

Our Man-Made Pandemic Of Anxiety



By Rob Pue

February 4, 2024

Worry. Anxiety. Depression. These disorders have reached pandemic proportions, afflicting people from all walks of life, worldwide. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, here in America, more than one in four adults (26%) suffer from depression or some form of major anxiety disorder, and 52% all adults take some type of anti-anxiety or anti-depression drug daily, and as more and more continue to face unprecedented challenges, the numbers are rising.

This past year saw a marked increase in suicides – here in our country and around the world. And for those afflicted, there is no shortage of fuel for our worry and anxiety. Today we face increasing costs of all goods and services, the ongoing Globalist agenda, threats to our Constitutional Republic, a deluge of foreign invaders on our borders, a tyrannical government machine, racial, political, and moral division, and so much more. Men, and heads of households especially, worry about paying the bills and keeping food on the table, and few are in a position to survive past their next paycheck. What will happen in the event of an emergency? Where will the money and resources come from to meet our needs and the needs of those who depend on us?

Faced with such threats to the way of life we know and love, many are ready to give up their freedoms in exchange for Big Brother's promise to make it all better. Yet we know that the

planned takeover by socialists and communists will only make matters worse – and so we worry more.

The truth is, the world has always been in turmoil – ever since the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden. I wonder what people worried about a thousand years ago – or two thousand years ago – or five thousand years ago. Surely, they all had worries of their own. Our parents had worries. Our grandparents had worries. And today, we carry on the tradition, but we've cranked it up a few notches. Today, we *really* worry!

I don't mean to make light of the situation. Quite the opposite. Anxiety disorders are real. Many who suffer these maladies can't help themselves. Sufferers often know their emotions are out of control, their feelings are unreasonable, their worries are largely unfounded. Yet they can't seem to pull out of it. It becomes a downward spiral, often into deep depression, or to the point where they can no longer function normally.

And Christians are not immune. In fact, I'd venture to guess that many of us deal with anxiety more than non-believers, because I believe this is a spiritual matter, and as God's children, we're directly targeted by the enemy in these spiritual attacks of anxiety. But most of the things the enemy causes us to fear or worry about never happen anyway.

God's Word tells us 365 times (once for each day of the year) to "Fear Not." Fear not. Jesus Himself spent a lot of time teaching on this subject. In Luke 12, He said, *"...Don't worry about your life, what you will eat; or about the body, what you will wear. For life is more than food and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens: they don't sow or reap; they don't have a storeroom or a barn; yet God feeds them. Aren't you worth much more than the birds?"* (Luke 12:22-24).

He went on to ask the question, *"Can any of you add a single*

cubit to his height (or one moment to his life span) by worrying? If then, you're not able to do even a little thing, why worry about the rest?" (Luke 12: 25-26).

Then He said, "Don't keep striving for what you should eat and what you should drink, and don't be anxious. For the idolaters eagerly seek all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first the kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you." (Luke 12: 27-31).

Then, as a loving Father would gently remind his children He said, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Luke 12: 32-34).

Jesus points to the ravens, the birds of the air. He points to the wildflowers, to the grass of the field. In short, He points to CREATION. In Genesis 1:1 we read, *"In the beginning, God Created..."* Yes! God created the heavens and the earth. He made it all. When you make a deeper study of the topic of creation, you realize that God made everything well – intricately designed with a purpose and a plan. God did not create anything that was not well equipped to survive and thrive in this world, according to His purpose.

God provides for everything He's made. He sustains this old world. And He cares deeply about each of His children. The Bible says He even numbers the very hairs of our heads! God feeds the birds of the air personally. Isn't that amazing?! The Scriptures tell us that not even a single sparrow falls to the ground without Him knowing. How He cares for, and provides for His creation and He especially delights in providing for all of our needs. Even more so when we look to Him and trust Him for His provision and acknowledge His hand of care upon our lives, with hearts of gratitude and thanksgiving.

Consider a tree. From its roots to its trunk, to its branches and beyond, it draws water and nutrients up to the tips of the upper-most leaves. Man, in all his wisdom, cannot build a pump efficient enough to do a task like this. Yet God has equipped the trees to survive and thrive – automatically! And look at the intricacies of a leaf and consider how the tree cleans our air and provides oxygen for all the earth's creatures!

Consider your own body. The Bible says that God "knit" each of us together in our mother's wombs. Scientists are now coming to understand that this word "knit" is more appropriate than anyone realized previously. Our muscles and sinews and internal organs and bones are literally "knit" together, and – the process begins at the moment of conception. We are fearfully and wonderfully made. Consider your eyes, your hands, your senses. Consider how our bodies heal themselves and fight infection and disease.

Consider the delicate balance of nature, how the Earth is the perfect distance from the Sun to provide us with the ideal climate. Consider how the Moon not only lights our night sky, but also controls our ocean tides, so the water of our planet is not dead and stagnant, but moves, cleans itself and sustains life.

Truly, when Jesus was teaching this lesson on worry, He meant for us to look to God's creation and understand that what He creates, He sustains and provides for – and more than that – cares for on a personal level. Awhile back, when I was particularly troubled by a particular situation, I was in prayer when the Lord spoke to my heart and asked directly, "Rob, how old are you? Haven't I always taken care of you, all of these years? Look at all you've been through in your life. Wasn't I always there for you? Why, then, do you doubt Me now?!"

Prior to writing this article, I sent an email out to a great many Christian leaders. I was seeking help in research, and

asked the question: "Can you cite any examples of when God did not provide for His people?" I received quite a few responses, but no one was able to give a single example of God not caring for His children. One man said, "Wow. Good luck with that one! I've only been a Christian 21 years, but I can't think of a single instance of God not providing for a Christian. It will be interesting to see the responses."

Several people cited those who suffered and died for their faith (including Christ's disciples), but that wasn't what I was asking. Scripture tells us we *will* suffer persecution for our faith in Christ. It's to be expected. And we should count it all "joy." Countless thousands have given their lives for their faith and studies show that persecution of Christians is greater now than any other time in history. Others brought up famines (past, present and future); one person mentioned the Great Depression here in America; several mentioned the tribulation of the "end times."

No doubt we live in a fallen world. It's no longer God's ideal "habitat for humanity." Sin has ruined it. But He still watches over and protects those who are His. He still hears and answers the prayers of the righteous. So then, just as the Bible tells us, our anxieties and worries are the products of our own faithlessness. Much like the Israelites when God brought them out of Egypt.

One friend observed: "time and time again God provided and did wonderful and miraculous things for the people of Israel, yet each time when they were faced with a crisis, they cried out in disbelief that God would actually come through. In Exodus 16, the Israelites said, 'if only we had died by the Lord's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death.' Verse 4 goes on to tell us how God provided manna from heaven with very strict instructions on how it was to be dealt with. God even tells them that He will test them to see whether they will

follow His instructions. Of course this wasn't good enough. They wanted meat. (So He even provided meat for them in the desert).

“The people of Israel are continuously faced with a crisis that they cannot meet by their own means. Each time they are faced with an impossible obstacle, God provides for them with His incredible power. Do they remember the last time that God delivered them? NO. Each time when a crisis comes up, starting at the banks of the Red Sea, all they can think is, ‘I want to go back to slavery.’ As God moves them forth through the waters of the Red Sea, provides fresh drinking water where there should be none, provides food where there should be none, these people cannot remember how God protected and provided. You would think that after they saw God spread the waters of the Red Sea they would believe all things are possible, but sadly, that was not the case.

“We know that the people of Israel had to wander through the desert for forty years. Forty years is a long time to walk considering the journey only would have needed 17 days to complete. Why did God make them walk and wander for forty years? The answer is because it took forty years for them to trust God. I believe we would all like to think that we would not have had to wander forty years in the desert to learn these lessons if we had been there. Unfortunately, speaking for myself, I know that's not the case. It took me forty years to see the blessings that God had given me in my life, to recognize that this was His doing. It took me forty years to learn to believe that the Bible is truly God's Word. It took me forty years to understand the importance of prayer each day. It took me forty years to know that God works all things for good. It took me forty years to realize truly who Jesus is and what He did for me with an understanding that comes from the heart and not the mind. It took me forty years to realize that God is sovereign...”

Another Christian leader noted, “God never abandons us. Jesus

says in Matthew 28:20, '*...I am with you always...*' God does, however, turn aside from evil – for a Holy God cannot dwell with ungodliness...but while God may turn away for a season, we are never abandoned forever. God constantly seeks us, finds us where we are and calls us home to Him. We become lost when we turn our back on Him, deny Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit."

Yes, that's it. We become lost. That is what our adversary, Satan, wants – for us to be lost. But that is not God's will for us. We're not meant to live in fear and anxiety. 2 Timothy 1:7 tells us, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

I've come to understand that anxiety and worry is the by-product of a spirit of pride and self-sufficiency. The truth is, we can't help or save ourselves. Apart from God, we can do nothing. (John 15:4-5). When we become hard hearted and believe we can control and do things in our own power, it's no wonder we worry and become anxious. Especially as Christians. Because as Christians we KNOW we're really powerless without Him. As lost sheep who have gone astray, we must return to the fold, to the loving arms of our Provider.

And that's the cure for this "pandemic" that continues to plague our world – faith and trust in our Lord. Take Him at His word. Believe His word. We say we do, so why, then, don't we? In Jesus' name, cast out the enemy's evil spirits of unbelief, anxiety, pride, fear, faithlessness and self-sufficiency, and then turn to the Savior, who will rescue you. Isaiah 26:3 says of the Lord, "*You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in You.*" Perfect peace – the perfect antidote to the pandemic of anxiety! And what does the Scripture say we must do to obtain this peace? Keep our minds steadfast on the Lord, and simply believe and trust Him. Praise the Lord for His protection and blessings.

Audio CDs and transcripts of this message are available when you call me at Wisconsin Christian News, (715) 486-8066. Or email Rob@WisconsinChristianNews.com. Ask for message number 416.

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E-Mail Rob Pue: Rob@WisconsinChristianNews.com