



Beyond the Sermon

A Sermon Application Guide

Title: Finding Peace Within the Storm

This guide offers a simple tool for those wanting to take the next step with Sunday's message. You can print this guide to study on your own or use it in a group and experience transformation together.

Message Theme

Steps to Overcoming Anxiety in Your Life

Prayer Focus

Father, I'm grateful for the gift of life and the opportunities that come with each new day. I thank You for the Holy Spirit who speaks to me, and I pray that I may learn to recognize Your voice and follow Your guidance. When I feel anxious, I'm thankful for Your peace, which surpasses all understanding. You're a mighty God and worthy of all praise. In Jesus' name, I pray, amen.

Key Truths

Anxiety and stress have become widespread in our culture, but we were never intended to deal with them. God desires to heal every aspect of our lives and provide us with peace. However, peace is not the absence of problems or challenges. To better understand God's meaning of peace, we can refer to Matthew 7, which speaks of a wise man who built his house on the rock and a foolish man who built it on sand. We may overlook that both encountered a storm, not just the foolish man who lost his house. Doing things God's way doesn't change the external storm, but it changes how we handle the situation. When we allow the storm to enter our lives, it will negatively impact us.

When we fix our eyes on Christ, it changes how we feel. Our culture highlights unhappiness and attempts to solve it with things that won't help. They display what we need to be happy and offer it for a price. Complaining is a verbal confirmation of negative focus. Our brains confirm what we think we know. So, if we believe we're right, wrong, or unhappy, our brains intervene to prove it. We tend to concentrate on the negative when in a bad mood. The solution is to retrain our minds by focusing on Jesus and giving thanks.

Giving our worries and concerns to God involves more than simply writing them on a boomerang, throwing them away, and hoping they will eventually return to us resolved. Instead, it means entrusting them to God for good. It's not about the weight of our worries but about who bears the burden. Where we place our focus determines how we ultimately feel; therefore, by shifting our focus to God, we can find peace even through storms.

During the storm in Matthew 14, Peter gets out of the boat to walk to Jesus. The moment he moves his eyes from Jesus to the storm, he begins to sink. Therefore, keeping our gaze on God to have peace in our lives is crucial. It changes our perspective when we start praising Him instead of worrying about the tempest. Our

minds cannot run in two different directions simultaneously. Instead of focusing on what we may have lost, we should look at what God is doing in our lives.

Practical Application

The journey to overcoming anxiety and depression is ongoing, and combining faith with practical actions is key to finding lasting peace.

Our emotions can either guide us or mislead us. If we let our feelings take control, they tend to reinforce themselves and intensify. For instance, when we are upset we can fall into the habit of listening to sad music or pulling back from life around us, and it starts a cycle of sadness. However, we can choose to direct our emotions towards positivity and take steps to enhance our mood.

We should reflect on the things that bring us joy and seek God's Truth. However, when we feel less than ideal, it significantly helps us to stand firm in the joy of the Lord and concentrate on His truth. By doing so, we can build our house on the rock and find the strength and hope we need to overcome any storm that comes our way.

Here are some takeaways from this message that can help.

First: **Change Your Focus:** Just like a ballerina focuses on a fixed point to avoid dizziness, fix your eyes on Jesus. Spend time in prayer, worship, and reading the Bible.

Second: **Cast Your Cares Away:** 1 Peter 5:7 says: "Cast all your anxieties on him because he cares for you." Don't just throw your worries at God and then snatch them back. When feeling anxious, pray and verbally give your worries to God. Visualize placing your worries in His hands and leaving them there. God is strong enough to handle the weight of all your problems.

Third: **Have an attitude of gratitude:** Philippians 4:6-7 says: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." Make a gratitude journal, a daily list of very specific things you're thankful for. This rewires your brain to look for the positive. Science shows that gratitude and anxiety cannot exist in the brain at the same time. Practicing gratitude reduces the levels of cortisol or the stress hormone in your body.

Fourth: **Seek Support:** Galatians 6:2 says: "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." Share your struggles with a trusted friend, pastor, or counselor. They can offer prayer, support, and encouragement. If anxiety and depression are overwhelming, don't be afraid to seek professional counseling or therapy.

Remember God's peace is available to everyone who trusts in him. Overcoming fear, anxiety, and depression is a process, not a quick fix, so be patient with yourself and keep your eyes on Jesus. Implementing these practical steps can help you experience the peace that Jesus promises, despite life's challenges.

Reference Verses

- John 14:27, 8:36
- Matthew 7:24-27, 14:23

- Psalms 103:1-3
- 2 Corinthians 10:5
- Philippians 4:6-9
- Isaiah 26:3
- 1 Peter 5:7

Declarations

- *If I focus on God, I will experience His peace.*
- *When my emotions are negative, I will remember God's Word and meditate on the positive.*
- *As I go through storms, I will weather them with God's wisdom and strength.*

What's Next?

Now it's time to write down anything the Lord has spoken to you. Praise Him, thank Him, and ask the Holy Spirit to help you walk this out.

Scripture References

Finding Peace Within the Storm

John 14:27 ESV Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

John 8:36 ESV So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

Luke 4:18 NKJV "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed..."

Matthew 6:25 ESV ...do not be anxious about your life...

Matthew 7:24-27 NKJV "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house

on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”

Psalms 103:1-2 ESV Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits...

Hebrews 12:2 NKJV ...looking unto Jesus...who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross...

Isaiah 26:3 NKJV You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.

1 Peter 5:7 ESV ...casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

Matthew 14:23-36 ESV REF And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat by this time was a long way from the land, beaten by the waves, for the wind was against them. And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, “It is a ghost!” and they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, “Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid.”

And Peter answered him, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.” He said, “Come.” So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, “Lord, save me.” Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?” And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”

1 Chronicles 16:8 ESV Oh give thanks to the Lord...

Philippians 4:6 NKJV REF ...with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God...