

What Are You Afraid Of? 6¹
Some Things We Must Think About, and Do, All the Time, to Overcome Fear
Philippians 4:4–9

⁴ **Rejoice** in the Lord *always*;
again I will say, **rejoice**.

⁵ **Let** your reasonableness **be known** to everyone.
The Lord is at hand;

You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. **James 5:8**

Rejoice always,¹⁷ pray without ceasing,¹⁸ give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18

⁶ **do not be anxious** *about anything*,
but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving
let your requests be made known to God.

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you,⁷ casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. **1 Peter 5:6–7**

⁷ And **the peace of God**, which surpasses all understanding,
will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers,
whatever is true,
whatever is honorable,
whatever is just,
whatever is pure,
whatever is lovely,
whatever is commendable,

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. **John 14:27**

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. **Romans 12:2**

if there is any excellence,
if there is anything worthy of praise,
think about these things.

⁹ What you have learned
and received
and heard
and seen in me—
practice these things,

Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.¹² I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.¹³ I can do all things through him who strengthens me. **Philippians 4:11–13**

and **the God of peace will be with you**.

**PRACTICE DOESN'T MAKE PERFECT,
BUT IT DOES MAKE PERMANENT.**

¹ Message prepared and shared with the congregation of West Salem Baptist church by Dr. Paul Null, Sunday, August 25, 2019. Citations from Scripture are from the English Standard Version of the Bible.

In some ways, anxiety is a learned habit that,
through repeated flesh-forming activities
(e.g., engaging in “what if?” thinking
about the future
and exaggerating what might happen
if the “what if?” actually happens),
forms grooves in the brain,
heart muscle, and nervous system
that trigger uncontrollable anxiety.

In neuroscience, the saying is,
“Neurons that fire together wire together.”

In other words,
repeated anxious thoughts, feelings, and actions
cause certain neurons to fire together,
and this repetition causes certain neurons to wire together
to form ingrained circuits.

Like muscle memory, these circuits are habit-triggering grooves.

These anxiety-inducing grooves can be significantly eliminated and replaced
by grooves that change the brain’s circuitry,
which, in turn, automatically trigger emotions of peace and joy.

This replacement requires,
among other things (e.g., a sense of community),
repeated practice of certain activities that will be explained later.²

² Moreland, James Porter. [Finding Quiet](#) (pp. 43-44). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.