

IS THERE

State Farm is in the insurance business. People buy insurance to lower their anxiety about possible loss. Loss of life, property, health, income and the list goes on. Currently our world, nation, and state are experiencing all of these losses and insurance isn't a great help and is definitely NOT lowering anxiety levels. So what do we do, where do we turn?

God is in the assurance business! As we face this crisis, we as human beings are in need of assurance.

Philippians 4:4-7 New International Version (NIV)

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Have you bought enough toilet paper? Enough bottled water? Enough bread? Enough bullets? WHY do we hoard items in the midst of a crisis? Assurance, or the LACK OF ASSURANCE!! We can't control the virus, the economy, travel bans, the next day; BUT we can control how much toilet paper we have in our basement. We try to find assurance or be in control by having a stack of items, cash or whatever on hand. We are trying and FAILING to have assurance in this crisis. So, if insurance (Jake) is limited, control (toilet paper, water, et.) is not in our hands, where do we find assurance?

A living, loving GOD!

Matthew 6:25-34 New International Version (NIV)

25 "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 27 Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

28 "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. 29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? 31 So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' 32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these

things will be given to you as well. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

So, if we are searching for assurance and peace, if we want to “be there” for ourselves and our neighbors, what must we understand and grasp as we live life in the midst of crisis?

1. Worrying (Anxiety) Accomplishes Nothing

Once heard of a man who struggled his whole life with anxiety until he hired a “professional worrier.” Whenever anxiety would appear, he gave it to the professional and let them worry about it. A friend asked how much it cost and he told them \$75,000 a year. The friend asked “What if you can’t pay?” To which the man replied, “It’s not my problem, let them worry about it!”

Worry is like a rocking chair, it gives you something to do but you never get anywhere. Or,

Worry is like a car running in neutral. You’re burning gas and oil and adding wear and tear, but not going anywhere.

It is not easy or simple to avoid worry, but it begins with realizing it accomplishes NOTHING. This realization is the first step towards ASSURANCE.

2. God Cares About You

Philippians 4:5 “The LORD is NEAR.”

Matthew 6:26 “Are you not much more valuable...”

Our world is taking measures to isolate us from one another. In isolation, it is easy to feel alone, unloved, and uncared for. Be assured, GOD CARES! We are each valued children of God. God knows us by name and will never leave us. Look out the window, see the birds, squirrels, moon, stars - you are more important than all of these! Be assured, God CARES.

3. Look at Priorities

Often when we have more, we worry more!

One day a man was in a serious car accident! He totaled his very expensive BMW. At the scene people could hear him crying “My BMW! My BMW!” An emergency worker told the man, “We have more serious issues to deal with, your arm was cut off!” Suddenly the man started crying, “My Rolex, my Rolex!”

We focus on the wrong things. We believe that assurance comes from having the right stuff. We often blame teens for being consumed by having the right clothes, looks, car, phone, and more; but all of us struggle to prioritize what’s truly important. “Seek first the

Kingdom of God.” Let’s open our eyes and seek the truly important and God-given things in our lives and find assurance in them.

4. Live Life (This Crisis) One Day at a Time

Matthew 6:34 *Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*

We spend so much time (70%) worrying about what has happened or what might happen. In the process, we forget about today! Our current situation is unprecedented! The virus is out, the future unknown, but the beauty of each day is still there if we look around us and in the present. We can’t be consumed by what was or what might be, but instead be Assured and invigorated by what IS.

5. Pray

Many of us who struggle with worry and anxiety, seek out therapy. Why? Because talking about issues and sharing feelings helps us move toward an assurance of a better tomorrow. Praying is “talk therapy!” Prayer is an appointment with a living, loving and caring God; who wants to listen. He is a God, a Friend who wants each of us to live life abundantly! In our days of isolation, there is a “Therapist” who knows you by name, always has an opening (time for you), is a great listener, who wants what is best for you and who offers assurance to face the day!

So, be a “good neighbor,” “be there,” and bring some assurance for you and the neighbors around you!