:1-2

Newsletter published by monthly. To Submit an article or idea contact:

Wanda Saufley: wsaufley@comcast.net or 540-414-4926 All Articles must be turned by the 20th of each month. Thank you.