

## **STAYING CALM STUDY GUIDES: WEEK ONE**

**THIS CRAZY WORLD...the more uncertain the times, the harder it is to STAY CALM. If we don't manage stress, it'll manage us. Life is hectic; stress nips at our heels; our ANXIETY LEVEL is through the roof. Anxiety is like "worry on steroids". We carry a sense of doom, worst-case scenarios that might happen sometime/somewhere. What we fear may happen is often worse than what does happen.**

**What keeps you awake at night? What distracts you from the task at hand? What makes your pulse race, your chest tighten?**

**These days, we live on edge, waiting for the other shoe to drop. It's all unwarranted, but it feels real. Most remedies for STRESS/ANXIETY focus on slowing down, doing less, a healthy lifestyle, getting MORE EXERCISE, controlling our temper, and avoiding stressful situations. This advice sounds wise, but it does not go deep enough. We complicate our lives more than anything else does. We do face real threats in this world; God spare us from IMAGINARY ONES that we conjure up in our minds.**

**ANXIOUS FOR NOTHING... In class, we'll focus on Paul's text in Philippians, written to his favorite Church, on their 11th anniversary as a church**

**Rejoice In God always. The Lord Is near. Have no anxiety about anything but in prayer let your requests be made known to God.**

**Paul was in jail; his being jailed made his friends in Philippi anxious. He urges them to be "anxious for nothing" but is that possible? That is like telling a person with a cold not to sneeze, a gambler to avoid the track. Is anxiety a disease, an addiction, or both? Can we choose not to do it? If we can't LIVE WITHOUT ANXIETY, we can at least LIVE BEYOND IT.**

**THE IMPACT OF ATTITUDES...we can't choose WHAT HAPPENS to us, just HOW WE WILL RESPOND to it. ATTITUDES are more important than FACTS. Our worst problem may not be our real problem but what it leads us to do. How we act/react may be more harmful than the threat. We'll either focus on problems, how they limit us or how God can help us.**

**JESUS ON ANXIETY...life was stressful for Jesus; he wasn't IMMUNE FROM PRESSURE. He went from 1 crisis to the next, harassed by those who felt threatened by him. He didn't reduce stress by reducing his schedule. In stressful situations he stayed centered, never overreacted, not because he was DIVINE but because he was spiritually focused. Serving Jesus added more stress to the Disciples than it removed. He didn't sugar-coat their risks ,yet he told them that they could have the same peace he had. And, so can we!**