

Don't 'Do It Afraid'—Do It With Jesus

Wars, pandemics, natural disasters and food shortages can trigger fear. “What if” questions run through our minds daily. Even deeper, more personal aspects like keeping a job, the healing of a loved one or an addiction that binds a family member keep us up at night. How do we live in peace and not anxiety?

In 2015, Sam McDowell was faced with paralyzing fear of driving after a collision with a semi-truck on an exit ramp. “For the first year after the accident, I would literally shake just while riding in a car,” she says. “I thought I was going to die.” In her podcast interview, she shares how she went from fear to faith by consistently asking Jesus to sit in the uncomfortable emotions with her. This time with the Lord transformed her.

While it would be tremendous to be delivered all at once, the reality for McDowell and most of us is the necessity to walk out our freedom daily. After sitting with Jesus time after time, we begin to believe He is who He says He is. Trust deepens, and our fears lessen.

The problem with fear and anxiety is the longer a person avoids dealing with these emotions, the more ingrained they become. Existing is the goal, and anxiety becomes the identity. McDowell began to recognize this in her life and made a choice—the choice to face and overcome her fears. She told herself she was going to drive on the interstate but would just do it afraid. In that moment, the Lord spoke to her heart and instructed her not to do it afraid, but *with* Jesus.

There it is. How do we cope and overcome? We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us (see Phil. 4:13).

5 Ways You Can Overcome in Faith—With Jesus

1. Turn to and lean into Jesus. Read Psalms, and you will see how David leaned into the Lord by sharing his emotions and thoughts. The Lord loves us so much, He wants us to come to Him and share our feelings. It's time to release the burdens from your shoulders to Jesus. Transparency and vulnerability are necessary keys to lean in.

2. Engage in praise and worship. Praise the Lord even when you don't feel as if you can. Turn on music and begin to refocus your attention on Jesus and not on the circumstance that is triggering the overwhelming emotion. Worship is a weapon that defeats the darkness and breaks the bonds of fear. The Lord inhabits the praises of His people (see Ps. 22:3) so when we sing about who He is, His presence rests on and within us. Peace replaces anxiety.

3. Read Scriptures and place them around you. Put them on your phone, refrigerator, desk and car. Find ones that speak directly to your anxiety and then quote them often.

4. Choose your thoughts. Do you know you can choose what you think on? Our brains cannot think two opposing thoughts at the same time. Paul tells us in Philippians 4:8 to think on what is lovely, true, pure and right. If you become anxious or stressed, identify what you are thinking about. Then begin to think on the truths of God. What does the Word say about who God is? What promises can you remind yourself of in the moment? Who are you in Jesus?

5. Set a phone alarm to remind you God is always with you. He is working when you do not see it or feel it. He is always working.

Father, I pray that You would sit with each person reading this. I pray that Your presence would engulf heavy and fearful hearts to bring freedom. I pray that hope would arise. Hold them in Your loving arms. In Jesus' name, Amen. {eo}

Kristi Lemley is a speaker, author, podcast host of the Power to Transform podcast on the Charisma Podcast Network, professor and counselor. She is passionate about reigniting the fire in the hearts of believers to transform lives. She connects in a transparent way that breaks spiritual barriers so every person can walk out their purpose with the authority and power of God. An ordained minister, she speaks at churches, conferences and retreats nationally and internationally. She has authored two books, *Transformed: Live God's Best* and *ABLAZE: Prepare Your Heart for Revival*.