

Session 3: Present Your Requests to God

Verse of the Week: Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God - Philippians 4:6

Companion Reading:

Anxious for Nothing Study Guide: Session 3
Book: Chapters 6 & 7

Key Scriptures:

Philippians 4:6

James 5: 13-16

Matthew 14:22-36

Luke 18:9-14

Matthew 7:7,8

John 14:13,14

Psalms 91:14-16

Philippians 4:11-13

Psalms 136:1-9

Group Questions:

Corrie Ten Boon famously asked the question, "Is prayer your steering wheel or your spare tire?"
How would you answer that?

How does a grateful heart affect your attitude toward anxiety?

Read James 5:13-16. When you pray do you believe that your words are powerful and effective? Or do you struggle with believing they make a difference?

When you pray do you tend to be detailed or vague? Why do you think you have this tendency?

Again and again Paul recognizes God's blessing. Why can we be thankful in any circumstance? Think about a time when God's blessing changed you emotionally, spiritually, and/or physically?

What area or circumstance in your life do you find yourself complaining about most?

Christ based contentment is the key to finding joy. Have you known this to be true for you? How?

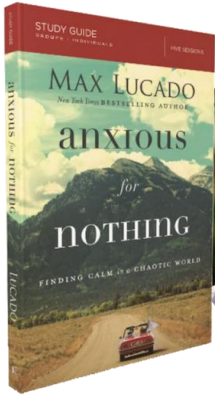
How can you apply Philippians 4:13 to your life?

Pray. Confess. Ask God to help you remember His nearness.

Group Activity:

Take some time to count your blessings, focusing your mind on God's good gifts instead of your worries.





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Personal Study

The power of prayer is not in chanting the right formula or quoting some secret code but in the heart of the one praying. God is not manipulated or impressed by formulas or eloquence, but he is moved by sincere requests. As his children, we honour him when we tell him exactly what we need. ~ Max Lucado

In every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God” (Philippians 4:6, emphasis added).

Really? In *every* situation pray with thanksgiving?

Even when that punk takes your parking spot? Even when there is no more creamer in the fridge, your toddler is screaming bloody murder, and all you want is a cup of coffee?

Even when she says, “I have cancer,” or he leaves after decades of marriage? Surely not! Surely the original Greek translation of this verse means “in *most* situations pray with thanksgiving.”

In her book *The Hiding Place*, Corrie ten Boom tells a remarkable story about gratitude. During World War II, she and her sister Betsie lived in three different concentration camps. The entire ten Boom family had been arrested for providing a safe haven to Jews and Nazi rebels. It’s estimated they saved eight hundred lives before being caught and sent away.

Corrie describes how the barracks of the Ravensbruck concentration camp in Germany was infested with fleas. The sisters were forced to sleep on wooden platforms with straw on top, but the straw was dirty, smelly, and crawling with the skin- biting pests. Corrie writes:

I sat up quickly and bumped my head on the platform above. “Fleas!” I jumped down to the floor. “The place is crawling with fleas! I . . . I don’t know how I can cope with living in such a terrible place!”



“Corrie, I think God has already given us the answer,” my sister Betsie said. “What was that verse we read from the Bible this morning?”

I pulled out my Bible from the bag I wore on a string around my neck. In the dim light, I read from 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18: “ ‘Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.’ Oh, Betsie, that’s too hard in a place like this!”

“No, come on, Corrie— let’s try. What are we thankful for?” my sister asked.

“Well . . . if we must be in this awful place, I’m thankful that we’re together.” . . .

“That’s right!” Betsie’s eyes danced. “And thank you, God, for the fleas— ”

Corrie goes on to say that the flea infestation kept the guards out of their barracks, allowing Corrie and Betsie to read the Bible aloud twice a day for any woman who wanted to hear. More and more women found the light of Christ in the darkest of places because of fleas.

Yes, there is a reason to be grateful in every circumstance.

- ❖ **Read the Key Scriptures.**

- ❖ **What theme do you see running through these verses?**

- ❖ **How does Paul say he is able to find contentment in all things?**

- ❖ **According to these verses why can we be thankful in any circumstance?**

- ❖ **What is a trying circumstance you are not thankful for? Write a prayer asking the Lord to bring gratitude and even joy when facing this difficulty**

