

STAND IN VICTORY OVER FEAR, ANXIETY & WORRY

By Kay Elise Tolman

Fear, anxiety, and worry can rob us of our joy and peace. As Christians we know better than to allow those emotions to take control. After all, the Bible instructs us not to fear 365 times, once for each day of the year. But despite our best efforts to stay focused in faith, the fear and anxiety continues to increase for many people.

Many are feeling stressed over a myriad of concerns today. We are at a dark point in history unlike any other with wars and rumors of war. Concerns over new COVID strains are troubling many; inflation and interest rates are rising while incomes are squeezed. The news media would have us believe there is an existential threat to our existence with climate change and other so-called emergencies. As a result, many people are struggling with repressed fear and anxiety, creating an underlying malaise that is disturbing sleep and causing overindulgences.

Even well-delivered prophetic words urging us to prepare for the days ahead are creating anxiety and fear for many people. These concerns have really impacted survivors of severe trauma and abuse, people that have had to grapple with death defying fear for a lifetime. Even counselors and ministers who walk in maturity and faith have reached out to me for assistance with these concerns. Some people have underlying fears, while others wear their fears on their sleeves. It isn't easy to break free from it, but it is possible!

Fear is a natural emotion designed to protect us from danger. It is not a sin to feel fear, but like all other emotions, if left unattended, repressed, or unprocessed, it can bring demonic infestation and emotional instability. In the same way Paul instructed us not to let the sun go down on our anger, it is healthy to deal with our feelings as they arise each day. Fear, stress, anxiety, and worry are like little foxes that can spoil our garden. We need to be diligent to catch those feelings, process them and bring them into the obedience of Christ. It is important we experience what we feel, but not to let emotions rule us. Our Creator designed us with emotions, and we were created in His image. Even Jesus wept. However the scripture clearly instructs us not to fear or worry. In Psalm 139:23-24 David says, "Put me to the test and sift through all my anxious cares. See if there is any path of pain I'm walking on, and lead me back to your glorious, everlasting way – the path that brings me back to you." (TPT)

We have a choice whether to live in fear, or breakthrough to greater levels of faith. I want to encourage you that fear and anxiety, even in times of great distress, can be overcome. We may have to battle and face off those spirits of fear, stress, and anxiety. We may have to speak to our soul like David did and tell ourselves we are going to be okay. It helps to ask the Holy Spirit to comfort and reassure us, after all that's His job! We also must insist our emotions come into alignment with His Spirit and the Word of God. As we do, the oppression and heaviness will lift so we can shine with God's glory and be a light through the darkness for others.

I'd like to share a short personal story. Many years ago I went to the doctor for a routine checkup, and the doctor found a lump. My mind went wild. A LUMP? I held myself together until I got to my car, then I immediately fell apart and went into absolute panic and fear. I called my friend Sarah while driving home from the doctor's office. Expecting sympathy and comfort, instead she said, "Well good, maybe now you will deal with that root of fear inside you." I was shocked by her response, but somehow knew the Lord was working through her to help me. She sent me a prayer and instructed me to pray it every time I felt fearful. "I don't care

if you have to pray this prayer 50 times a day," she said, "You are going to get over this fear." (Prayer below.)

It was six weeks before I could get in to see the specialist. In the meantime, tests were run, and images taken. The medical team knew exactly how big the lump was and exactly where it was located. But every day, admittedly several times a day, I prayed the fear prayer and surrendered my life to God. I finally concluded that whether I lived or died, I would be with Jesus, and that was all that mattered. Everything else became less important as Jesus became my absolute focus. By the time I got in to see the specialist the lump was completely gone.

Since that time, I have had many occasions to stand against fear; losing friends and family, driving in the middle of the night with no place to call home, moving to a new state alone, and standing on a global platform with my heart pounding. But the biggest hurdle for me has been overcoming financial fears as the result of two bankruptcies in my life. The Lord has been very patient with me, helping me to develop faith for major purchases, and overcoming those moments of fear when there was only a small bit of change in my checking account and bills were due.

I desire to always be faithful to God and He has been more than faithful to me. He has abundantly supplied more than I could ever think or imagine. Whether it was finances that I needed, faith for a difficult situation or a close friend to walk beside me through the rough patches, God has been truly faithful and trustworthy. He is an ever-present help in times of trouble, and He hears our cries.

In Hebrews 13:5 the LORD says, *"I will never leave you nor forsake you."* He had to write these words on my heart and repeat them often so I would believe them. Although family, friends, and loved ones all betrayed me, I had to learn to trust God never would. From that point forward my faith truly began to blossom.

Simple Exercise

It may help to do a little exercise. Imagine each thing that concerns you. Picture each fear, each anxious thought as though it were an object. Maybe it is like a backpack full of rocks, or a basket of rotten apples, however you see these items imagine giving them to the LORD.

You can say a prayer out loud:

LORD, I give you all my (Feelings/thoughts/pictures) _____ because your word says to cast the whole of my cares on you. Thank you for caring for me affectionately and watchfully. Please take these emotions and concerns, and in exchange please restore my peace and joy. Help me to grow in faith and trust you with it all.

1 Peter 5:7 says, "Casting the whole of your care [all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all] on Him for He cares for you affectionately, and cares about you watchfully." Amplified Bible (See also Psalm 55:22).

God has made provision for each of us to walk with Him in peace, hope, and faith regardless of our circumstances. James was right when he wrote in James 1:2, "My fellow believers, when it seems as though you are facing nothing but difficulties, see it as an invaluable opportunity to experience the greatest joy that you can!" (The Passion Translation)

May you be blessed with the comfort of the Holy Spirit, and the peace of God that is beyond understanding, and experience joy everlasting through your salvation in Jesus Christ.

Stand In Victory Over Fear, Anxiety, Stress & Worry

If we participate with the spirits of fear, anxiety and stress, a stronghold can develop and then function as an open door for enemy oppression and bondage that can affect us physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually.

When the fears and stresses of life threaten us, we must run to the refuge of the Most High God and receive the peace that passes all understanding.

Isaiah 26:3 "You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you."

At the first indication of fear, stress or anxiety in your body, mind, or emotions, use the following steps of faith and prayer noted below.

- 1) Pray to renounce, reject, and repent for participation with spirits of fear, stress, anxiety & worry.
- 2) Command the enemy to go.
- 3) Speak to your body to release the effects of fear and anxiety.
- 4) Speak to your mind and emotions to receive healing.
- 5) Declare your faith!

Sample prayer:

1) Heavenly Father, I renounce and reject the spirits of fear, stress, anxiety & worry. Please forgive me for all agreement and participation with these spirits, and wash me clean. I surrender my heart to you, and I cast all of my concerns on you because you care for me. (1Peter 5:7)

2) Spirits of fear, stress, anxiety and worry, I command you off of my hypothalamus and every cell and tissue of my body in the Name of Jesus Christ. I command you to lose my mind, body, soul and spirit and go immediately to the feet of Jesus Christ, in the power of His shed blood and in His authority. Holy Spirit, I ask you to drive out evil spirits with the fire of heaven and be a wall of fire around me and the glory in my midst. (Zechariah 2:5)

3) Body, I direct you to release all fear, anxiety, and stress. All adrenaline and cortisol levels are directed down to normal levels. Body, receive the peace of God into every nerve, organ and cell in the Name of Jesus Christ.

Exercise: Exhale the stress and fear, and slowly breathe in the peace of God.

4) Mind and emotions receive your healing, receive the peace of God that transcends all understanding. Mind and emotions I command you to align with the Holy Spirit and the Word of God.

5) Declare, "God has not given me a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love and of a sound mind." (2 Timothy 1:7) I receive the peace of God, which transcends all understanding and guards my heart and mind in Christ Jesus. (Paraphrased - Philippians 4:7) Holy Spirit please fill me with your grace, peace and healing virtue. Please show me any time these spirits attempt to steal the peace you've given me. Help me to walk by your Spirit and glorify your name.

Thank you, LORD, for my victory!