

P to D

What Me, Worry? Series

by Chris Famisaran

Father in heaven, as we close out our series about anxiety, lead and guide us in Jesus name. Amen. All right. Well, good morning, everyone. Y' all doing all right?

Life can be crazy sometimes. Yesterday I wouldn't say it was a life changing decision, but I decided to make some decisions in my life to help make my life better, that is, to have a better, healthier life. So I chose to go swimming. Yesterday I did chapel at AUS. I thought, oh, the pool's right there.

But then I went to the office. I wanted to drop off my guitar. I didn't think I would have enough time. But then I realized, wait, you know what? Got an hour. So I went back to Bellflower. And you know when you always go to someplace new, you ever have a sense of anxiety or trepidation? Nobody knows me. I don't know the guards. I've never been to this pool. What if it's cold? It was warm and fortunately enough, not overly chlorinated.

But it's different. It was out of my comfort zone. I haven't really swam. I haven't lap swam in years. We did a couple of years when we were over in Hawaii and prior to that, it seems like every couple of years I would get to go to the pool. But to consciously and regularly lap swimming, it's been something I've been putting off. But when I was younger, especially in college, it brought me great joy. It was the best shape I was ever in my life, at least one of the times. And I decided that I wanted to return to something that I knew I was comfortable. At least I know how to swim. I've been swimming my whole life. In fact, if I could be an animal, I wish I could be a dolphin. I love water.

So I thought, well, hey, let me go, let me get out of my comfort zone and let's go. So I got out, got changed, I got into the water and I started to swim. And let me tell you something, I was tired. I don't have the strength that I used to have.

And so I did a couple of laps. I think I did a couple hundred meters of, of just a warm up front crawl, sidestroke and whatnot. Then I wanted to see where is my fitness really at. And so when I was training to be a lifeguard, the standard was 500 yards. How fast could you do that? And also when I took a swim class years ago, I would be doing at least a mile of swimming every week.

And if you fell behind, sometimes you'd have to do a couple miles. And I used to be able to do a mile within an hour.

But the standard was how fast can you do a 500 meter or a 500 yard swim? And so as I warmed up, I did a couple of hundred yards just to warm up. I then began. I had my watch on, I started to time it and I realized that my splits were easily meeting a minute there and back a minute there and back a minute. I thought, okay, well maybe I can do sub 10.

That would be great. I didn't hold the minute splits. In fact, after two laps there and back, I had to change from front crawler front stroke to the breaststroke. My standard was to be able to do it all. Front stroke didn't happen.

And around the 3 to 400 meter mark I started to have this existential crisis. And I realized all the people I made fun of when I was younger was thinking, just do it. I realized I was on the other side of that, just do it. And so I had more empathy not only for myself, but for people outside. And by the time I got done, when the 500 meters were up, I clicked the watch and I saw 11:33.

Considering that I haven't swam like this in a long time, it's actually not bad. Could have been much worse. But when I was younger, when I was training to be a lifeguard, I easily could have done a 500 yard swim in half that time. Perspective now I got out of the pool, I was disappointed. I thought, how could I let myself get to this point?

I got in the car and I thought, well, I have a choice to make. I can sulk about it, feel bad about myself, or I can think about and plot how am I going to get to that point where I can swim efficiently. I don't think I can go back to where I was before just because, you know, that's going to ask a lot. But if I could be at least do a sub 8, I would be so stoked and happy about that. So I thought

about it. Well, okay, I need to be intentional. I need to plan. I need to think about how often can I come here or are there other pools that are easily more accessible since I don't live in this area. And there I began to think about, okay, at least if I can come here at least once a week and I can, I can supplement other activities besides swimming. Maybe I can row. And of course some of you know I ride, but also maybe do strength training. Just maybe, just maybe I can get much faster and to be able to glide in the water like I used to.

Perspective My perspective has changed in the last 10, 15, 20 years, 30 years. There's a lot that's happened. Life is about perspective. You're not going to stay the same. Things change and sometimes you have to adjust.

And just like every journey you begin, you get in your car and you're parked. Our sermon today is P to D. What is P to D? If you get in your car and you have an automatic transmission, you'll see that. That the car, the gear, is in P when you start because it's parked. And eventually you have to put it into D to drive. We've been talking about anxiety the last couple of weeks. We talked about first just to breathe, to relax. Just start with the basics. And now as we close out this series, we're going to talk about perspective. How do we go from A to B or from P being parked to drive?

Now, we read this verse earlier. Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again. Rejoice. Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Don't be anxious about anything, but in everything, every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

What does anxiety often cause us to do? It inhibits our ability to make decisions. Amen. And yet, something that I think we don't realize is that indecision is a decision.

Indecision is the enemy of progress. Choosing nothing is still a choice with consequences.

How many of you tend to procrastinate or put off things? I'll just do it tomorrow. I'll do it tomorrow, I'll do it next week, I'll do it next year. And eventually it piles up. And over time you're thinking about what I need to do. And it's getting closer and closer and closer and closer. Am I stressing you out right now? Until eventually it's too big. I don't know what to do. Now you really have anxiety. And maybe you're starting to have a panic attack.

Sometimes we have to make a decision. We've talked about. Make a decision, move. Gustavo and I, we've had this point he's brought up several times, and I love it is because when he was working, one of his bosses said, you got to make a decision. You cannot stay static.

Movement is key. If you simply just choose to ignore, your life is going to get more complicated. When you look at the life of King Saul, he was a very, very reluctant leader. He felt he experienced imposter syndrome. I don't feel that I'm called. And you know, when you look at the story, did God want to give Israel a king? No, he didn't. But who demanded it? The people. They all thought, let's make King Saul king. Of course, he was a reluctant king, and it showed in how he lived and how he acted. And if you look back, if you go to, for instance, the first Samuel chapters 13 through 15, you see that he made some poor choices. In fact, sometimes his impatience got in trouble. He was impatient. And he told the people, do this. When God said, no, you need to wait. A big battle was coming up, preparing, and Samuel had told him, wait seven days for the arrival, for the sacrifices. And Saul was impatient. His anxiety was related to his impatience.

In chapter 14, he makes some rash vows and he has some very, very questionable judgment. In chapter 15, he was God called Saul to completely destroy the Amalekites and all that they possess. And of course, Saul doesn't do that. And Samuel confronts Saul, declaring that faithless obedience is better than sacrifice.

And so God ultimately rejects Saul as king. Saul was unfaithful, he was impatient, he had bad judgment, he failed in many respects, and he was not able to lead faithfully, all because he had this sense of, I'm not fit to be king.

Now I want to go to another passage. Let's go to Acts chapter 15, when we talk about decision making. Okay. Acts 15. There are times in life where you know you don't always have all the answers. And one of the beautiful things that I love about our church, or just the fact of having people in your life, it's good to have people in your life, because if you're feeling anxious or you're feeling uncertain, seek their wisdom out, talk about things.

So Acts 15, and it says, certain people came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the believers, unless you're circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you can't be saved. And this brought Paul and Barnabas into sharp, not just little, but sharp dispute and debate with them. So Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question. The church sent them on their way, and they traveled through Phoenicia and Samaria, and they told the Gentiles how they had told Gentiles had been converted. This news made all of the believers glad when they came to Jerusalem.

They welcomed, were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders to whom they reported everything. And God had done with them. And so we can see that there's this conflict here where they are disagreeing. But along the way, as they travel to Jerusalem to have this summit, they're sharing the good news of how all these individuals had chosen to believe in Jesus. Amen.

Okay, now, verse five. Then some of the believers who belonged to the party of the Pharisees stood up and said, the Gentiles must be circumcised and required to keep the law of Moses. And here they're trying to add on another layer. The apostles and the elders met to consider this question. What did they do? They met to consider this question. And after much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them. Brothers, you know that some time ago, God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the Gospel of God and believe God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us.

He did not discriminate between us and them, for he purified their hearts. By what? By faith. Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that neither would nor our ancestors had been able to bear? No. We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved just as they are. And so Paul advocates, he fights on behalf of the Gentiles. What was done in the past, did it work? No. We're not saved by our actions. We're saved by grace. So why are we trying to put an extra burden on these individuals?

Verse 12. The whole assembly became what they were, quiet as they listened to Barnabas and Paul telling about the signs and wonders God had done among the Gentiles through them. And when they finished, James spoke up and he said, brothers, he said, listen to me. Simon had described to us how God had first intervened to choose a people for his name from the Gentiles. The words of the prophets are in agreement with this as well as it is written. After this, I will return and rebuild David's fallen tent, its ruins. I will rebuild and I will restore it, that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, even all the Gentiles who bear my name, says the Lord who does these things, things known from long ago. So we see that the people went back to Scripture here in verses 16 through 18,

verse 19. It's my judgment, therefore, that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God. Instead, we should write to them, telling them to abstain from the food polluted by idols and sexual immorality and the meat of strangled animals and from blood. For the law of Moses has been preached in every city from the earliest times in. And is bread in the synagogues on every Sabbath.

And so what we see here is that the believers, the apostles and everybody got together and they talked. And as they hashed it out, did anybody's perspective change? Absolutely. Why should we keep going back to that which did not work? You see a dog. When they throw up, what do they want to do? They want to go back and eat it. And is it healthy for them? Probably not. Why do we want to do the same thing? If we throw up and we go back to that throw up, it

already has no substantive value to it. But yet sometimes in our hearts, we can't let go. It can cause anxiety to move forward in a different direction, to try something new. Fear is real. Yes. But if you're more fearful and will stay put and not grow and not change, how do you expect to go from parked to drive?

Anxiety can be crippling. I understand. But at the same time, too, if you don't try, how can you move forward?

Failure is a movement. You do not have to be defined by failure. **Failure is a moment, not a lifetime.** Failure is a moment is not a lifetime. We learn from our failures.

How many of you have failed at something? I better see everybody's hand up. There's nobody perfect here. We've all fallen and we've all failed. Maybe some more than others, but that doesn't matter. You got up and you're here, right? You're watching here, right? Are you defined by your failures? And if you do, let it go. The anger, the frustration, let it go now.

Al Worden. Do you know who Al Worden was? Al Worden was a command module pilot of the 1971 Apollo 15 moon mission. And he has the distinct but curious honor of being the most isolated human person in history as he was orbiting the moon with his teammates over 2,200 miles away.

Okay. On the lunar surface, Worden was very much all by himself as he got a perspective of all of the cosmos beyond that only a handful of humans have ever seen. And Worden says, as he looked out into the universe, a very different perspective in a very different way than anyone had seen before. And what he found was that the number of stars was just so immense, in fact, he couldn't pick up individual stars. It was like a sheet of light that was in front of him, and it was so immense, he found it so fascinating because it changed my idea of how we think about the universe.

There are billions of stars there. Milky Way galaxy that we are in contains billions of stars. And not just a few, but billions. And what does that tell you then about the universe? Because the Milky Way is only one galaxy. How many galaxies are out there? You want to feel significant? Go behind the moon.

Sometimes you don't even need to go behind the moon. You just need to look up in this, in the sky, and know that we are, in the grand scheme of things, we're very insignificant, but yet God thinks we are significant. Amen.

So sometimes we think as well that we're super small. But we need to have a bigger and broader perspective beyond us, to help us to know where to go, to move us forward. **Anxiety causes us to complicate the issues.** Amen.

Anxiety causes us to complicate the issues.

So before we get to those issues, just pause. What did we talk about first? Just take a deep breath. In fact, right now, let's just get everybody to take a deep breath, gain some perspective, look around, seek help, think about, how is this going to affect me? How can I overcome? Who can I go to to help?

And as you take the next. As you **ask God for wisdom, then take the next faithful step.** Not the next perfect step, not the right step. You're going by faith. And sometimes even in faith, guess what? We still might get it wrong sometimes. But are we going to let that define us? No. We are going to learn from it. Abraham is saved. Why? Because of his righteousness. Not. Not because of what he did, but because he was faithful. And did Abraham always get it right? No, he messed up. He messed up bad. Okay. Did Peter always get it right? No. Did Paul always get it right or did his perspective change at times? Absolutely. You look at the majority of the characters in the Bible, you will see that their lives were changed and their perspective changed. So just because it is right now doesn't mean it has to be this afternoon or tomorrow or in a year or in 10 years, my friends.

So what does this all come down to? Perspective. As you look out, what do you see? What do you hope for? What do you long for? What do you want to change in your life? How do you want to grow?

What decisions do you need to make moving forward that you need the Lord's wisdom? as you go forward. Rejoice. But what does it also say? Go to the Lord with your concerns. It's not all on you. Pray about these things and faithfully. Lord. Lord, I seek your wisdom. God I don't know how to handle this

obstacle. I don't know how to handle my job. I don't know how to handle my neighbor. I don't know how to deal with my difficult child. I don't know about the bill that I've just gotten, how I'm going to pay it. But I encourage you to seek God's wisdom and may you have peace.

And not only that, pray about it. Seek others to pray. There's somebody you trust. Get their point of view. I love the fact that I get to work with a team, people who are smarter than me. I love the fact, too, when I join a group that. Who challenges me because there were. When I'm dealing, for instance, with. In a band context, when I've been put in a place where everybody's way better than me, it's easy for me to feel insecure, right? I can walk back and say, well, I'm just not good enough. Or it's an opportunity for me to be intentional and learn and grow as a musician. Now apply that to any parts of your life. You want to be a better driver, you want to be a better cook. It takes humility to learn. But when you are humble and recognize that God is in control, great and wonderful things can happen.

So may you go forward and not be anxious. Rejoice and rejoice. Even when it's difficult. Even when it's difficult, even when you're scared, when you're crying, when you're angry. Find that perspective. You're alive. Number one, Amen. Number two, you're here with your church family. And number three, God loves you, so rejoice. It may take meaning one step at a time, but that step turns into two, and eventually you start to walk even faster, and maybe you'll run the marathon.

So this week, **as you face challenges, reflect on the possible outcomes, pray about it, and make a faithful decision.**

Father in heaven. Lord, this last month we have been talking about anxiety, Lord, and about worry. And Lord, there is a lot of things in this world that causes us to be worried. No doubt. And so we ask God, give us strength, give us wisdom, help us to have faith in you. And as you lead and guide us as we make faithful decisions, may they honor you and may we be a faithful representation of you. Unite us, Lord, as a church family, no matter what, Lord, we want to give you thanks and praise. Thank you for who you are and

thank you, Lord, for choosing us in spite of us. In Jesus name, everybody said Amen.

Grace and peace, everyone.