



# HOPE & ANXIETY

## MESSAGE NEXT STEPS

WHY SO ANXIOUS?

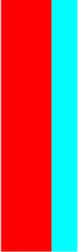
JANUARY 6

Anxiety is at epidemic levels in our society, and for many of us, it is a daily struggle. Coming in various forms, from frivolous worries to debilitating anguish, our experiences may seem unavoidable. But what could be behind all this anxiety, and where can we find hope for true freedom?



## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is an example of something that causes irrational fear in you?
2. When you think of the “type of person” that suffers with anxiety, what do you picture?
3. Can you think of a time when you worried excessively about the future? What brought on that worry? How did you handle it?
4. Would you describe yourself as someone who suffers from anxiety? If so, how would you identify your level of anxiety: severe, moderate, or low-grade?
5. **Read Philippians 4:5-9.** God made it clear that we need not worry or be anxious because He is near. With these verses in mind, how do you think God can be a part of easing your anxieties?
6. **Read John 1:11-13.** If you don’t have confidence that you’re loved by God, secure forever with God, at peace with God, and that God is in ultimate control and you’re safe in His arms, you’ll be fearful and anxious, because the world doesn’t always offer us a safe place. What are some ways you remind yourself of your security in God?
7. Taking steps toward hope and freedom from anxiety will likely need to include discovering some specific information about what may be leading to anxiety in your life. This week, do the work to identify your level of anxiety, identify whether you have a predisposition to anxiety, and identify triggers to your anxiety (such as the things that lead you to stress out). After you’ve done this work, commit to begin letting anxious thoughts trigger prayer. In each worrisome or anxious moment, pray to God and ask Him to bring His promises of security to mind. Share with friends, family, and/or your life group about any changes you see in your life based on this new perspective.



## KEY SCRIPTURES CONT.

**Philippians 4:5-9** – Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

**John 1:11-13** – He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.

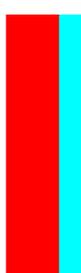


## DIGGING DEEPER

As you look to dig deeper into the topics of this week’s message, consider completing the Surrender outcome on Gateway’s Spiritual Growth Path. Here’s an excerpt:

It’s almost inevitable that the newer follower of Christ will make a false assumption. It may not be articulated and may not even be conscious, but the perception is that because God loves us he will be certain to fulfill our hopes and dreams. We will have the job, the spouse, the financial resources, and the opportunities that otherwise would not have been available to us apart from Christ. In truth, God does love to bless us, but the further we get down the path, the more we learn the reality of what it means to “take up your cross and follow Christ” (see Matthew 16:24). Paul wrote, “I have been crucified with Christ and no longer live but Christ lives in me” (Galatians 2:20), and John wrote that, “if anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them.” (1 John 2:15). The Deepen follower of Christ has learned to fully surrender their desires, hopes, and dreams and to passionately seek God’s desires, hopes, and dreams. To do so is simultaneously death and life. We die to the life we had envisioned so that we may live life freely for the greatest of goods. This depth of surrender is both powerful and profound, albeit at times painful. There is a peace gained that life circumstances can never give, and there is an empowerment that happens toward fulfilling one’s true calling and the good works “God prepared in advance for us to do.” (Ephesians 2:10).

To complete the Surrender outcome in its entirety, head to [gatewaychurch.com/spitual\\_outcomes/surrender](http://gatewaychurch.com/spitual_outcomes/surrender)



## SPIRITUAL OUTCOMES—

[gatewaychurch.com/spiritual\\_outcomes/surrender](http://gatewaychurch.com/spiritual_outcomes/surrender)