



No one has to learn how to be nervous, anxious, or stressed. What everyone could use is help learning to live with peace on the inside even when it's crazy on the outside. In this series we are going to turn to God's Word and learn that it is possible to KEEP CALM!

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family and/or with a group.

1 Rick began by reminding us of the impact stress and anxiety has on all of us. With that in mind, share some examples of how they impacted your life in 2020. What negative effects have they had on your health, your thoughts, and your relationships? Follow up: What is your level of stress and anxiety as you head into this New Year?

2 **Read Philippians 4:6-7.** How does reading those verses make you feel--does it encourage or discourage you? What promise is attached to these verses and how have you experienced that recently?

3 **ANXIETY IS real.** *The capacity for anxiety does not mean you are weak or possessed or unfaithful; it means you are human.* Why is that important to remember? In what ways can anxiety be healthy? Follow up: Rick went on to say, "So many of us are losing joy today because we are so worried about tomorrow." How can a constant focus on "What if?" paralyze a person's life from "What is"?

IMPORTANT NOTE: The focus of this series is dealing with anxiety that has a "spiritual dimension" (the kind of stress that is rooted in a divided and disordered heart) not anxiety that has a physiological cause or is rooted in emotional trauma. We are a church that believes medicine and therapy are graces of God. If you or someone you know needs additional support please connect with our **Counseling & Wellness Ministry** here: thehills.org/counseling.

4 Anxiety is **real**, but does not have to be a **cell**. *The presence of anxiety is unavoidable, but living in the prison of anxiety is optional.* **Read Philippians 4:4-8.** What are some things that stand out to you from the immediate context surrounding verses 6-7? Why do you think Paul prefaced the command to not be anxious in verse 6 with the command to "rejoice in the Lord always" in verse 4? When has that been most challenging for you?

5 **JESUS OFFERS rest to the stressed.** *Everything hinges on the very first thing we must do to escape the prison of the anxious life.* The first thing we must do to KEEP CALM is Come to Jesus! **Read Matthew 11:28-30.** How can this invitation from Jesus help you live from a place of rest when there is so much trouble to worry about?

6 *You will keep losing the battle with anxiety until you choose to ground your life in the one thing you cannot lose.* **Read Luke 10:41-42.** What are some of the places you turned to last year to relieve the stress in your life? What idols got exposed?

7 **RELIEVING ANXIETY starts with believing Jesus.** *It is important to remember that Jesus never promised a life without stressful situations.* **Read John 14:1, 27 and 16:33.** What encourages you the most from these promises? Follow up: **Read Isaiah 26:3.** *Escaping the bondage of anxiety is going to require a better "fix."* How can leaning into what you believe about Jesus help you KEEP CALM in 2021? Share some examples of what you really believe about Jesus. In what ways would that be contagious?

