

# DAILY DEVOTIONAL

I Have Questions / What do we do about anxiety?

## WEEK 1

THERE ARE TOOLS TO TAKE ON ANXIETY.

### DAY 1

Have you ever had a rough day that was turned around when someone said something nice to you? It probably lifted your spirits and made your day just a little bit better, didn't it? That's because words are powerful. And while we've all been on the receiving end of negative words, in today's verse, Solomon reminds us how we can use our words for the good of others.

***Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up (Proverbs 12:25 NIV).***

Kind words are like a lifeline that we can throw out to friends who might be weighed down or discouraged by things like anxiety, stress, or worry.

A compliment, an encouraging text, or even an encouraging Instagram comment has the power to cheer someone up. It has the power to change the course of someone's entire day!

In a world where tearing people down is the norm, life-giving words can make more of a difference than we sometimes realize. So what if it started with you?

Who's one person you know—maybe someone dealing with a lot of stress, anxiety, or pressure right now—who could benefit from the encouraging power of a kind word? **Today, choose to make a positive difference with your words by taking a step to encourage that person.** Write them a note, send them a text, or use social media to build them up!

### DAY 2

Have you ever had a week when basically everything went wrong? Or a month or a semester when life just seemed to take wrong turn after wrong turn? We've probably all been there.

Life is full of highs, but it's also full of lows. Maybe an unexpected injury ended your season, or some drama ruined your closest friendship. Maybe your parents got a divorce, or you lost someone you loved. In those moments, when nothing feels like it's going the way we thought or hoped it would, it's easy to find yourself wrestling with anxiousness, stress, and even doubt.

***And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose (Romans 8:28 NIV).***

While it's easy to let our circumstances affect our confidence in God, in this verse, the Apostle Paul reminds us that in all things—the good and the bad—God is always working. And that means He can be trusted. God is big enough to take it all and use it to ultimately achieve His plan for the world and His purpose for your life.

Today, if you're dealing with stress, anxiousness, or doubt because of a tough situation in your life, remember that God can be trusted. **Write today's verse on a notecard or type it into your phone as a reminder that you can trust Him no matter what you're going through.**

When you choose to trust in His plan and remember that God is always working, you may just find that God really *IS* bigger than even our toughest circumstances.

## DAY 3

Throughout high school, you will make countless decisions—some big and some small. And honestly, the same will be true for the rest of your life!

Life is full of decisions. And the more choices we have to make, sometimes the more stressed out we can get! How do you not get stressed out trying to make the right decisions? How do you avoid anxiety about making the wrong ones?

Thankfully, if we follow Jesus, we don't have to stress. Why? Because God is directing our steps. Check it out:

***In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps (Proverbs 16:9 NIV).***

In today's verse, Solomon reminds us that God is with us,

leading every step we take. In other words, He has a plan for us!

If we put our trust in Him, God will take us where He wants us to be.

Should we try to make the best decisions we can? Of course! But do we need to stress and worry and fret over it all day and all night? Not at all.

**Today, pray and ask God to show you the best decisions to make today and give you the courage to make that good decision. Then, thank God for taking it from there and guiding your steps forward.**

## DAY 4

Imagine carrying your book bag to school every day, only instead of it being full of textbooks, binders, and notebooks, it's full of the things you worry about, get anxious about, or fear the most.

It could be upcoming tryouts, a big test, or a college application. Maybe someone in your family is sick, or your parents have been arguing a ton lately.

Just like our books in a book bag, we carry this stuff with us every day. We're burdened, worried, and exhausted, and over time, it can really weigh us down.

But here's one of the amazing things about God: He doesn't want you to carry those burdens alone. In fact, He doesn't

want you to carry them at all! Why? Because He cares for you. Check it out:

***Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you (1 Peter 5:7 NIV).***

You see, God is not some distant being out in the middle of nowhere. No, God is personal. He knows you and is concerned with the intricate details of your life. Whatever it is you're anxious about, He wants you to give it to Him. He wants you to cast it on Him—to throw it His way because He can handle it.

**Today, write down all the things that you're burdened by and read them out loud to God.** As you do, picture taking them out of your bag, throwing them His way, and trusting Him with it all.

## DAY 5

Let's face it: High school is full of people who are overwhelmed, overcommitted, and overstressed.

We're overwhelmed because we're thinking too much—constantly making decisions or striving to meet expectations.

We're overcommitted because we're doing too much—school, sports, clubs, and church.

And we're overstressed because of, well, everything else—parents, social media, siblings, our after-school job, and more!

And all of that combined leads you to experience a type of fatigue that goes beyond just physical. Mentally and internally we just feel . . . exhausted.

Thankfully, in the midst of the chaos of life, Jesus offers us an invitation:

***"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28 NIV).***

Tired from the craziness of life? Burdened by fear, the pressure to measure up, or the insecurity that says you never will? Jesus says, "Come to me to find rest." Jesus wants to restore what's been depleted in your mind, heart, and soul.

The truth is, your soul is at its best when you come to Jesus for rest. **So this week, make it a point to spend a few minutes with Jesus on a daily basis—not to add yet another thing to your already-filled day, but to find some rest.** Tell Him what's on your mind, in what areas you're struggling, and where you need some help. And then just chill for a few minutes knowing He's with you, loves you, and cares about it all.