

Unshakable

Keeping Steady in an Unsteady World

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PART 1: PEACE

Challenge Question

If God promises a peace that “*transcends all understanding*,” why do many sincere Christians still feel anxious or stressed out—even when they pray?

Introduction

Stress is a physical or emotional response to an external cause or challenge, such as a work deadline or an argument. It is a normal survival mechanism that triggers the “fight or flight” response, releasing hormones like adrenaline to help deal with immediate pressure or threats. Stress is usually short-term and fades once the trigger or situation is resolved.

Anxiety is a feeling of fear, worry, or unease that can occur as a reaction to stress, but is defined by being persistent and excessive. Unlike stress, it can linger even when no immediate stressor is present and is often an anticipation of future threats. While occasional anxiety is a normal part of life, it becomes a mental health concern (an anxiety disorder) when it is overwhelming, hard to control, and interferes with daily functioning.

Self-Assessment Table

Instructions: Rate each item below from 1–5

1 = Not stressful for me; 5 = Extremely stressful for me

	What stresses you most?	Your Rating (1–5)
1	Financial pressure / economic uncertainty	
2	Family related stress	
3	Health concerns, aging, or illness	
4	Loneliness or lack of close relationships	
5	Political turmoil in our nation	

6	Technology overload / information overload	
7	Feeling a lack of meaning or purpose	
8	Other:	

Anxiety is not just a cultural trend...it's a human reality intensified by modern pressures, constant connectivity, and uncertainty. Even devoted believers admit internal unrest. Paul's words carry credibility because they were written from prison, not comfort. The passage teaches that God's peace is not the absence of stress but the presence of Christ ruling the inner life. Peace is not something we manufacture—it is something God gives when we align our hearts, minds, and habits with Him.

In the U.S., according to the American Psychiatric Association:

- 68 % of adults reported being stressed about keeping themselves or their families safe. *American Psychiatric Association*
- 63 % are stressed about their health. *American Psychiatric Association*
- 63 % are stressed about paying bills or expenses (i.e., economic stress). *American Psychiatric Association*
- In another APA survey: 70 % cited “current events” as a major stressor; 77 % cited the economy; 73 % cited the U.S. election; 69 % cited gun violence; 68 % cited personal/family safety. *The American Institute of Stress*

Philippians 4:4–9 (NIV)

*“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. 8 Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable-- if anything is excellent or praiseworthy-- think about such things. 9 Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me-- put it into practice. And the **God of peace** will be with you.”*

Supporting Scriptures

- Isaiah 26:3 — God keeps in perfect peace those who trust Him
- 1 Peter 5:7 — Casting cares on Him because He cares

- John 14:27 — Jesus gives a different kind of peace
- Psalm 34:4 — God delivers those who seek Him
- Matthew 6:25–34 — do not worry, the Father knows our needs
- Colossians 3:15 — let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts
- Proverbs 12:25 — anxiety weighs down the heart

Case Study

“Charlie-The Christian Business Owner Who Feels Responsible for Everything”

Background: Charlie is a 48-year-old Christian who owns a mid-sized construction company. He’s been a believer for over 20 years, serves as a deacon, and financially supports missions and local ministries. People admire him as: confident, successful, a provider for others, a man of strong faith. But privately, Charlie battles chronic anxiety...especially around work and financial responsibility.

His current situation: Over the past year rising costs and supply delays have cut into profits. Two long-time employees retired unexpectedly. A major client is late paying a large invoice. Charlie fears he may have to downsize staff. At night, he lies awake replaying scenarios: “If I make the wrong decision, families could suffer.” “What if the business fails and I let everyone down?”

He reads the Bible in the morning, including Psalm 37 and Proverbs 3:5–6, but still feels his chest tighten throughout the day. He hasn’t shared this with anyone because business owners are “supposed to be in control,” he doesn’t want to worry his family, he thinks strong Christians should not struggle with fear.

What Charlie believes biblically	What Charlie <i>feels</i> :
God provides (Philippians 4:19)	“Everything depends on me.”
God directs his steps (Proverbs 16:9)	“If I don’t hold it together, it will fall apart.”
Peace is promised (John 14:27)	“People trust me — I can’t show weakness.”

Question: Charlie is a mature Christian and knows the Bible, so what advice would you give to him? How can he find peace?

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