

When ‘What Ifs’ Keep You Up at Night

It is the middle of the night and I’m awake. Wide awake.

Yesterday I stayed home from work because I’ve been fighting a wicked cold or flu thing and I slept most of the day. I was actually thinking I might be well-rested for the next day.

No such luck.

Part of the problem is my house got quite warm and I just don’t sleep in warmth.

Secondly, I’m anxious.

“do not be anxious about anything ...” (Phil. 4:6, ESV).

Every time I say the word anxious, those words pop into my head.

And yet, I’m having difficulty letting go of my fear.

It’s this storm coming.

It’s feeling unprepared.

It’s the fact that I delayed something I shouldn’t have. Been on my to-do list for three months. Since I bought this house.

And I haven’t done it ... just kept moving it to the next day.

For three months.

So many things are like that for me .. there is just so much to do. What other really important things have I missed, forgotten, or put too far down the list?

I’m watching the rain drizzle right now, and fearing the deluge that is predicted.

I keep praying ... placing my fear in God's hands ... and then picking it back up again ... then repeating the process until I can't sleep.

I have thought about walking around my home praying. I began my walk and then decided that I want to write some verses down and place them around my house. I've wanted to do that for a while as well.

Why did I buy a house close to water?

Water and me ... well, we have a history. Wet basement over and over again. Wet yard ... rivers running through it over and over again. Wet. Wet. Wet.

Even my kids have joked that we will just have to accept that we are destined to own a water park at some point in our lives ... I'm just hoping it isn't my first floor.

"but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving

"let your requests be made known to God ..." (Phil. 4:6).

I am I need to start thanking.

I am so very thankful for this wonderful house. So thankful for the dreamy yard. So thankful for the beautiful wood floors. So thankful for the bedrooms for children. So thankful for a washer and dryer that work. So thankful for air conditioning. So thankful for my relaxing backporch. So thankful for kind neighbors. So thankful for my little kitchen. So thankful for a place to live.

Oh but even as I pray and know know know that I can trust my God who gave this all to me ... I'm fearful.

I know it is because sometimes things still go horribly awry. Sometimes prayers aren't answered the way I hoped ... the way that seemed best.

What if...?

How often have I uttered that phrase, if not aloud at least in my head ... and even my heart?

Too many times.

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:6-7).

Deep breath.

Peace ... peace I can't even understand.

Seems illusive at the moment.

I feel desperate for it. I can almost taste it, but ... why am I struggling?

God says present my request with thanksgiving ... let God know what I'm feeling, thinking, worrying about, thanking Him for ... and the peace will come.

It doesn't seem like I have to do anything but give it to Him ... and not be anxious.

Is it in the process of praying that the peace comes? Do I just pray until it pours over me like syrup? Soft and smooth ... stick-to-me peace?

Do I make myself not anxious?

I don't think so, because if I could I wouldn't need to pray and it would be my own peace not His.

So ... how do I give up this little bit of panic that is clawing at my chest?

Back to my knees ... Lord, how do I have peace?

I'm desperate for a few more minutes of sleep, but I want to feel that peace that surpasses all understanding ... for both my heart and my mind.

Right now it feels like my mind needs it most.

It's whirling and I'm weary.

How do I grasp it God?

And again ... I'm reminded.

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances;

"for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." (1 Thess. 5:16-18).

OK ... pray.

Father, for me right now, it is the fear of losing my home in a storm. This precious home You have given to me and my children. This lovely home that I long to grow old in with people I love nearby. This dear place You provided my little family with ... this house. Lord, You know me ... You know my fears and my anxious thoughts. And you know that sometimes I worry about dumb stuff, but, Lord, this feels huge. This house, in the three months we have been here, has had some little hiccups ... and even those have felt discouraging to me. Oh Father, I'm so afraid. I'm so afraid of losing more. This past week You have revealed to me that I have an idol of control in my life. This is definitely not something I can control ... at all. I can't even begin to control the weather or the water or even the insurance company, but Lord, I can trust You. I know I can. So why am I so afraid? I think I know why. It is because I know sometimes You use difficult things to bring us closer to You ... and I do want to be closer to You, Lord. I'm just so afraid of more difficult things. More struggles. More heartache. Lord, I believe, help my unbelief.

I believe You are good. I believe You love me. I believe You have a plan. I believe You will provide. I believe I can trust You. I believe You know me and know what is best. There is not one thing that happens in my life that has not first gone through Your hands. Lord, I trust that Your hands hold only good for me and my children. Lord, I have to grab hold of Your peace and say, "Your will be done" and rest in that. Lord, I know You are good and wise and loving and faithful and kind. Lord, practically speaking, could You allow me to get flood insurance tomorrow? Please. If I do, I know it is all You. If I don't, I know that it is Your plan that I trust You without it. Either way, I trust that You are working.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

P.S. I have no insurance until the end of the month, BUT I have peace. I'll take that peace any day! God is so good. I didn't believe I could feel peace about all this, but I do. And that, my dear friends, is totally a Holy Spirit thing! God is so gracious to me. I laid it before Him, left it there, and He gave me peace in return! I'm so thankful! More than I can say.

Storm is coming, but it's OK.

A dear friend sent me a passage this morning that TOTALLY blessed me:

"Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress. He made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed. Then they were glad that the waters were quiet, and he brought them to their desired haven. Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of man! Let them extol him in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders" (Ps. 107:28-32).

God is good all the time ... with floods and no floods. All the time God is good!

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