

Get Off The Anxiety Cycle

Dear Friend,

Last Friday night, all night long, the Lord took me to the wood shed and told me over and over “Larry, *get off the anxiety cycle.*” He would whisper it to me in my sleep, wake me up and speak to my spirit and mind, and then put me back to sleep and through my dreams say “get off the anxiety cycle.”

The saying “be taken to the wood shed” was what was said years ago when a parent wanted to discipline a child. When I was being disciplined in my spiritual “wood shed”, the Lord showed me that being on the anxiety cycle, of where I am living in the anxious zone, is self-destructive.

For that reason, Paul said in **Philippians 4:6,7** “**Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**”

Jesus loves us so much. It is because He loves us so deeply, that He desires to move us out of the anxiety cycle of this world, into His eternal presence and power, which is the faith, hope and love zone.

In **1 Corinthians 13:13** we read, “**Now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.**”

Getting off the anxiety cycle and living in faith, hope and love zone involves living a life of confidence in God’s power, love and ability to meet our needs.

“**Do not throw away your confidence.**” These words from **Hebrews 10:35** jumped right out at me when I came across them in my daily Bible reading.

How easy it is to lose confidence when things don’t work out the way we believe they should. At such a time discouragement and disappointment can come upon us to the extent that we lose our confidence. In order to stay off the anxiety cycle we are told to “**Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you stood your ground in a great contest in the face of suffering**” (**Hebrews 10:32**).

Yes, you may be facing many difficulties at this time. That is why it is so important you stay off the anxiety cycle and believe God that things will get better. In order to do that it is absolutely critical that you immerse yourself in the Scriptures and, “**persevere so that when you have done the will of God, you will receive what He has promised**” (**Hebrews 10:36**).

Living in the faith, hope and love zone involves trusting God to the extent you can be courageous to the point you will do what is right, in spite of your fear. It is being able to see that **FEAR** is actually **False Evidence Appearing Real**.

In order to resist fear and stay off the anxiety cycle, we must come to the realization that if we are just believing God for the things we can do ourselves, we are limiting Him.

Living in the faith, hope and love zone causes us to reach up and grab a hold of the promises of God. As we hold on to these promises found in the Bible, they keep us off the anxiety cycle where we turn the sweet milk of faith into the sour milk of worry and fear.

If Satan can keep us on the anxiety cycle where fear of the future takes over, we will become paralyzed and ineffective and unproductive in the work of God, Being on the anxiety cycle will also cause us to feel totally overwhelmed by the pressure of all that we feel we have to do immediately.

Instead of getting on the anxiety cycle we must do what God tells us to do in **Psalm 50:15** when He says, **“call upon me in the days of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will glorify me.”**

No one signed articles of faith in the early church. Instead, they acted in faith and called upon God. They did not gather to study healing of the inner child or psychosomatic diseases, they simply went forth by faith and healed the sick. They fearlessly lived in the faith, hope and love zone as they fed the hungry, housed the homeless and declared, “Thus says the Lord” to the arrogant power brokers. The first century Christians were frequently imprisoned, because they were more concerned about saving faith than saving face.

Living in the faith, hope and love zone caused every early believer to consider herself or himself a Freedom Fighter in God’s Revolution of Love. First century believers knew that in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, existed a power that was second to none. This was the power of God unto salvation, for all who repented and trusted Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

They were armed not with knives or guns, but with the sharp two edged sword of the word of God. It is there that these Freedom Fighters found in God’s word the power to be more than conquerors through Christ who strengthened them.

The true Freedom Fighters of the Lord are those who are able to march forward under the same banner Paul did and declare, “I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation.”

All around people are dying while we claim to have the message of life. What kind of message is this anyway if we are always on our anxiety cycles and ignoring the multitudes who are dying without hope? Will judgement day simply reveal that while we lived on earth we were practical atheists on anxiety cycles who are doomed to hearing the Savior say, “Get away from me, I never knew you”?

God forbid! The declaration *Christ is Risen* is a call to action! A revolutionary call to arms for those who believe. After all, we did not choose Him, Jesus chose us. We are no longer our own. We have been redeemed through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. This shed blood now commands us to attack the domains of Satan and set the captives free.

It is not easy staying off the anxiety cycle. All of us are tempted daily to give into fear. Perhaps that is why we are told over and over in the Bible to “*fear not*” or “*do not be afraid.*” Daily, we are given choices whether we are going to believe the assurances of God’s word or the crazy tapes of fear and unbelief that Satan turns loose in our heads.

We can either lie in our beds at night unable to sleep, as fear haunts us concerning the future, or we can accept the promises of God's word and live in the faith, hope and love zone. We are told in **Proverbs 3:24-26**, “**You will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet. Have no fear of sudden disaster or of the ruin that overtakes the wicked, for the Lord who is your confidence will keep your foot from being snared.**”

When we ride the anxiety cycle fear will wrap its snarling hands around us until we find ourselves suffocating in worry, anxiety and fear. In the middle of the storms of life, Jesus is asking us the same thing He did His disciples in **Mark 4:40**, “**Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?**”

I remember one battle when the temptation to panic was almost overwhelming. Fear kept knocking at the door, but I knew I could not give in to it. Instead, I chose to reflect on past experiences where I had witnessed God's faithfulness. I thought about the miracles that He has done in my life, I meditated on the scriptures that said if we believe in Him than His words will not come back void.

As I did this, the thoughts of the reality of \$280,000 in bills and loans for New Life Evangelistic Center would try to get me on the anxiety cycle. These bills included due dates on utility and credit card bills, plus repairs that needed to be done. These circumstances dictated I had every reason to panic. Yet faith, personal experience, the promises of scripture, and the wonders of creation all revealed the faithfulness of God.

As day after day passed, and prayer after prayer was said, the results appeared to be the same—expenses kept overwhelming the income. Then when hope seemed to be a product of the past, I received a phone message. The message said that \$80,000 had come in from an estate settlement for NLEC that I had not even been aware of. Once again, God demonstrated His faithfulness as He had done thousands of times in the past. Along with this miracle He directed me to **John 16:23** where it says, “**In that day you will ask Me nothing.**”

Then I came across Oswald Chamber's interpretation of that verse in his work My Utmost For His Highest. He asks, “*When is that day? It is when the ascended Lord, makes you one with the Father. In that day you will be one with the Father just as Jesus is, and He said, ‘In that day you will ask Me nothing’. Until the resurrection life of Jesus is fully exhibited in you, you have questions about many things. Then after a while you find that all your questions are gone—you don't seem to have any left to ask. You have come to the point of total reliance on the resurrection life of Jesus, which brings you into complete oneness with the purpose of God. Are you living that life now? If not, why aren't you?*”

Oswald Chambers was describing what it is like living in the faith, hope and love zone. It is in that zone where the peace of God becomes so real in life, that even in the most difficult situations we do not need to fear. It is there we can rely on the reality and certainty of **Romans 8:28**, where it says, “**All things work for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose.**”

Knowing that many of us have not yet arrived at living constantly in the faith, hope and love zone, Jesus in His love and mercy, goes on to assure us in the rest of **John 16:23,24** with these words, **“I am telling you the truth: The Father will give you whatever you ask for in my name. So far, you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask now, and you will receive that your joy will be complete.”**

Each day I need to make every effort to resist fear and stay off the anxiety cycle, I must continue to pray and read the Bible then through the power of the Holy Spirit, I will be awakened to the fact that God is in control, and there is no need for me to be anxious. As I do this, my joy will be complete.

Chambers, in his work My Utmost For His Highest, gives us further insight on how we can stay off the anxiety cycle, even in the midst of adversity when he writes, *“Huge waves that would frighten an ordinary swimmer produces a tremendous thrill for the surfer who has ridden them. Let’s apply that to our own circumstances. The things we try to avoid and fight against like tribulation, suffering, and persecution are the very things that produce abundant joy in us. We are more than conquerors through Him in all these things; not in spite of them, but in the midst of them. A Saint doesn’t know the joy of the Lord in spite of tribulation, but because of it. Paul said, ‘I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulations.’ The undiminished radiance, which is the result of abundant joy is not built on anything passing, but on the love of God which nothing can change. And the experiences of life, whether they are everyday events or terrifying ones, are powerless to ‘separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord’ (Romans 8:39).”*

It is the knowledge of this love of God which enables me to have that deep inner joy, even in the deepest darkness moments. The love of God, which has been manifested through the life, death and resurrection of the historical Christ, gives me the strength and the ability to live daily in the faith, hope and love zone. This happens as I call out to God for help—even in the moments of utter hopelessness.

Any time I step out of my comfort zone and trust God’s provision, I have to deal with the unknown. In **Acts 20:22** Paul told the elders in Ephesus, **“And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there.”** Not knowing, Paul was going anyway by faith.

That is what living in the faith, hope and love zone is all about. It is moving by faith into areas we don’t know what is going to happen. It is there God is free to do “exceedingly far beyond what we can ask or think.”

“God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind” (2 Timothy 1:7). It is this power, love and sound mind which allows us to be overcomers as day after day, week after week the assaults come. These attacks often come from places we least expect them. There are the disappointments, the pressures, the unmet expectations. It would be so easy to ride the anxiety cycle over and over.

It is times like that, in which God is calling each of us get off the cycle of anxiety and live in the resurrection power of Jesus Christ. It is there we have victory over sin, the devil and the world's system. **Revelations 2:7** promises, **“To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.”**

It is not easy to get off the anxiety cycle when one is persecuted, put in prison, suffering and in need. Yet we are told, **“Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life” (Revelations 2:10).**

The pressure is on, but we can't afford to give up. As Satan attacks, we must resist him steadfastly, living by faith in the Faith, hope and love zone, **“Because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete not lacking anything” (James 1:3,4).**

If we are going to be overcomers living in the faith, hope and love zone, rather than riding the anxiety cycle, we must learn how to **“use the sword of the Spirit, and the shield of faith, to quench every fiery dart of the evil one” Ephesians 6:16,17.** As we use these spiritual weapons, we must remember that Satan has been defeated through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Colossians 2:13-15 tells us that, **“God made you alive with Christ. He forgave you all your sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against you and that stood opposed to you; He took it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.”**

As we desire to stay off the cycle of anxiety, we are given promise after promise in Revelations 2 and 3 (please read on your own for a deeper understanding). In spite of these words of promise it is so easy to get tired out, worn out and burned out as we battle the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh day after day. That is why it is so critical that we keep our daily appointments with God. In these daily appointments we talk to God in prayer, as we read and meditate on the scriptures, and behold the wonders of God's creation.

Instead of just giving up when we face overwhelming physical, mental and spiritual needs, we need to live in the faith, hope and love zone and declare, **“My God will meet all your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus” Philippians 4:19.** I have to stand on that promise daily believing God to meet the ever growing financial needs of the New Life Evangelistic Center.

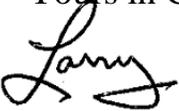
Those who have gotten off their anxiety cycles and are now living in the faith, hope and love zone are the ones who are reaching out to the poor, the fatherless, the widowed, the hurting and the homeless. They declare, **“Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal” (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).**

We will stay off the anxiety cycles if we always remember what God tells us in **Hebrews 13:5** when he says, **“Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.”**

As we live daily in the faith, hope and love zone we are promised for Christ declared, **“It is done. I am the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost for the spring of the water of life. He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be My son” (Revelations 21:6, 7).**

As we live each day striving to stay off the anxiety cycle let us allow the Holy Spirit to keep us steadfast, immovable; always abounding in the work of God.

Yours in Christ,


Larry Rice