

## **STAYING CALM: WEEK FIVE**

**STATEMENT...to stay calm, to live beyond anxiety, we learn to celebrate God's grace, we ask for his help, and we let go of our problems and stop trying to control life. We truly leave problems with God and not pretend to leave them. People gripe about how bad the world is. There are always OPTIMISTS/ PESSIMISTS who look at the same facts but who see two different pictures. Whether we are optimists/pessimists, we all have low-grade anxiety. If what WE KNOW can hurt us, what WE DON'T KNOW can drive us crazy.**

**WORD TO CONTROL FREAKS...we are never more anxious than clinging to the illusion of BEING IN CHARGE. We can't solve every problem or bear every burden. Giving God control sounds wise, but as strong-willed people, we are reluctant to give control to God/anyone else. It doesn't come naturally to us. How silly we look to God, presuming to be in charge, ignorant of our limits, and refusing to respect the BOUNDARIES where our influence ends. We are one second away from being reminded of how little control we have. Listen to Psalm 46**

**Be still and know that I am God. Be still. Leave what's beyond our control to the one who is God. Practice letting go. Let God take what we can no longer carry.**

**Not knowing God, many are defenseless against anxiety. Those who DON'T KNOW GOD don't know WHAT THEY DON'T KNOW. Faith/fear wage war in every soul; eventually one wins.**

**JESUS AND CONTROL FREAKS...Jesus drives control freaks nuts. With him, it is wise to EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED. He tells us not to worry then gives us 100 reasons to worry we never had before. He is less concerned about LOWERING OUR STRESS than in MAKING OUR LIVES SIGNIFICANT. Paul lived with "many unknowns" His life after Christ was more stressful than before Christ. Yet he says**

**REJOICE, THE LORD IS AT HAND, BY PRAYER, LET YOUR REQUEST BE MADE KNOWN TO GOD...TRANSLATED: LEAVE IT ALL WITH HIM**

**Peace is possible, not because of the ABSENCE OF STRESS but GOD'S PRESENCE. After meeting Jesus, Paul was no longer in charge. He let go and let God lead him. This wasn't a one-night process. Little by little he learned how to trust, to let faith drive his life. Giving up control isn't being helpless. We need self-confidence. Our anxiety increases if we feel helpless. We can make some things happen. What we can do, we should do. One thing we can't do: to control life/other people. Being in control was never our role to take.**

