

Thanksgiving – Door to Holy Spirit Power

I. Don't Worry (365x "fear not")

Luke 12:22 And he said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, **do not be anxious** about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. **23** For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. **24** **Consider the ravens:** they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! **25** And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? **26** If then you are not able to do as small a thing as that, **why are you anxious about the rest?** **27** **Consider the lilies,** how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. **28** But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, **how much more will he clothe you,** O you of little faith! **29** And **do not seek** what you are to eat and what you are to drink, **nor be worried.** **30** For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and **your Father knows** that you need them. **31** Instead, **seek his kingdom,** and these things will be added to you.

32 "**Fear not, little flock,** for it is **your Father's good pleasure** to give you the kingdom. **33** Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. **34** For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The equivalent of 'worry' may be expressed in some languages in an idiomatic manner, for example, '*to be killed by one's mind*' or '*to be pained by thinking.*' (Louw & Nida)

There's a whole school of research within public health on how to scare people? "**Fear appeal.**" Euphemism for scaring people to death,

1. Create something or have something that people are afraid of in order to get your public health measures imposed,
2. Make it personal to them, – make them afraid personally.
3. Give them something immediate to do to begin cooperating with the plans that you have.

don't leave the house wear a mask stay 6 feet apart
Close down businesses, don't let kids go to school

Public health – is essentially a **totalitarian** model.

Assumption – What public health officials think is true & applied regardless of the context.

Collateral damage – The Bill of Rights, Liberty, the right of people to die with their boots on,

American tradition of individuals and their own communities making decisions.

Learned helplessness.

When we're born, to be taken care of we express pain, cry, wiggle, look sad.
DEPENDENT ON OTHERS

When made to feel helpless again. And we become like the infant and feel someone must take care of us.

Other people, drugs, psychiatric drugs, alcohol, authoritarian religions, we look to leaders of all kinds.

Greater than fear... anxiety. If you can make it **confusing**,

Fear knows an **object**, such as the coronavirus.

Anxiety is a state of confusion in which we can't even think anymore.

One of the characteristics of a **panic attack** or an **anxiety attack** is we lose the ability to think. We become helpless, confused.

Prov. 12:25 **Anxiety** in a man's heart weighs him down, but a **good word** makes him glad. (Depression or Joy of the Lord)

Bondage (fear of death) or FREEDOM

Heb. 2:14 (NIV) Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might **destroy** him who holds the power of death — that is, the devil — 15 and **free those** who **all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.**

17 **For this reason** he had to be made like his brothers **in every way**, in order that he might **become a merciful and faithful high priest** in service to God, and that he might **make atonement** for the sins of the people. 18 **Because he himself suffered** when he was tempted, **he is able to help** those who are being tempted.

He Has Deprived the World of the Power to Harm Us

John 16.33 AMP I have told you these things, so that **in Me** you may have [perfect] **peace** and confidence. In the world you have tribulation and trials and distress and frustration; but be of good cheer [take **courage**; be **confident, certain, undaunted**]! For I have overcome the world. [*I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you.*]

S1: KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON! (The Victory is INSIDE you)

1 John 5.4 For **everyone** who has been born of God **overcomes the world**. And this is the **victory** that has **overcome the world**—our **faith**.

OVERCOMING — STAYING IN GRATITUDE

S2: YOUR COURAGE RESOURCEFULNESS & RESOLUTION WILL BRING US VICTORY

Phil 1.27 NIV **Whatever happens**, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel **28 without being frightened in any way** by **those who oppose you**. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved — and that by God.

S3: FREEDOM IS IN PERIL. DEFEND IT WITH ALL YOUR MIGHT

Antidote to anxiety:

Phil. 4:4 **Rejoice** in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. **5** Let your **reasonableness** be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand;

S4: Phil 4.6

6 *do not be anxious about anything*, 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 your minds in Christ Jesus.

Gratitude Prepares The Way for deliverance

Psalm 50:23 The one who *offers thanksgiving as his sacrifice* glorifies me; to one who **orders his way** rightly **I will show** the salvation of God!

NIV ... *sacrifices thank offerings, prepares the way* so that I may show him the salvation of God.

GRATITUDE invites the Kingdom! ... connects with **GRACE**.

Redeeming Blown Opportunities

When You Feel Like You're Dying

Jonah 2:7 NIV When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, Lord, and my prayer rose to you, to your holy temple. **8** “Those who cling to worthless idols forfeit the grace that could be theirs. **9** But I, with a *song of thanksgiving*, will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed I will make good. Salvation comes from the Lord.”

10 And the Lord commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

COURAGE RESOURCEFULNESS & RESOLUTION WILL BRING US VICTORY

A. The Pattern- The holidays or other social gatherings come and it's the big chance for the Gospel light to shine out of our lives. After all, Jesus said that we would receive **power** when the Holy Spirit comes on us, and that we would **be** witnesses. (Read-martyr) Our feet are lovely, we bear good tidings, we publish peace. We are the light of the world, the salt of the earth, the army of God complete with the armor and power of God, the royal priesthood, et al. and we are going to be thrust into social situations that have great potential. Hallelujah!!

But more than once, Anne and I returned from a foray into the darkness, not victorious, but slightly deflated or majorly defeated, feeling like sad sacks and wondering how our happy sinful pagan relatives would ever get saved.

You know the scenario. You're all set in your mind, but then the big day arrives. The radiator on the car leaks the night before. The

kids wake up cranky. Mom is on edge- she has such a huge list of things to get done before you embark on the journey or the barbarians arrive and dad has predictably but mysteriously zoned out with a number of tasks or interests that have **nothing** to do with getting ready. Well, you patch things up, try not to get ugly, then just as you go out the door, the baby has the grace to really soil his diaper. **When** is he going to get potty trained?!

When you finally come in contact with the heathen, your sense of communion and fellowship is strained at best and you **tolerate** each other, slipping into the familiar roles and routines that were developed in the extended social group long before the Gospel light ever shined into our former sinful lives.

We find ourselves wondering where is the power? What does it really mean to be a Christian anyway? Is Jesus with me, even to the end of my rope?

Personal Illustration- Visiting Anne's Mom. When we were first saved, most of our relatives “heard the Gospel” and saw some change in us. As time went on, we would try different strategies. “Just let our light shine” was a long term plan. The problem was when we would drive to San Francisco, the UNITY would go away. Our kids would act up, I would “isolate” by reading every magazine or newspaper around and would communicate with Anne mostly in grunts and brief, incomplete sentences. The conversation with Evelyn never moved out of Trivial Pursuit.

After figuring this pattern out- it only took about **ten** years, we started preparing ourselves.

When we got to the Bay Bridge, we would start speaking in tongues, worshipping, praying etc.

Definite improvement. Somehow, over the next day or two we actually got into a lifestyle conversation on death, dying, funerals, and eternity. WOW!!!

After a few more visits like this, we were on the road to glory. Anne's mom had a health crisis. Her older sister said that she

wasn't worried. The Holy Spirit told us that it was urgent. We got in the car and went to Saint Mary's Hospital in San Francisco. Definite love and sharing the gospel. God gave us favor. She recovered a little. Lung surgery was scheduled. We prayed and went to see her. The conversation was trivial, I was praying. An old German nun kicked us out at 9 PM. We prayed. Got others to pray. The next morning we visited and kept the conversation right on track. As they came to pick her up with a gurney, she was just finishing the "sinner's prayer." The surgeon told us later that he had "lost her" eight times. She lived nine more months and now lives in heaven!

IV. Ministry

How can you move into victory in this area?

No fear. No anxiety. Thanksgiving.

You shall receive power.

S5: ACTS 1:8

STRATEGIES

All who are weary... come to me and I will give you rest

All who thirst... come to me and drink and out of your belly will flow