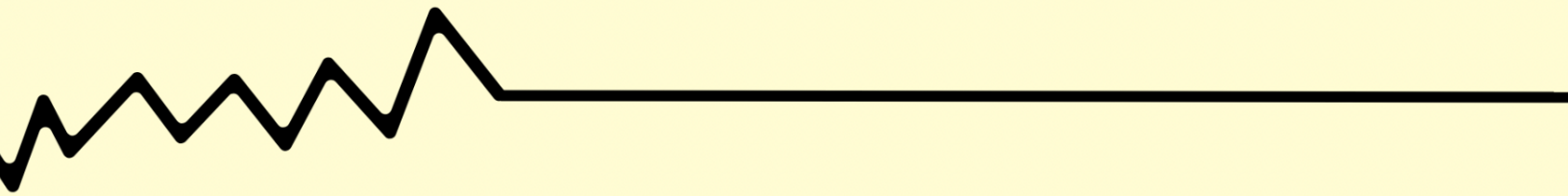


ANXIOUS



Anxious
Why Are You Anxious?
Psalm 6

- “More than a quarter (26.6%) of people ages 18 through 29 said they'd struggled with anxiety symptoms over the prior two weeks, compared to about 21% of those aged 30 to 44, just under 16% for those aged 45 to 64, and 11.2% among people 65 or older.”
- “Nearly 1 in every 5 (18.2%) adults reported anxiety issues in 2022, up from 15.6% in 2019.” That’s approximately over 63 million people who struggle with anxiety!

Psalm 6
To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments; according to The Sheminith. A Psalm of David.

O Lord, rebuke me not in your anger,
nor discipline me in your wrath.

2 Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am languishing;
heal me, O Lord, for my bones are troubled.

- 3 My soul also is greatly troubled.
But you, O Lord—how long?
- 4 Turn, O Lord, deliver my life;
save me for the sake of your steadfast love.
- 5 For in death there is no remembrance of you;
in Sheol who will give you praise?
- 6 I am weary with my moaning;
every night I flood my bed with tears;
I drench my couch with my weeping.
- 7 My eye wastes away because of grief;
it grows weak because of all my foes.
- 8 Depart from me, all you workers of evil,
for the Lord has heard the sound of my weeping.
- 9 The Lord has heard my plea;
the Lord accepts my prayer.
- 10 All my enemies shall be ashamed and greatly troubled;
they shall turn back and be put to shame in a moment.

Anxiety affects all of us

- “A psalm of David”
- “heal me, O Lord, for my bones are troubled. 3 My soul also is greatly troubled” (vv. 2b–3a).
- Anxiety’s suffering can be simultaneously physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual
 - “In neuroscience, the saying is ‘Neurons that fire together wire together.’ In other words, repeated anxious thoughts, feelings, and actions cause certain neurons to fire together, and this repetition causes certain neurons to wire together to form ingrained circuits” (J. P. Moreland, *Finding Quiet*, 44).

Anxiety comes in many shapes and sizes

- Anxiety as a warning
 - “Anxiety is an emotional response to a real or perceived future threat. . . . Anxiety is a warning system of impending danger” (Joe Carter, “Ask TGC: Is Anxiety a Sin?”)
- Anxiety as a disorder
 - “Anxiety manifests as a physiological malfunction that has become both disordered and debilitating. Some symptoms include persistent anxious thoughts on most days of the week for six months, when the anxiety interferes with daily functioning, or when you have anxiety-related symptoms (such as trouble sleeping)” (Carter, “Is Anxiety Sinful”)

- Anxiety as a consequence
 - Anxiety is the result of sin.
- Anxiety as a sin
 - Anxiety is a “sinful responses to God’s providential care. This is anxiety that results because we lack trust in God” (Carter, “Is Anxiety sinful”).

Anxiety is exhausting

- “6 I am weary with my moaning; every night I flood my bed with tears; I drench my couch with my weeping. 7 My eye wastes away because of grief; it grows weak because of all my foes” (vv. 6–7).
- Anxiety’s suffering can wear you down.
 - “And being in agony he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground” (Luke 22:44).

Anxiety can feel like a trap

- “But you, O Lord—how long? 4 Turn, O Lord, deliver my life; save me for the sake of your steadfast love. 5 For in death there is no remembrance of you; in Sheol who will give you praise?” (Vv. 3b–5).
- Anxiety’s suffering can feel like it will never end.
 - “For those who suffer, it is not just the physical suffering that causes anguish but also the mental suffering of not knowing how long the anguish will linger” (Rolf Jacobson, *The Book of Psalms*, 104).

You are not powerless or hopeless in your anxiety’s suffering.

- You can have power over anxiety
 - Power comes in doing something
 - “A prayer in pain that leads to trust” (Mark Vroegop, *Dark Clouds, Deep Mercy*, 28).
 - “Lament is not only an act of self-expression or exorcising pain: it forms and heals us. The Psalms express every human emotion, but, taken up again and again, they never simply leave us as we are. They are strong medicine. They change us. The transformation they effect isn’t to turn our sadness into happiness; they don’t take grieving people and make them annoyingly peppy and optimistic. They never say ‘Chin up’ or ‘It’s not so bad.’ Nor do they tell us why we suffer. Instead they fix our vision on God’s love for us, and teach us to locate our own pain and longing in God’s eternal drama. They form us into a people who can hold the depths of our sorrow with utter honesty even as we hold to the promises of God” (Tish Harrison Warren, *Prayer in the Night*, 49–50).
- You can have hope in anxiety.
 - Hope comes in trusting Someone

- “for the Lord has heard the sound of my weeping. 9 The Lord has heard my plea; the Lord accepts my prayer. 10 All my enemies shall be ashamed and greatly troubled; they shall turn back and be put to shame in a moment” (vv. 8b–10).
- If Jesus isn’t the answer to our anxiety now, he will be the answer to our anxiety in the future.