

PREVENTING EMOTIONAL MELTDOWN
Overcoming Emotions that Destroy

GOD'S SOLUTION FOR MAN'S ANXIETIES

By Jim Craddock

*Preventing Emotional Meltdown:
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*Never underestimate what God can do through
the human heart fully committed to Him.*

INTRODUCTION TO EMOTIONS

Life was not supposed to be the way it is today. In the beginning, emotions were simply a reflection of the indwelling presence of God. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were to be spared of experiencing the terrible, debilitating affects of what I call “renegade emotions.” Their emotion spectrum consisted of *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control* (Galatians 5:22-23), and many more that demonstrated the dynamic image of God within.

Renegade emotions did not come with God, they came with the Fall. They are a product of a nature now turned against God and permeated with an exceedingly powerful and evil force called sin. Not only did this turn Adam and Eve’s world upside down, but turned their emotions inside out. Instead of being master over their emotions, they became the victims of them.

So powerful are these emotions, man is no longer ruled by his reason, but rather by his emotions. Renegade emotions do not enhance a person’s life, they blackmail and destroy. Don’t take my word for it, just ask those who are suffering from the terrible blackness of despair that depression brings, or the excruciating pain that runaway anxieties produce.

We are guided and dominated by our emotions rather than our reason.

Satan delights in marginalizing the Christian through destructive emotional patterns. He did his best in trying to disable the great English preacher, Charles Hadden Spurgeon through depression. He attempted the same with Amy Carmichael, God’s worker for the children of India. No one is immune to these insidious emotions.

Of course, Satan wasted no time in developing an extensive, pervasive system to address the very problems he himself had created. To marginalize anyone from trusting God to heal and deliver them from these devastating renegade emotions, we find man attempting to do through secular means that which God does through spiritual means.

GOD’S THERAPIES THE WORLD MISSED!

The Prophet Jeremiah wrote these poignant words of God, “*Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?*” (8:22a).

It is important to emphasize doctors are necessary when illnesses strike. When I have my reoccurring kidney stone attacks, I don’t call the local shrink; I head to the hospital for a bucket full of morphine. I might add God has gifted this nation with the most astounding medical science in history. God doesn’t disparage or condemn a Christian for going to a doctor or a counselor. Being a physician or a professional practitioner is both a high calling and an equally high responsibility.

Now many Christians also feel it is wrong to take medication, especially for the renegade emotions. They think it shows a lack of faith or else they feel it is just plain wrong. This is not true. There are times that medication is necessary. If I didn’t put drops in my eyes three times a

day, I would be totally blind. Without my high blood pressure medication, I would be flirting with a stroke.

So having said this, I would also say with equal firmness, we cannot allow the medical field to replace our faith in the sufficiency of Christ and His Word. That is a very real danger. In our day and age, we only begin to rush to God in prayer when the physician says there is no hope.

Believe me, there is no better therapy than the Spirit of God working through the Word of God, so the Son of God can do in our lives what cannot be done otherwise. The Bible deals with the renegade emotions and has done so before psychology or psychiatry ever came into existence.

God heals today! Often through the expertise of a doctor and just as often through an act of faith, He is our Balm of Gilead. As we trust the Spirit of God to work through a physician, so we must also trust the Spirit of God to work as only He can in the healing of our spirit, soul, and body.

EMOTIONS AN OVERVIEW

As most of us have experienced, emotions can be messy, debilitating, and dangerous. What can we do when our emotions run wild and threaten to overwhelm us? Worse, what happens when we lose control of our emotions and they begin to dominate us? These and other questions we will address in our *Preventing Emotional Meltdown: Overcoming Emotions that Destroy* series which are “*God’s Solution for Man’s Anger*,” “*God’s Solution for Man’s Anxiety*,” “*God’s Solution for Man’s Depression*,” “*God’s Solution for Man’s Fear*,” and “*God’s Solution for Man’s Guilt*.” You can obtain these books at www.HisTruthTransforms.org/Store.

The spectrum of human emotions is like a kaleidoscope, many colored and ever changing. We live in an emotionally charged world – emotions, not reason, govern our behavior. Billions of dollars are spent yearly by the marketing industry in its quest to manipulate our emotions. The medical field has undergone a paradigm change reflecting the demands for a quick fix and a feel good life. This has forced doctors to deal with symptoms rather than causes, with emotions rather than facts.

THE NATURE OF EMOTIONS

God wired us as emotional creatures. Unfortunately, our first parents’ short-circuited the system. Before Adam pulled his foolish mistake, emotions were positive, helpful, edifying, and satisfying.

As previously mentioned, after the Fall, a whole host of negative and harmful emotions arose. These renegade emotions are aggressively destructive such as anger, anxiety, depression, fear, guilt, and hatred. These emotions have the ability to blackmail us and hold us captive. Either we conquer them or they could conquer us!

The Bible gives us an account of the first case of renegade emotions - guilt, fear, and dread. Adam, along with Eve, believed the devil’s lies as God’s truth and God’s truth as the devil’s lies and in so doing got snake-bit (Genesis 3). They knew they had transgressed God’s explicit commands and were, in fact, guilty. Because they were guilty, they, for the first time ever, experienced fear – they were afraid of God. It was fear that caused them to hide from God, their

love of God had become the dread of God, for they feared the punishment that was to be meted out.

Basically, emotions tell us what we feel is right or what we feel is wrong, a case of pleasure vs. pain. Emotions are the means that both body and mind communicate to us. They are messengers. This is why it is so important to ask ourselves why do we feel the way we feel? There is a reason we feel the way we do. However, it is also important to realize our negative emotions can be organic in nature. In other words, emotions might be telling us there is a physical problem.

Emotions are messengers.

CASE HISTORIES

A wife came in and wanted me to tell her how she could have her husband's head on a platter. From what she related to me, he was worthless, useless, baseless, the meanest, orneriest, and most miserable human being ever to set foot on planet earth.

I asked her when the last time she had a medical checkup. Never! I suggested she go to her family doctor and make certain everything was in order. It wasn't. Six months later she called and thanked me for saving her marriage. "But I didn't do anything," I protested. "You sent me to a doctor and he discovered I had a very serious case of blood-sugar imbalance. It has changed my life," she went on to say, "I have the most wonderful husband in the world!"

A husband brought his frazzled wife in. She looked like she had grabbed ahold of a hot wire. Her hair all but stood straight up. Here was a bomb with a very short fuse. I think every emotion of the human spectrum were at overload. She was afraid she was crazy. He was convinced she was! It turned out though that it wasn't her nerves, but her thyroid. The thyroid was fixed and she was fixed.

A doctor's wife came in. "Don't tell me I am entering into early menopause," she declared. "I have checked with two of our doctor friends and they assure me I am not. What do you think my problem is," she asked. "Early menopause," I replied. Explosion!!! Later, she called and admitted I was right. Her doctor friends were just trying to be polite. When hormones go crazy so does the person.

Often haywire emotions are the result of an organic problem, one that needs medical attention. I have met with people who were convinced they were going insane only to find that there was an imbalance or hormone deficiency. Post-partum depression is frequent, blood disorders usually show themselves through emotional upheaval. Don't rush to judgment.

So, how do we keep our emotions in check, and what do we do when we can't or won't? The sense of losing control of our emotions is devastating.

OUR HELPER

Remember, you cannot conquer your emotions yourself, you must put the Spirit of God to work and allow Him, through you, to overcome your renegade emotions. We have the Holy Spirit to

help us express our emotions in a healthy way: in a way that frees us from bondage to our renegade emotions and allows us to honor and express God's heart and character.

Our emotions are not to be the authority of our lives. We are to recognize our renegade emotions as indicators to connect to the Father's heart. He will cause us to examine where the Holy Spirit is urging us to appropriate His truth in bringing about healing from the chaos of damaging emotions.

It is God who replaces our renegade emotions with the Spirit-filled emotions that are *love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control* (Galatians 5:22-23), and many more that demonstrate the dynamic image of God.

May what you learn move you to a closer intimacy to Jehovah Rapha, the One who heals, because Jesus Christ has, indeed, given us everything for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3).

God bless you as you undertake a wonderful adventure.

GOD'S SOLUTION FOR MAN'S ANXIETIES

“You will not be afraid of the terror by night, or of the arrow that flies by day; of the pestilence that stalks in darkness, or of the destruction that lays waste at noon. A thousand may fall at your side and ten thousand at your right hand, but it shall not approach you” Psalm 91:5-7.

Nothing is quite as frightening as the unknown. It smacks of the supernatural and for all of our Western sophistication, we remain a superstitious people. When a person is faced with something he or she does not understand, nor does there seem to be any cause and effect, the unnaturalness of the attack is cause for a deep unsettling fear. We are deathly afraid of what we cannot name.

Acute anxieties or panic attacks strike without warning, suddenly, viciously, and with such force they do seem to be supernatural. Because what occurs happens so quickly and creates so much emotional anguish, a person feels they are losing their sanity. The phenomenon of a panic attack is such that many seek out the help of an exorcist to get rid of the demon attacking them. Don't laugh, I have counseled many who have done just that.

Anyone who has experienced the pain of a panic attack will identify with the “agony” of this emotion. And let me tell you, panic attacks are not like other renegade emotions – panic attacks create incredible emotional pain and will quickly bring a person to their knees.

Anxiety in its most virulent form is a renegade emotion that blackmails us as we try to cope with the confusion and hurt it brings. Tragically, the very fear of a panic attack provokes further panic attacks. We become victims of our minds, which cannot or will not shut down. Our thoughts are held captive by the most vile, gross, evil, and violent emotion possible.

I wrote this book out of my own personal experience, along with observations through many, many hours of ministering to those who were unfortunate enough to become ensnared by this insidious emotional pestilence. For those of you who have gone to the emergency room convinced you were having a heart attack, only to discover otherwise or those who were convinced that they were going crazy let me assure you there is hope.

“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” Romans 15:13.

My purpose is twofold: first, to bring a biblical perspective to a problem affecting thousands upon thousands of Christians and second, to bring healing to your own **agony** so that you may experience the **ecstasy** of relief. God is faithful and He will see you through your terrible and difficult hours. As the Bible so clearly states in 1 Peter 5:7b, “*He cares for you.*”

I received an urgent call from a husband who lived in a distant state. He had heard that I was commuting to a city not far from where he lived, and he wanted to know if I would mind coming to visit with him and his wife. There was a sense of desperation, almost panic, in his voice. When I asked him the problem he related that his wife was entering her last month of pregnancy and

refused to leave the house. In fact, she had remained indoors during the entire length of her pregnancy, refusing even to see her doctor.

As it turned out, I was able to see them on my next visit. What I discovered upon my arrival was a woman who literally refused to leave the house, even in an ambulance. Because of her fear of leaving the house, she was determined to have the baby at home. The problem was that her doctor was equally determined not to deliver the baby anywhere but in the hospital.

It seems some months earlier, she began experiencing acute anxieties or what is commonly called a panic attack while shopping. She described vividly the scene. "I felt as though I was losing all control," she said. "My mind just went haywire and all these thoughts began pouring in. I thought my heart was going to pound right out of my body. My mouth was so dry I couldn't swallow. I began to tremble all over. It was so bad that I wanted to scream. I literally thought I was losing my mind! The only thing I could think of was to flee to the security of my home."

From that time on she refused to leave her house, even to walk around the block. The fear of having another attack kept her a prisoner in her home. She had developed agoraphobia. (Agoraphobia is a term taken from the Greek that means, "Fear of the marketplace." It has been applied to those who, because of their fear of a panic attack, tend to stay within the security of their home, rather than venturing out.)

The difficulty in ministering to this woman was compounded by the fact she lived in another state. I could only see her periodically, and yet following the principles presented in this book, she overcame her anxieties, had her baby in the hospital and the last I heard from her she was doing great – no panic attacks.

Another example was a woman in her late 20's and quite successful in a Christian ministry. When she came to me she was in the depths of terrible anxieties. Someone had to literally bring her to my office. As we spoke, she related to me that while flying to her home she suddenly, without warning, went into a violent panic attack – the first she ever experienced.

The results were such that she retreated to the safety of her house and like the mother refused to leave. Only trusted friends could get her out to the necessary places she had to go. She identified her panic attack to flying and the very thought of boarding a plane was now emotionally beyond her. (Unfortunately, this is a usual response blaming the situation we are in to the panic attack, when in reality there might be no connection.)

I discovered through our conversations that just hours prior to her departure she went to her physician for a shot to help with her allergies. When the first shot failed to bring any relief he gave her a double dose – in fact, a triple whammy. I was convinced this is what brought on the panic attacks. She had a reaction to the overdose of medication – it just happened to have occurred on the plane. It could just as well happen anywhere.

Eventually she retreated so much she absolutely refused to leave her bedroom! It took a while mind you, but walking with her to the front door, to the front walk, around the block, finally to a store restored her confidence. All the time she was learning the truths of God concerning what

had happened and how she could not only overcome, but make certain they didn't occur again. By the way, she now flies without fear.

One authority says, "A panic attack causes the fastest and most complex reaction known within the human body. It immediately alters the functioning of the eyes, several major glands, the brain, heart, lungs, stomach, intestines, pancreas, kidneys, and bladder." Small wonder there is intense agony in panic attacks!

Because we Americans live in a culture that operates as a norm on "overload," anxieties become part and parcel of our culture. In addition, America is a nation that has lost its historical anchors, which when coupled with the insecurities in the world today, anxieties have become commonplace.

Through the study of Scripture, my own personal experience and observing literally scores of panic-prone people, I saw the need to develop a biblical framework in which to address this problem. Rest assured the Bible does speak to our worries and anxieties far better than does the world. There is hope for the hurting!

The Bible views anxiety as a normal emotional response to every day stresses and tension. Normal stress or anxiety only becomes a problem when we go into overload without a compensating closure on what caused us to go into overload. Overload over a period of time causes one to exceed their stress tolerance level, and when that happens a panic attack can and often does occur. A person soon learns to identify panic attacks because of the feelings of dread, apprehension, fearfulness, a sense of losing control, and extreme emotional pain they produce.

The Bible places anxiety as a renegade emotion, blackmailing and victimizing those unfortunate enough to fall into its trap. Remember anxieties are not a problem that must be reserved for the professional alone to address. There is an amazing resource that has thousands of years of experience behind it -- the Word of God. The Bible is amazing in its sensitivity of, and its balanced approach to, the problem of anxiety. I found in it all of the resources necessary to overcome the devastation of my own acute anxieties.

THE BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE

Having personally experienced the shock of painful panic attacks, which were as unexpected as they were unpleasant, I went to the Scriptures to find insights and relief. I was amazed at the depth of understanding and the insights that the Bible afforded. Not only does it take anxiety seriously, but it also provides the supernatural processes to overcome it.

It is the divine textbook for each one of us in dealing with anxieties. It was through my study of the Scriptures and observing panic prone people (along with my own experience) that I distinguished four different types of anxiety:

- 1. Normal Anxiety**
- 2. Circumstantial Anxiety**
- 3. Chronic Anxiety**
- 4. Potential Anxiety**

NORMAL ANXIETY

We all have our worries and concerns or as others might say, our fears and anxieties. These are normal as Chevrolets and apple pie. Even the Bible shows us that anxiousness is a legitimate emotional response. The use of the word in the Greek indicates, first of all, a sense of concern for self or others. For example, in 1 Corinthians 7:33-34, the word is used to express the normal concern of a person for his or her spouse. In verse 32, there is concern about the Lord's affairs.

Paul shares his anxiousness (concern) for the churches (2 Corinthians 11:28), and teaches Christians to be concerned for each other (1 Corinthians 12:25-26). When Jesus speaks concerning the cares of this life, he is stating a fact of life (Matthew 13:22; Mark 4:29).

What we find, then, is Scripture teaching that normal anxiety or concern is healthy. It is simply everyday stress we all face. A person operates more efficiently and productively under normal anxiety. However, no matter how normal our cares might be, we are still to cast them on the Lord, "*Casting the whole of your care [all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all] on Him, for He cares for you affectionately and cares about you watchfully*" 1 Peter 5:7, Amplified Bible, Classic Edition (AMPC).

A strange phenomenon occurred during the drug scene of a few years ago. Many young people began to smoke pot when they were in their early or middle teens. The primary reason they gave for smoking was to avoid and escape the stress around them. Smoking pot left them mellow and without a seeming worry in the world.

What they did not realize, that normal, everyday stress is necessary and most people become accustomed to this type of stress. However, these young people as they quit smoking pot and entered their middle and late twenties discovered they could not handle everyday stress. It left many an emotional wreck.

Of course, we Christians don't worry or fret, we call it concerns, but what parent isn't concerned for their children or spouse for spouse. There are a thousand little cares and concerns that come our way every day. This is life. Most of us adjust to the stress of living without a thought. However, when a more virulent form of anxiety strikes, such as panic attacks, even the every day cares and concerns seem more than we can handle.

I know in my own experience the things that I didn't give a thought to now seemed almost insurmountable. Little things took on a stature that made them bigger than life. I began to avoid anything that would increase my anxiety load or cause a panic attack.

CIRCUMSTANTIAL ANXIETY

Circumstantial anxiety is just as its name implies. It is anxiety that stems from circumstances. When the stress of circumstances causes us to go into overload without resolution, it causes us to exceed our stress tolerance level. At this point, panic attacks can and often do occur.

We live in a world that is disintegrating. In fact, the world of the 50's in which I grew up no longer exists. We live in an insecure world made so by circumstances that once would have been

called an aberration, but now are common place. When our world is insecure, circumstances take on a greater weight – far too often our greatest fears come to pass.

The greatest fear of a parent is the disappearance of a child. Every parent lives with that fear. And that is exactly what happened to my wife and me. Our oldest son at two disappeared in the foothills of Colorado and as time elapsed we became frantic. Finally, he was found safe and sound and happy as a little lark – I can't say the same for my emotional state. The circumstances had all but overwhelmed me.

Now the Bible gives us a very clear word picture of circumstantial anxiety. In fact, Job's experience epitomizes circumstantial anxiety. Here was a man who was subjected to great changes in a very short span of time, and he could not handle the stress overload. He went into anxiety shock.

It is interesting to note what Allen Toffee said in his best seller, *Future Shock*. "I coined the term 'future shock' to describe the shattering stress and disorientation that we induce in individuals by subjecting them to too much change in too short a time."

A prime example of this was the sudden and surprise attack on Pearl Harbor that brought America into World War Two. By any estimate, the destruction to our army and navy was a disaster, but it welded our divided nation together as nothing else – Pearl Harbor was the catalyst that guaranteed the allies victory in that terrible conflict.

However, there were those who were so stunned by the attack they could not function, even though they had trained all their adult lives for such an eventuality. They had grown use to a peace time mentality where every thing was in order and in its place. The sudden onslaught of the Japanese attack changed everything immediately! Some could not cope. One general, in charge of all the air forces on the island, was hospitalized with a nervous breakdown. He could not handle the events of those early hours of December 7th 1941. Little is known of him after that day.

Look at what happened to Job. In a matter of hours, his seven sons and three daughters were brutally slain, his servants massacred. He lost his wealth and all of his possessions. His vast estates were destroyed and his position in life taken away. His wife turned against him and his three closest friends condemned him. On top of this, his health broke and he became seriously and painfully ill. Who could blame Job if he went haywire? He didn't though, for despite the assault of the enemy, his faith in God's sufficiency was sufficient to carry him through.

It is interesting to take Job's circumstances and relate it to one of the various stress tests that are available. These stress tests indicate the scale of impact that sudden and drastic changes make in a person's tolerance level. Job's situation goes off the chart. Yet, he survived the tragedies he faced! How? By his abiding faith and trust in our living God.

Jesus prepared his followers for what was to come, a lesson we must all learn. "*In the world,*" He said, "*you will have tribulation.*" The word He uses here, "*tribulation,*" refers to anything that burdens the spirit. But with the warning comes the promise, "*But take courage; I have*

overcome the world” John 16:33. In this same passage there is His great promise of peace, one of the things that anxieties steal from us. He has promised faithfully that He will never leave us nor desert us – no matter what (Hebrews 13:5)!

When we are at our worst, God is at His best.

Even the great Apostle Paul had his moments. He worried over the steadfastness of the Thessalonians Christians, wondering if they had remained in the faith. When he could no longer stand the suspense, which had become intolerable, he sent Timothy to see what happened (1 Thessalonians 3:1-2).

What we see is that circumstantial anxiety is by far the most common type of anxiety with which we will have to face. The reason is circumstantial anxiety is characterized by a known cause and effect -- known, identifiable factors. When the cause is known, it tends to alleviate the fear involved in the panic attack.

A very successful businessman, a leader in his church, came to me following a very traumatic situation where he experienced a severe panic attack, and in the process ventilated his feelings toward anyone and everyone. This was completely out of character for him, but his world had come apart.

He began to share with me how a court case, which he had been assured would be settled in his favor, went against him. The cash outlay to settle the judgment was quite large. The same day, he discovered that there would be severe losses in his business. These were quite unexpected, and, coupled with the lawsuit, would produce a severe strain on his finances.

That afternoon he had to settle several very serious personnel problems in the business. Then, he had no sooner begun attempting to sort out the difficulties when his best friend and fellow deacon called about an extremely urgent and private matter. When he managed to get alone for a moment with his friend, he received the shattering news that his son had impregnated his friend's daughter. Bang! This man went into overload exceeding his stress tolerance level by far and experienced a panic attack.

CHRONIC ANXIETY

Chronic anxieties are somewhat more difficult for us, but not for God. With circumstantial anxiety, you have easily identifiable factors, while with chronic anxiety you do not. One deals with external circumstances; the other deals with unresolved internal issues, usually relational in nature.

I have discovered from my own observations when anxieties and depression continue over a long period of time, there is an organic problem. The body is the culprit. Many times some deficiency or organ malfunction creates the problem. This is why I highly recommend anyone suffering from anxiety or depression seek medical help.

I have found those who suffer from chronic anxiety tend to come from insecure backgrounds, which creates an intense need to control their lives, their environment and those very few people they let into their sphere of influence. To deal with their insecurities and to establish their control, self-imposed laws and standards are developed and from these an entire infrastructure of life is developed. Intended for safety, this infrastructure becomes a prison.

The need to control becomes paramount. These people sit, as it were, on the very peak of a pyramid, attempting to control their destiny. The pyramid is their self-developed superstructure through which they extend their control, but which in reality controls their lives. Incredibly, I have never met a controller who was willing to admit they were controllers.

CONTROL

Intensely controlling people are living time bombs ready to explode at any moment. Anything that threatens their control is met, first, with anger and rage. This is the "intimidating process," whereby those that threaten are neutralized. Chronically anxious people, by necessity of their infrastructure, are hyperactive, high-achievers, talented, controlled, seemingly all together people.

These people are often the envy of many, but their appearance of having it all together is a facade. This type of person must perform, must excel, but underlying all of this veneer lie deep-rooted fears of abandonment, rejection, and failure. Strangely enough, some of those with chronic anxieties do not have panic attacks.

The person suffering from chronic anxiety tends to be inflexible and goal oriented to the degree that if you take away that which is the means controlling their destiny, they go into a rage. If that doesn't work, it is often followed by panic attacks. They tend to be very selective about whom they allow to befriend them, and they demand certain standards from those friends. It is very difficult for a person with chronic anxiety to be close to anyone. Often this type of person does not marry, but, if they do, the husband or wife, along with the children, presents a problem -- how can they be controlled?

It has been my observation that women tend to be more controlling than men, but then that might simply be because they are more visible as wives, mothers, or daughters. A man's control is always vertical in nature, while women express their control horizontally. Men tend to control organizationally and women tend to control relationally.

While the degree of control is related to the insecurity of growing up, it is primarily a product of the Fall. Genesis 3:16 gives us great insight into this problem of control. Here we read, *"To the woman He said, 'I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you will bring forth children, yet your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.'"*

The word *"desire"* is most interesting for it unlocks the mystery of control. Unfortunately, our English translation loses the true meaning of this word from the Hebrew. Of course, we husbands would like to think that our wives are eaten up with desire for us, but that just isn't the meaning.

Desire in the Hebrew means “*to control*” and has great emphasis in the original. It can be so strong that it borders on a disease. The only other usage of this word occurs in Genesis 4:7 where we read, “*If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its **desire** is for you, but you must learn to master it.*”

Indwelling sin always seeks to control. It knows no other course, since this is its nature. By understanding this insidious part of indwelling sin, we can understand the meaning of the word in its usage in Genesis 3:16. Unfortunately, controllers view their control as a good, healthy thing when in reality it is the epitome of the self-life. Control is carnal and certainly not listed as one of the fruits of the Spirit.

What a person cannot control becomes the sworn enemy of the controller. The threat of losing control is so great and the consequences so painful they will do almost anything to remove or neutralize what they cannot control. Loss of control is a disaster of the first magnitude for it unleashes the ravages of a panic attack.

Therefore, don’t be surprised at the behavior of a person who is a controller. (Remember, we all control to a degree.) The most pronounced behavioral patterns are rage, contrived anger, stubbornness, possessiveness, turf protection, resistance, manipulation, super spiritual, demanding, overbearing – the list goes on. Strange but true, the controller never really believes or will accept that they are controllers.

If a person with chronic anxiety is a Christian, he or she often confuses performance with spirituality. These people feel close to God and spiritual only when they are performing, meeting their goals. In reality, it is a superficial spirituality -- it is “foolishness” at its zenith. To them, God is basically a means to extend their control, although they might not be aware of this.

However, for the Christian, God is very much aware of the dangers of this type of life. The need to control becomes an idolatrous task master, one whom God will not allow to continue. Therefore, God begins to cause this type of lifestyle to come apart at the seams. When this happens, the person with chronic anxiety goes into a panic attack or worse--panic shock, which seemingly has no end.

RITUALS

Panic attacks are painful to the extreme. Medical help is sought, medications demanded, the best in professional counseling secured. If relief is not forthcoming, there is the tendency to bounce from counselor to counselor and from doctor to doctor. Because of the emotional pain, there is an automatic response in developing a ritual to alleviate the pain.

It is interesting that obsessive-compulsive behavior is now diagnosed as separate disorder, when in reality it is simply a person responding through repeated rituals to offset the pain of panic attacks. The trouble with “typing” anyone is the tendency to become what a person believes themselves to be. Deal with the panic and the behavior will change.

An example of ritualistic behavior was the woman who called several pastors every morning and asked them to pray for her. She would write these prayers down and then repeat them over and

over until the anxiety lifted. She devoted an hour and a half to three hours every morning to this system.

Another person, when confronted with a panic attack, would search through her mind until she could come up with something that she could call sin. Then she would go through the process of repentance, confession, etc., to alleviate the pain. I have found that every person with whom I have ever dealt, and who was suffering from acute anxieties, had developed -- almost unconsciously -- a ritual to handle the anxieties.

The Bible reveals fear is the root cause of anxiety. In fact, I personally believe fear is the root cause of all renegade emotions. There is the fear of rejection, of ridicule, of abandonment, of failure -- all fears related to relationships. As I have said often, fear is to Satan what love is to God.

A young man who had excelled in athletics in college joined a large Christian organization known for its aggressive outreach. During his first year of training, he did exceptionally well in the jobs given him. During the following year at his assignment, he also did quite well. In fact, he did such an outstanding job that he was given the responsibility of directing a local ministry.

However, several weeks before assuming the job, he suffered what was described as a nervous breakdown and was hospitalized. Later, as we talked, I found he had such a deep-rooted fear of failure that when he was given the additional responsibility he couldn't take it. His fear of failing was so great that he deliberately, but unconsciously, went into what I call panic shock (extremely severe panic attacks).

The panic attacks were real enough, but in his mind a sick person was not held accountable, or recognized as a failure, thus he could avoid a responsibility without being condemned by others as a failure. This man has never again entertained the thought of returning to the ministry. He equated his panic attack to his job and no amount of counseling could change his mind. He was determined never to venture into an area where he might fail.

Over the next few years, he experienced a number of panic attacks, which would come without warning. Yet, in every case, they could be related to the underlying fear problem, which remained unresolved. His standard of success was such that failure was inevitable -- being sick was the answer.

Let me issue a word of warning here. I have found a disturbing type of side effect to panic shock. Quite often, when a person goes into this type of severe reaction, well meaning but uninformed people diagnose the problem as demonic and take the anxious person through "deliverance," which only increases the fear and pain. The panic prone person is often left with a deep feeling of hopelessness, and a tendency to doubt God's sufficiency in dealing with the problem.

A professional football player came to me. He was suffering from continuing panic attacks. He was very disciplined and literally controlled every aspect of his life. However, he had injured his knee seriously enough to warrant an operation. When he was given a sedative to put him under for the operation, for the very first time he felt himself losing control. As he related the story to

me, he said, “I have never known such fear before, and when I came out from under the anesthetic it remained unabated.” His fear was fear of losing control!

Later, as he sought counsel from friends, he was told he had demons. Desperate for any measure, he submitted to “deliverance,” but nothing happened – there was no deliverance! This only increased his terror and panic. From that moment on, until we had the opportunity to address it, he was victimized by periodic and unpredictable panic attacks.

Case histories concerning chronic anxieties abound, but can we find in Scripture similar situations? Interestingly enough, in the life of Job we saw the problem of circumstantial anxieties, whereas, we find in the life of David the problem of chronic anxieties.

David was the youngest of eight brothers. His father was a common man with no special standing in the nation. David was trained to watch after the sheep and, being the youngest, was pretty much ignored. In fact, his brothers ridiculed him when he inquired about Goliath. Yet, he was bold in his stand for God.

David was a talented musician and warrior, a natural leader of men, fearless in warfare, and a chosen child of God, but throughout his turbulent struggle to claim the throne of Israel he was afflicted with deep-rooted fears and insecurities.

In reading the Psalms, we are struck by the continuing anxieties, which David suffered. He often felt God was angry with him, punishing him or refusing to help him (6:1-7; 10:1; 13:1; 22:1-2). At times we can sense some anger at God in these passages. I find it is a common pattern that people suffering from painful anxieties feel God has deserted them or is punishing them. David's insecurities are revealed in Psalm 13:4b, in which he says, “...and my *adversaries will rejoice when I am shaken.*”

The word “*shaken*” in the Hebrew speaks of great insecurities. In fact, David very carefully outlines what to do about insecurities in a number of passages in the Psalms (15:5; 16:8; 21:7; 22; 55; 62:2, 6; 82:5; 112:6). Insecurity is but a form of fear.

David tended to listen to the panic of his own heart (Psalms 13:2). He gave counsel to his fears (Psalms 22:14) and suffered the sense of isolation which anxieties bring (Psalms 25:16-17). In fact, David exhibits most of characteristics of acute anxieties.

POTENTIAL ANXIETY

Potential anxiety has to do with concern for the future. Jesus recognized this when He said, “*So do not worry or be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will have worries and anxieties of its own. Sufficient for each day is its own trouble*” Matthew 6:34, AMPC. In Mark 13:11, we are cautioned not “*to be anxious ahead of time.*” Faith cannot be projected into the future. To do so changes it into fear. Basically, potential anxiety is uncertainty--a fear that the future will mean a reliving of past painful experiences.

For example, divorced people who have remarried often become extremely anxious over repeating the cycle that caused the first marriage to break up. This fear can create severe problems within the relationship.

Other areas of potential anxiety that crop up often are fears of war and/or economic depression in individuals who went through those difficult times in past years. In fact, I find more anxiety in older people over the fear of another Great Depression than I do of war.

As the authority of the church has waned in this country and the secularization of our society has been more and more firmly entrenched, young people have grown up without being confronted with the concept of hope that is inherent in the gospel message. They only hear of the terrors of nuclear war or terrorist attacks. Hopelessness and potential anxiety go hand in hand.

Anxieties become acute when overload continues without resolution causing us to exceed our stress tolerance level. Acute anxiety reactions are extremely painful emotional and physical responses to unresolved issues in a person's life and/or stress overload. They are characterized by terror, panic, fear, unbearable tension, pounding of the heart, nausea, difficulty in breathing, trembling, dizziness, excessive perspiration, dryness of the mouth, loss of appetite, and so on. Panic attacks are recurring; unpredictable, acute anxiety reactions, which can create panic shock.

Previously I have used "panic shock" to describe the critical stage of panic attacks. Anxiety has a spectrum running from mild anxieties to panic attacks to panic shock. Again, panic shock occurs when the anxieties become so great, so sudden, and so intense that the emotional system shuts down. Some would describe this as a type of nervous breakdown.

To describe this type of reaction, let us again look at Psalm 91:5-6: *"You will not be afraid of the terror by night, or of the arrow that flies by day; of the pestilence that stalks in darkness, or of the destruction that lays waste at noon."*

Noonday destruction was the Old Testament word for depression. Here we find it preceded by three very vivid descriptions of panic attacks. Probably the best word to describe a panic attack is terror. There is associated with it a deep-rooted fear, dread, hysteria -- a person becomes panic stricken. The "arrow that flies by day" describes both the intensity of the emotional pain and the unpredictability of panic attacks. "Pestilence" infers a "striking down" or becoming "incapacitated." All of these are present in an acute reaction or panic attack.

PHOBIAS/AGORAPHOBIA

A person who experiences a panic attack or panic shock is conscious only of the tremendous emotional pain. This pain is so severe it can and often does produce residual phobias, all related to the initial attack.

First, I find there is a fear of another attack. This puts a person back under "potential or anticipatory anxiety." Job stated, *"For what I fear comes upon me, and what I dread befalls me"* (3:25).

As I stated earlier, a phobia is simply another word for fear, but more specific. Several years ago

it was reported that psychologists had diagnosed some 37 specific phobias. Today, they run into the hundreds. There seems to be a phobia for everything and anything.

Second, there is a sense of losing control, of going insane. The mind races with all kinds of negative and painful thoughts. A person feels either abandoned by God or under His judgment. Whatever is associated with the cause of the attack is scrupulously avoided, even though it is not the cause of the attack.

When it occurs in a religious setting, such as in church, or while reading the Bible or praying, there is the tendency to avoid even thinking about God. This perpetuates the problem for the person, because he or she avoids the problem rather than facing and overcoming it. It is important to realize what seems to have triggered the panic attack is not necessarily the cause of the panic attack.

With continued panic attacks, I have found a person begins immediately to establish a ritual to alleviate the pain of anxiety. For example, one man washed his hands hundreds of times a day. Another created a religious ritual of labeling things as sin. The ensuing repentance of the so-called sin brought temporary relief, but did nothing to help in overcoming the problem. Others create rigid self-imposed laws to help control their emotions. The repetitious behavior and the rigid following of “self-imposed laws” often provide a temporary sense of relief and a false sense of security.

I have observed these rituals often become compulsive to the extreme. One woman who came in for counseling would retrace her route again and again because she felt she had hit something with the car. This invariably made her late, almost to the point of missing her appointment.

It is extremely difficult to break the cycle of these rituals because ceasing them creates an accelerating tension, which could lead to another panic attack. Rather than remove a ritual, the ritual needs to be replaced with a Biblical response, which will help overcome the anxiety.

One of the more unfortunate side effects of panic attacks is the growing fear of having an attack in public or of being left alone. We call this agoraphobia, meaning literally “the fear of the marketplace.” The mother we first discussed in the opening of this study was a victim of what is called agoraphobia.

Crowds, confusion, masses of color all bother this type of person. There is fear of public places such as shopping centers, grocery stores, restaurants, and so on. It can also be expressed in fear of traveling, even of leaving the house. In our counseling, we have had to literally help people leave their homes by walking with them short distances and increasing little by little until they could drive or travel on their own.

Another fear associated with agoraphobia is the fear of being alone, and often a person with acute anxieties will either spend the night with someone or have someone spend the night with them on a regular basis. One woman who had a fairly long history of panic attacks had a whole list of people that she could call on either to spend the night or to give her lodging. In this way, she would not be an imposition on any one person.

UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMICS OF ANXIETY

There are several outstanding features of panic attacks that establish the dynamics of this problem. **First, it is primarily a problem with women**, especially in agoraphobia. Eight-five percent of agoraphobics are women, while more men are social phobics.

Second, there is always associated with severe anxieties a sense of losing control, which relates back to the curse of the Fall (Genesis 3:16). Let me explain. As a result of the tragic events in the Garden, Adam and Eve had to face the consequences. We read in this Genesis passage, *“To the woman He said, ‘I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you will bring forth your children; yet your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you’”*.

Now the word *“desire”* does not mean in the Bible as we use it today. The word in the Hebrew means, “to control.” The word is very strong in the original, and what it means to us is that “control” is part and parcel of every woman’s personality – varying only in the degree of intensity.

Control is as normal as breathing – everyone controls to a degree. However, to many the fear of losing control creates tremendous emotional stress, especially in those who grew up in an environment of insecurity. Anxieties are noted for the sense of loss of control they create. Control differs in men and women. With men the control is expressed vertically – their tendency to rule as it were, from a position of authority. Women control horizontally, creating their areas of turf.

I could give countless examples of control-prone people. However, control in Christians is something that God will heal one way or another. He allows us to go to the point where we finally turn our control over to Him. Until that point is reached, control is a problem because of what it produces.

Third, in every case of acute anxieties, panic attacks, agoraphobia, and/or obsessive-compulsive behavior which I have counseled, I have observed that the onslaught of panic attacks have occurred after long periods of unresolved stress. What happens is that stress finally exceeds our tolerance level and when it does anxieties including panic attacks occur.

Stress, especially unresolved stress, is harmful. I have seen where real organic problems arise out of stress and when the stress is alleviated the physical problems remain. They in turn have to be dealt with. We must learn to attack the stress that assails us and overcome it, rather than being overcome by the stress.

Fourth, I find uncontrolled thought patterns involved in anxieties – as mentioned, a racing mind, thoughts that are negative and introspective in nature. Fear is as much a mental problem as it is an emotional one. Our mind plays tricks on us and when panic attacks occur we lose control of our thought process – they run wild. Some of the mildest, sweetest Christians I know have confessed to me the vileness of their thoughts over which they seemed to have no control.

One person related to me the extent of her thought problems. They were extreme in their nature. Thoughts of filth and violence filled her mind, at times her thoughts were vile as vile could be -

this from a gentle Christian.

In overcoming destructive thought patterns, it is important not to deal with the symptoms only, but seek the cause. What must be remembered is these thoughts are a symptom of the anxiety, not of our volitional choice. They can be overcome!

Fifth, underlying all panic problems is the root problem of fear. Fear is not only always present in anxieties, but is the cause of it. Understand in the arsenal of Satan fear is his major weapon. We find in the Bible that fear is the antithesis of faith, not doubt. Fear robs us of many things and will totally undermine our faith.

We see this in Jesus rebuke of His disciples. *“When He got into the boat, His disciples followed Him. And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being covered with the waves; but Jesus Himself was asleep. And they came to Him and woke Him, saying, ‘Save us, Lord; we are perishing!’ He said to them, ‘Why are you afraid, you men of little faith’”* Matthew 8:23-26.

I personally feel, as I have mentioned before, fear, this kind of fear expressed in the Bible, is the root of all renegade emotions. There is an emotional road path of renegade emotions that begins with fear and ends with serious anxieties.

As we have seen, anxieties cause the mind to race almost uncontrollably, flooding the mind with doubts and repetitive, destructive thoughts. These thoughts become an obsession. Often they center on whether one is really saved or not. This then induces further anxiety, which in turn induces further negative thinking.

I have had people consumed with their thoughts. Thoughts such as, "Why do I have lustful thoughts toward my child." "Why do I want to be immoral?" "Have I done enough for God?" "Am I willing to be obedient?" and perhaps they committed the unpardonable sin or how unworthy they are.

Two things evolve from this type of thinking. First, rituals are established to help alleviate the thoughts, and, second, laws are established in order to protect one from his or her fears.

For example, one counselee had two major fears, which produced constant obsessive thinking. The first law was "Thou shall not doubt," and the second was "Thou shall not be immoral." Unfortunately, part of the obsessive thought pattern was immoral thoughts of an extremely short duration.

Although this person recognized the immoral thoughts as wrong and immediately brought them under the blood of Christ, it initiated an unconscious self-punishment process. Even though she had confessed the thoughts, she still felt guilty. She had broken her law, and acting as judge and jury she pronounced the verdict. Within a space of few hours, doubts would come flooding into her mind concerning her salvation. These doubts would bring on a panic attack--it was the acute anxiety that was the punishment for breaking the law, the very law she had created as a system to alleviate the anxieties.

Along with the obsessive thoughts, there can be, and often is, compulsive behavior. Usually these are the rituals formed to alleviate anxiety or are behavior related to the thoughts. In the case of the situation described above, the woman would immediately and compulsively tell her husband that she had been thinking immoral thoughts. This didn't do a whole lot for his manhood, and, of course, he would respond in a negative, angry manner, especially since it happened so often. Again this was part of the punishment system, and worse, she had manipulated her husband into being an integral part of her ritual system.

If the stress related panic is not resolved, it can lead to the obsessive-compulsive behavior. This type of person is obsessed with certain thoughts, which cause compulsive conduct. An example is the lady we spoke of who always felt that she had struck something with her car.

I remember well the wife and mother who came to see me and shared with me her fear of stepping outside her door. She knew that something would fall on her. How she handled this was to open the door, retreat a few paces and leap as far as she could through the door. Her husband and children broke up at this peculiar behavior, but it was real to her.

I have often stated fear is to Satan what love is to God. I feel from my study of Scripture, fear is the underlying cause of all renegade emotions. On the following pages, I have included a list of wrong fears. When fear is unresolved, it can cause the emotions to run wild. Because fear is so prominent, it is important that we address it in detail.

FEAR

Fear, not doubt, is the antithesis of faith. It is an underlying cause of all renegade emotions, and no other emotion within the emotional spectrum is such a hydra-headed monster. Unresolved fear is a cancer eating away and destroying faith.

Not all fear is bad fear, though. Again, I emphasize the Bible teaches three kinds of fear--a healthy fear, a holy fear, and a wrong fear. It is important for us to understand the differences between them.

The main word in the Greek for "*fear*" is phobia. We get our English word "*phobia*" from this word. In classical Greek, this word was used three ways: (1) it was used for panic or cowardice, as when a man's nerve failed him and he fled in battle; (2) it was used for normal fear, fear of danger, a physical response to a dangerous situation; (3) it was used in the sense of reverence of reverential awe. The New Testament follows this pattern in its usage of the word. What we see, then, is a holy fear and an unholy fear, a right fear and a wrong fear, a healthy fear and an unhealthy fear.

Another word used in the Bible to describe a type of fear is the word "*deliria*," which means "*timidity*." We find it used in 2 Timothy 1:7a, "*For God has not given us a spirit of timidity...*" Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, stated, "*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge*" Proverbs 1:7a. Job said, "*Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom...*" Job 28:28a.

There is cause for a sense of fear (Matthew 10:28), something no one would ever ignore or forget, but the essence is best seen as an exhilarating, wonderful reverence, for it creates an

intimacy between God the Father and us, His children. It is this unique fear, this reverential awe produced in us by the Holy Spirit, which allows us to know God as a loving, caring, concerned Father. This type of fear produces positive results in us, such as:

- A relationship with the Father (Psalm 9:10).
- It is a source of holiness (2 Corinthians 1:7).
- It is a motivating power to Christian action (Philippians 2:2) and of Godly persuasion (2 Corinthians 5:11).
- It brings an awareness of God, a God-consciousness that will affect one's whole lifestyle (1 Peter 3:2).
- It produces a Godly sorrow (2 Corinthians 7:11), which brings about true repentance, which produces relief and removes guilt.
- This is the right and holy kind of fear. A Godly "fear," born of the Holy Spirit in us. It is not being "afraid" of God.

However, there is the wrong kind of fear -- the fear that is the fountainhead of acute anxiety and panic attacks. The wrong kind of fear always puts a person in bondage, blackmailing them through their own emotions. Bondage and punishment are always factors in the wrong kind of fear.

As with most renegade emotions, fear reinforces fear. Fear begets anxiety and anxieties beget phobias and phobias beget wrong thinking and behavior, which beget fear. There are eight characteristics of wrong fear:

1. Fear is the root problem of emotional trauma. Fear causes things to happen. As Job said, *"For what I fear comes upon me, and what I dread befalls me"* (3:25)
2. Fear is the tool of Satan. God is love; Satan is fear. Hebrews 2:14-15 tells us that it is through the fear of death that Satan has kept mankind in bondage.
3. Fear is the motivating power of the world system. God uses love to motivate. (2 Corinthians 5:14; Romans 2:4).
4. Fear enslaves. It causes one to come under self-imposed law (legalism). It creates anxieties, etc. (Romans 8:15).
5. Fear robs of faith. It robs us of the peace and tranquility that God would have us experience. Proverbs 29:25, from the Amplified Bible (AMP), says, *"The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in and puts his confidence in the Lord will be exalted and safe."*

6. Fear robs of freedom. Paul says we have not received the spirit of slavery again. (Romans 8:15).
7. Fear robs us of God's love. *"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love"* 1 John 4:18.
8. Fear is not part of our new identity. *"For God did not give us a spirit of timidity (of cowardice, of craven and cringing and fawning fear), but [He has given us a spirit] of power and of love and of calm and well-balanced mind and discipline and self-control"* 2 Timothy 1:7, AMPC.

We are commanded not to be fearful. For what God commands, God empowers. Jesus said, *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful"* John 14:27.

As a young man in the army I was trained as a Nuclear Weapons Disposal Technician. Since atomic bombs were few and far between I was assigned to bomb disposal. Although World War II had ended eight years before, there were many islands in the Pacific that were rife with unexploded bombs and shells. Consequently, I was sent to Okinawa to assist in the removal of all dangerous ordinances. Mind you now it was a hair-raising occupation.

A bomb disposal team consists of a tightly woven group of seven men with a commanding officer. Because of the danger involved, each member of the team was taught to perform correct procedures. It was said we were allowed one mistake – there would be no opportunity for another. The one thing above all that we looked for in ourselves and any new team member was fear. A fearful team member could kill you. Fear was our greatest enemy.

Sixth, the need to control. Remember control is not restricted to women, although it is prevalent with them. Everyone tends to try to control his or her destinies to some extent, and the greater the insecurity of the childhood the greater the need to control.

Insecurities leading to control are revealed in many ways, such as perfectionism, compulsiveness, protectionism (building emotional walls), high expectations, high achievement, hyper activity, etc. Yet, underlying all of these is the overriding need to control.

Control, as we have previously stated, is paramount in those who are chronically anxious. In establishing control, a person establishes strict, self-imposed laws and standards, rituals, strict schedules, and high demands. Over the years a superstructure is built upon these foundational factors, which allows the person to operate in tight control within the superstructure of rigid laws and standards.

In less imposing situations, the control might extend, for instance, only within the kitchen, but within the kitchen there will be a superstructure. Thus, the area of control can be anywhere from a seemingly insignificant area to a person's entire life. I have found that whenever a person's area of control is threatened, they first respond in anger--intimidating anger. If that doesn't work

and the control continues to erode, anxieties quickly set in.

STRESS

Often in cases involving continuing panic attacks, I send the counselees to a medical doctor to see if there were chemical imbalances present. In almost every case they registered positive--there was a chemical imbalance.

However, the chemical imbalance was not the basic cause. In every case, there had been a long history of unresolved stress. From all my years of experience I am seeing stress, that remains unresolved, as one of the foundational factors of both emotional and physical problems. Stress eats away at the physical and emotional fiber until it causes severe problems.

If stress is so debilitating, then why don't we know more about it? Interestingly enough, stress is listed as the number one problem people face today. The word for "stress" in Latin means to be drawn tight. You have heard the phrase, "He is wound up tighter than a rubber band."

Since the causes of stress are as varied as people are different, the key is, first, to identify and isolate the causes of stress for that particular person, and, second, to learn stress management. This we will address as we deal later with the resolution of anxieties.

I found as so many others that panic attacks cover the emotional spectrum. You name it, and anxiety will produce it. Working through the Scriptures, I have found over 50 characteristics that are common to this emotional problem:

PANIC PRODUCED STRESS FACTORS

Fear	Dread	Apprehension
Sense of suffocation	Sense of impending doom	Stiffness
Tension	Increased anxiety	Hysteria
Severe emotional pain	Inability to relax	Irritability
Inner turmoil	Panic	Loss of appetite
ringing in the ear(s)	Anger	Oppression
Muscular tension	Sudden terror	Weakness
Sense of being abandoned	Sense of distress	Emotional fatigue
Deserted by God	Withdrawal	Rapid heartbeat
Insecurity	Chest pains	Remorse
Palpitations	Insomnia	Stomach problems
Listening to negativity	Restlessness	Distraction
Thoughts	Trembling	Rituals
Inability to think	Quivering voice	Trouble speaking
Fear of other attacks	Sense of being is faulty	Dry mouth
Desire to escape	Listless	Heaviness
Uncontrolled thoughts	Racing thoughts	Confusion
Sense of going crazy	Thoughts of God are negative	Fear of calamity
Sense of being assailed by fears	Negative thoughts	Depression

ROAD MAP OF A PANIC-PRONE PERSON

Are certain people prone to anxiety reactions while others are not? From my own observations, I see many people who are able to handle a lot of stress while others can handle very little. People who have a low tolerance to stress and therefore are prone to anxieties seem to share several things in common, such as fear, insecurities, phobias, stress, and the need to control.

I believe there is an immaterial (hidden) membrane enshrouding our emotions that keep them in control. When this emotional membrane is ruptured for whatever cause, it allows the emotions to run amuck. There is a terrible sense of losing control when this happens, generating intense fear.

In some, circumstances are the culprit, in others, relational difficulties; and in some families it seems to be hereditary. Those with a tough resilient membrane are able to cope with a great deal of stress without any seemingly adverse reactions, while others are far more fragile.

All of us bring a great deal to our adult plate. In growing up, we picked up a great deal of baggage and garbage along the way. We live in an imperfect world, raised by imperfect parents and interact with imperfect peers. So it is small wonder we face problems as we mature.

This imperfect world of ours has a system to it. (The Bible refers to it as the “world system.”) Our historical development programs develop our belief system so we think a certain way, act a certain way, and believe a certain way. The result is we adopt, as true, certain beliefs about ourselves to form what we call “identity” – the person we believe ourselves to be.

I believe our minds are like a sponge. They are constantly absorbing stimuli from external sources, however, the conclusions we reach are most often erroneous. This is exactly what the devil wants, to believe as truth something that isn't.

If within our historical development there has been abuse, rejection, divorce, drugs, abandonment, criticism, indifference, lack of acceptance, or any myriad of negative strokes, it is imprinted upon how and what we believe. What we believe about ourselves is crucial for it is here the germ of anxiety leading to panic attacks is born.

I have observed a child will develop a type of behavior such as becoming a high achiever, developing an intense sense of being a responsible person, being a people-pleaser, or trying to be the perfect child to offset negative strokes. The pain of destructive strokes is such we will do our utmost to alleviate it. This behavior is simply masking what we really believe about ourselves.

Behind this behavior is the forming of a system of handling life. This adaptation determines the tolerance we have to stress. As an adult when the system that worked as a child fails us, then we unravel for there is nothing within to handle the pressures of our environment. This technique of adaptation is most often masking what we really believe.

Unfortunately, a person tends to become what they believe themselves to be so the behavior of a person mirrors what they believe about themselves. Interpersonal problems can begin at a very early age. For example, the goodie two-shoes grows up as the perfect child only to suffer problems later on, while the child who lets it all hang out seems to have fewer problems on

entering adulthood.

I believe it is a person's background environment that determines whether they will be panic prone or not. A strong, emotionally healthy environment will produce a strong, emotionally healthy child. An abnormal environment will produce an anxious child. When you have abnormalities within the background environment, such as alcoholism, divorce, or rejection displayed by the significant figures, it leaves an indelible imprint of insecurities on the child.

On the other hand, if the background environment consists of continued significant figure criticism, attempts to control (possessiveness, etc.), and super-imposed rules with overly high expectations, the child will also develop insecurities. Abnormalities in either area of background environment take their toll on the offspring.

In a home where there is alcoholism, divorce, or rejection factors, there will be a growing sense of abandonment, of not being wanted, unworthiness, abuse, etc. The more severe these are, the more critical will be the insecurities developed in a person. The behavior of the parents and other significant figures impact a person tremendously and set the stage for future problems.

Two very real and powerful dynamics play a large part in the background environment. They are the: "World System" and "Torah Syndrome." The world system is the creation of our arch foe to control his domain. This system permeates everything and everyone and is violently opposed to Christ and His Church. The Torah Syndrome is Satan's vile attempt to pervert God's holy Law into a weapon of destruction.

Satan controls the world system whose purpose is to program every individual born in this world to the devil's way of thinking. The background environment is an essential part of the world system and is conditioned by that system.

Also, inherent in all individuals, but more so in those who are insecure, is a highly sophisticated system of super and self-imposed laws, which I call The Torah Syndrome. These laws form the system with which one deals with their insecurities.

As a person grows up, an insecure background environment produces a person who tends to be a perfectionist, workaholic, over-achiever, extremely responsible, and a people-pleaser with a low self-esteem. This type of person is very sensitive to criticism and has a need to be in control. They usually have very high expectations, and receiving or giving of approval is almost always performance related. In other words, you have a panic-prone person.

The greatest fears present in the panic prone-person are the fears of failure and of rejection and the shame associated with them. Therefore, they feel it is imperative that they control their environment.

As I have stated, underlying all anxiety and panic attacks is unresolved stress. You will note that along with the problem of unresolved issues is one of stress overload. The difference between these two is one is internal, the other external. One deals with issues that have remained unresolved in a person's life; the other deals with circumstantial situations that come up and

overload a person's nervous system. When the tolerance is exceeded, panic attacks can and often do occur. It is out of the initial acute anxiety reaction that panic attacks may occur. It is at this point those suffering from anxiety reactions and panic attacks will begin to develop phobias. Also, it is at this time of crisis a person usually begins to seek help.

A PERSONAL JOURNEY

I write now from experience. Nothing prepared me for the onslaught of reoccurring panic attacks. It all began when I awoke one morning with a vague feeling of something wrong, I wasn't quite normal. I thought it would go away – it didn't!

Suddenly, it hit with the impact of a Mack truck. I thought I was going to die. My first impression was that I was having a heart attack. My chest hurt with a squeezing pain, I couldn't breathe and the fear was overwhelming. I truly thought I was losing my mind.

Here I was involved in an active, successful biblical counseling ministry with many people seeking me out for help and now I was the one who needed help. I couldn't sleep; I couldn't eat (I lost 40 pounds). My mind went crazy – I couldn't control my thoughts and they were terrible.

Relief came in stages, but I found the mere thought of having a panic attack brought on a panic attack setting me back to square one. I didn't know where to turn. Where does a counselor go for counseling? Satan took advantage of the situation and isolated me from sharing with anyone, even my wife, what I was experiencing.

I had a small bottle of Valium left over from a back problem I had several years previously. I thought about taking those, but the fear of becoming an addict was too great so I flushed them down the toilet. No sooner had I done that when I was hit with a vicious attack. I almost dived down the drain to recover the Valium.

For years the peace of God was like a cold drink on a hot day. It was constant, abiding and always reassuring. Now it was gone. The joy of the Lord was replaced with the fears of anxiety. I was a basket case if there ever was one. I avoided anyone who was having a similar problem. The fear of an attack was just too great.

I recognized my symptoms had become a part of my everyday life and therefore, finally consented with myself to go to a doctor. He was "ho hum" about the whole thing and prescribed some medication, but my fear of becoming an addict kept me from taking them. Mind you I was a mess and Satan was having a field day.

As with so many people, when all else fails try God. I had prayed, I had read the Bible; I had done everything I thought possible with no success. But when I was at my worst, God was at His best. Slowly and ever so gently He guided me into the realization that I had to do something to find healing. He had the truth, He had the answers, He desired my healing but I had to become a participant rather than a spectator.

It was during these trying times that scripture verses from Ephesians and Philippians became the foundation of a biblical application that brought complete healing; these passages became my

oasis of hope. What I learned was the absolute faithfulness of God.

“In reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth” Ephesians 4:22-24.

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” Philippians 4:6-7.

I began to realize what I was before I became a Christian was still alive and active. Certainly the song (the old life) had ended, but the melody lingered on. Many of my old thought patterns remained unchanged because I believed them to be true, when in actuality they were a lie. Thus, they affected my life as true even though they were lies.

I decided, therefore, that I would commit myself to 15 minutes, three times a day, to deal only with the fears and anxieties I was experiencing. Paul is actually commanding us to “put off” what we were and to become what we are! This will become clear as we go on.

I broke my life down in five-year increments, 0–5, 6–10, 11–15 and so on. Then consciously I began asking the Holy Spirit to reveal to me what it was about my old self that was still active. It shouldn’t surprise anyone that I soon realized I was a fearful person. In fact, this was a very deep and abiding fact, and amazingly the Holy Spirit revealed the circumstances in my growing up which had created the characteristic.

As the Lord brought things to my mind that were part and parcel of my old identity, I would, praying out loud, put them off. Then, using verses of assurance I would “put on” who I really was in Christ. In becoming a new creation in Christ, God didn’t instill a spirit of fear in me – that was a hangover from the past.

It took time and there were setbacks, but slowly, surely God gained the victory in my life. It took several months, but as time went on my faith grew and my anxieties shrunk. Finally there came a day they were no more, never to return. God had healed me.

FINDING THE ECSTASY: RESOLVING FEARS, ANXIETIES, AND PANIC

It is important for all of us to realize panic attacks will often necessitate dealing with the symptoms of panic attacks, as we deal with the causes of the panic attacks. I have found this to be true in almost every case of acute anxieties that has come before me.

I must once again say, only those who have known the pain and terror of a panic attack can really understand the trauma a person goes through. Until the emotional pain is alleviated it is almost impossible to deal with anything but the symptom of anxiety. However there are ways to alleviate the trauma of the panic attack.

If you feel a panic attack coming on or you are in the midst of one here are some suggestions to do:

1. **Relax!** Sit down and deliberately begin to calm your body beginning with your head to your toes. Remain calm and tell yourself you are experiencing a typical panic attack and it will go away.
2. **Call** someone and tell them what is happening. Ask them to pray with you.
3. **Pray** out loud and share with God what is happening – He cares!
4. **Read** Psalm 23.
5. **Talk** to yourself as David did and tell yourself what is happening and you will get through it.

THE BIBLICAL PROCESS

It is imperative we use our most valuable resource available to us -- the Bible. The Bible recognizes panic attacks as a real problem, and it deals with it accordingly. It was through the apostle Paul that God brought the best process of dealing with anxieties that has ever been created. First, let us read the passage dealing with the problem.

Paraphrasing the Philippians verse: “Stop being anxious! Instead, bring every need into the presence of the Father and worship Him. Gratefully pour your hearts out to Him, letting Him know in detail the things bothering you. Do this and God’s peace, which is far beyond your mind's ability to comprehend, will calm the anxieties within you. It will form a mantle of protection in Christ over both your heart and your thoughts to keep you from further anxieties.”

The Biblical process of overcoming anxieties has five steps. I call them the five P's of victory. They are:

1. **PRAYER**
2. **PRAISE**
3. **POSITIVENESS**
4. **PRACTICE**
5. **PEACE**

Before we start making application of this passage, let us study a critical point Paul is making. The verse begins with stop being anxious! Paul is saying we can **choose** not to be anxious. There is a Biblical principle, which states, "What God commands, He empowers." This means He is putting at our disposal everything necessary to overcome anxiety.

It also shows the Christian can control his emotions – with God’s help. A Christian does not have to be victimized by renegade emotions. Peace is not the absence of anxiety, but the victory over it. The question is how? This is where our Holy Friend, the Spirit of the Living God comes in.

He is the Indweller and Overcomer who lives within us. The panic-prone person needs to be lovingly confronted with his or her need of the fullness of the Holy Spirit, so that they might know and experience the comfort of and power in the Holy Spirit, which is available to all Christians.

The Christian is to exercise his will, rather than capitulate to the renegade emotions allowing them to control him. Far too often the anxious person is either avoiding what he feels has brought on the anxiety, or he has developed a ritual to deal with it. The anxious person must be shown how to follow the process of alleviating anxiety as outlined in this passage.

PRAYER

Whenever a person feels anxious, or they are afraid that a panic attack is coming, the first thing to do is bring it to God in prayer. Don't wait -- PRAY!! Even though there might be panic, take it to God in prayer.

"Stop and pray" is not bad theology or practice. We are encouraged, in fact, commanded to bring every thing to God, no matter how mundane. You might want to write out every desire, every care, and every need you can think of and then present it to God in prayer.

Paul says to pour out our hearts to Him. The word "*supplication*" in the Greek means, "to lay out one's personal needs." The word "*request*" in the Greek means, "to emphasize what you are asking." The idea is to break one's requests into specific detail.

"Casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you" 1 Peter 5:7. We can exchange our anxieties for His peace. This entails a deliberate act of putting all the anxieties on Him. I make it a practice to have the person write out and commit to the Lord every care and concern, as an act of his will.

We have not because we ask not. Our Father often waits in vain for us to ask. What does it take to move God? Nothing! He is more than ready to work. But, are we willing to receive? A paraphrase of John 15:7 says, *"If you continue to live in a vital relationship with Me and My Word becomes the final authority in your lives, I challenge you to demand something for yourselves, whatever your hearts desire, and I will cause it to happen!"*

PRAISE

Praise is an awesome tool for healing! It evokes the hand of God on our behalf. Appreciation is a lost art. We are to voice our gratitude. *"In everything give thanks,"* says 1 Thessalonians 5:18a. Teach the panic prone person by example and practice to turn anxieties into thanksgiving.

How can we praise God?

- By reading out loud Psalms of praise.
- By singing hymns and anthems.
- By verbalizing God's greatness and glory.
- By meditating on His character and works.

POSITIVENESS

"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worth of praise, dwell on these things" Philippians 4:8.

Anxieties have the curious characteristic of forcing a person to see the negatives. Everything is a minus factor. The panic prone person must force himself into this passage -- of focusing and fixing his mind on the positive things of the Lord.

Another characteristic of anxieties is it causes the mind to race endlessly and uncontrollably. Thought patterns run amok. As the mind runs away, doubts about a person's salvation are often created, or they believe they have committed the unpardonable sin, or they driven to do something for God.

To a panic prone person whose mind is in the fast lane, assurance is a desperate need because it offsets the racing of the mind. Let us see what the Word of God has to say first about our salvation, and then how we can handle thought patterns.

"Having canceled out the certificate of debt, consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross." Colossians 2:14.

The phrase "*certificate of debt*" presents a very vivid picture for us.

This statement refers to Roman law. Whenever a person was convicted of a crime in a Roman court of law, a "certificate of debt" was drawn up against him. Every crime was itemized and written down and put on the certificate of debt, showing the criminal owed Caesar a debt (whatever the court prescribed) for those crimes. Wherever the prisoner was jailed, the certificate of debt was nailed to the prison door.

Of course, there is a certificate of debt against us. Every sin we have ever committed has been drawn up, itemized, and spelled out. But, it has been nailed to the cross. Why? Because God intended to pay the debt for us!

According to Roman law, the certificate of debt remained nailed to the door until the sentence was completed. Then, the certificate would be taken down and the Latin for "paid in full" would be written across it. Interestingly enough, one of the last things Jesus said from the cross was the Greek word "*tetelastai*." Luke 23:46 describes it: "*Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.*" Then in John 19:30 says with a victorious shout he cried, *tetelastai*, "*It is finished!*" The word "*tetelastai*" in the Greek means **PAID IN FULL!!**

Christ paid our debt in full. But, how can we as we suffer from doubts because of anxieties grasp this? First, I have found it is imperative to write down everything I can possibly think of that I considered wrong or sinful in my life and then I would write across it, "PAID IN FULL."

For those who come to me I share with them the security of their relationship with Christ. To help, I take them through three simple steps related to salvation:

1. **THE HISTORICAL SEQUENCE:** How I received Christ.
2. **THE EXPERIENTIAL SEQUENCE:** What I have experienced as a Christian.
3. **THE DIVINE IMPERATIVE:** What God's plan is for me.

From my experiences, it appears, many pastors and Christian speakers can create doubts about a person's salvation by a systematic destruction of their faith than rather strengthening a person's sense of salvation through the building up of their faith. (In almost every case of acute anxieties with which I have dealt, the anxious person has detailed how a pastor categorically tore down his or her anchors of salvation, which in turn produces unspeakable terror.) I don't question the sincerity of these clergy or speakers, nor their motives, just their application.

I always insist that the panic prone person accept as an anchor in their life the truth just expressed. They can demand their minds quiet down -- and they will. Concentrating on God's character and His love and commitment to us can be vital in helping a person handle runaway thoughts.

One mother would press her hands against either side of her head and squeeze as hard as she could trying to suppress the thoughts that were bombarding her mind. Anxieties breed doubts, racing thoughts, introspection, self-centeredness, and "crazy" thinking.

If you are a panic-prone person and have been captivated by bad inner thoughts and you have taken counsel in your doubts here is what I want you to do.

S T O P ! ! !

I have them say, "Stop!"--Sometimes shouting it. I get them to talk to themselves, as did David. Rather than listen to themselves I get them to talk to themselves. I have them write out what they are thinking, listing their doubts and negative thinking. Then we analyze these together, so counselees know they are being heard.

Then I begin to build anchors into their lives. I do this by having them list what they feel the problems are. (Usually they correlate with their thinking patterns.) Then, for each problem I create a Biblical anchor centered on a verse of Scripture. Then we decide on the means best to attack that particular problem or situation.

Also, I get them involved in something that keeps them busy, but allows time for them to work on the anchors. I give them tasks to accomplish that are simple, but effective. Some are:

1. Establishing a schedule.
2. Creating a hobby.
3. Listening to tapes.
4. Writing (A very effective tool).

5. Setting goals.
6. Getting them involved with resource people.
7. Plan a vacation or something to create anticipation.
8. Reclaiming the past.
9. Having effective devotional time. (This is crucial, because often anxieties have been related to their Christian walk, and the tendency is to avoid the area related to the anxieties).
10. Continue in counseling.

PRACTICE

“The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you” Philippians 4:9.

Paul is urging us to practice what we have learned, received, heard, and seen. The word *"practice"* means to work at creating holy habits. It means effort is going to have to be expended.

When we use the word *"victory,"* we must realize that victory implies battle! Renegade emotions such as fear, anxiety, guilt, etc., are to be fought and conquered. Such battles are not easy, but the battle is the Lord's, not ours.

A good place to initiate the practice of overcoming renegade emotions is with fear. Fear, as I have so often stated, is the underlying cause of all renegade emotions. Fear is to Satan, what love is to God.

There is a word in the Greek that is used only 10 times in the New Testament, but it is a word of singular importance in dealing with anxiety. The word is *"poikilos"* and means "variegated" or "many colored." In 1 Peter 4:10, Peter uses it to describe the *"manifold grace of God."* James 1:2 uses it to describe the variety of tests a Christian faces. Peter uses it in this way also in 1 Peter 1:6.

Poikilos has two applications, which are important for us. The first means, as I said, variegated or many colored. The other describes a person who is clever and resourceful, one who can meet any emergency or situation.

The first use of the word speaks of color, of stunning masses of color--overwhelming shades and hues of color. The idea of an overwhelming mass of color would give us some idea of the full meaning of the word. James uses it when he says, *"Count it all joy my brethren when you encounter various trials."* What is being communicated is that the Christian is met with an overwhelming array of tests - tests of every shade and hue of color.

Peter repeats what James says. As Christians we are faced with an overwhelming variety of tests. Amazingly, though, James tells us to rejoice in them! Rejoice in a panic attack! Can he be serious? Now, the word "count" means "to run before the mind," not the emotions. We don't have to feel joy to count it all joy. But how can we do this?

WHAT TO DO WHEN A PANIC ATTACK OCCURS

1. **STOP** everything. Sit down, take a deep breath and force yourself to relax.
2. **PRAY**, turning the situation over to God. Pray out loud if you can. Follow the Philippians 4:6-7 process.
3. **CONCENTRATE** on controlling your panic by talking to yourself.
4. **CALL** a friend and relate what is happening and have him/her come and assist you. If you are in a public place, stop wherever you are, pray silently, and take control.
5. **REMEMBER** that others have been through this before and have survived, and so will you!
6. **MEDITATE** on a verse or passage of Scripture.
7. **SEEK HELP** by going to a Bible-based pastor or counselor who will listen and help.
8. **CALL YOUR FAMILY PHYSICIAN** and tell him/her what is happening and what you are doing about it.
9. **INVOLVE** your family, friends and others in helping you overcome the anxieties.
10. **PRAISE** God, no matter how difficult it seems. He is not the cause of the problem, He is the solution.

YOUR NEXT STEPS...

FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS

The next step to understanding how to continue to express healthy emotions is to grow in your experiential knowledge of God. Developing a healthy identity that reflects the indwelling presence of Christ and accepting the Bible as God's Word—and therefore, as our final and supreme authority—are equally important.

Every Christian has a personal testimony of God's grace in their lives. Unfortunately, many remain only babies in Christ, choosing not to grow in Christian maturity and develop an intimate and joyful relationship with God. To continue in your journey of knowing God is to learn, understand, and activate what we call foundational truths.

“For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil” Hebrews 5:13-14.

The first foundational truth is “**Understanding who you are in Christ.**” The reason this truth is so important is because most believers step into their new birth experience with their old mind chatter dictating their emotions, behaviors, and beliefs. This dialog is normally in opposition to their new identity in Christ.

The second foundational truth is “**The Holy Spirit.**” Without understanding of the indwelling, empowering work of the Holy Spirit, we are left to go through life under our own initiative and power instead of God's. The Holy Spirit is the One who takes God's Truths and makes them a reality in our lives.

The third foundational truth is “**Renewing the mind.**” Without the process of renewing our mind to the truth of who God is and who God says we are, we will continually struggle in our Christian walk striving to experience the abundant life Christ promised.

The fourth foundational truth is “**Seeing your Heavenly Father for who He truly is.**” The important point here is believers usually take their experiences with their earthly dads, moms, and authority figures, good or bad, and clip art those experiences to God's face and end up worshipping God incorrectly.

The cornerstone of these foundational truths is “**The Holy of Holies: the temple of God.**” Jesus, through His life, death, and resurrection, made it possible for believers to have immediate access to God and His throne, the Holy of Holies. For believers to understand they are God's temple and God's Spirit lives in them (1 Corinthians 3:16), brings in a worship that sets them free to experience their life in Christ, free to worship God in spirit and truth, and free to follow the Holy Spirit as He renews the believer's mind to truth.

For further study on these foundational truths, I recommend you do our *Free Indeed!* Bible study and our *Pneumanetics Original* series which are outlined on page 44.

As you have read this book, hopefully it has helped you begin to know God at a deeper level so He becomes the most important person in your life. As our relationship with God continues to mature, it allows us to break free from the power of sin, free from the power of our renegade emotions, and live in victory as a believer. God's empowering presence is what enables us not only to live the Christian life victoriously, but to serve Him effectively. This transformation makes us outwardly what God has already made us to be inwardly.

RENEWING OUR MIND

As we have said, emotions are a fact of life, but we don't have to experience them in a negative way. God doesn't simply remove the destructive emotions that taunt and haunt us. No, that would leave a vacuum which cannot exist. He does something far better; He replaces them with Spirit-filled emotions.

Emotions in and of themselves are not right or wrong. They are morally neutral. However, they do communicate to us there is something going on in our thoughts and beliefs that need to be examined. We need to understand and allow our emotions to be an indicator to a deeper problem. When our emotions become messy and controlling, they have become more true to us than God's Word. This is why it is so important to ask ourselves, "Why do we feel the way we feel?" This is something David practiced.

"Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me?" Psalm 42:5a.

There is a reason we feel the way we do, and we need to examine how our thoughts and beliefs are promoting our emotions. God desires to help us handle our emotions:

"Casting all your cares [all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all] on Him, for He cares about you [with deepest affection, and watches over you very carefully]" 1 Peter 5:7, Amplified Bible.

The moment we accept Christ as Lord and Savior, we receive a new heart, a new human spirit, and the Holy Spirit comes to live within us. God is beginning a mighty process of conforming us to the image of His Son. The environment in which God does this work is called life and all that it entails. The method of conforming us to the image of Jesus is the work of the Holy Spirit through the revealing of truth, and it requires us to respond by applying that truth to our lives. As we are now understanding, Scripture calls this process renewing the mind, also known as "putting off" the lie or renegade emotion and "putting on" the truth or the healthy emotion. Again, our involvement in this process is imperative.

The question that comes up is "What lies are we renewing our mind from?" This would be anything and everything that stand in contradiction to God's Word. Since our unrenewed beliefs, thoughts, emotions, and behavior think in contradiction to God's truth, they must be dealt with so that we can function as God has designed us as new creations in Christ.

Recognition is the key to correctly diagnosing our renegade emotion. When we correctly diagnose what is causing our emotion it allows us to respond in a Godly way.

HOLY SPIRIT’S EMPOWERMENT

Christians seem to be willing over and over again to renew their efforts—rather than renewing their minds. Renewing our minds is not an option. It’s a command that comes directly from God. However, we cannot renew our minds correctly apart from the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit leads, directs, and executes our renewal from within us, something He does daily (2 Corinthians 4:16). There are many secular programs such as behavior modification or the power of positive thinking, but all of these programs attempt to change a person from the outside in, rather than God’s way of changing a person from the inside out. A true renewing of the mind can only come through the application of Truth by the Holy Spirit.

The renewing of the mind is a partnership, the product of an active, engaged relationship between us and the Holy Spirit—the same power that raised Christ from the dead—within us. Renewal is a process that, over time, changes our renegade emotions to healthy emotions or wrong beliefs into right ones. Renewal is a spiritual exercise where we practice to consistently make volitional decisions by our faith, rather than by our feelings.

PUTTING OFF / PUTTING ON

Again, a key principle of Christian sanctification is known as “putting on” and “putting off” or renewing our minds. The idea is simple. It means to change from one thing to another, in the same way that you would take off one set of clothing (“putting them off”), and then “putting on” another set of clothing in their place.

Putting off your renegade emotions can prove very frustrating because there’s typically a gap between the moment when we make a decision in faith and the outcome of that choice, the time when we finally get to experience the reality of that decision in our lives. But as you keep choosing God’s Truth, allowing the Holy Spirit to change you, permanent change will take place. Keep persevering in trusting God to keep transforming you into His likeness.

In the process of putting off, God never removes one thing without replacing it with something far better (putting on). If you find the prospect of becoming a different person intimidating, try to remember that God is in the business of creating masterpieces, not imitations. He loves you and He wants only what’s best for you—even more than you do!

Because we continue receiving inputs that we need to process for the rest of our lives, we are using the R.E.A.C.T. process in dealing with our renegade emotions and inaccurate beliefs to help us constantly challenge our erroneous belief system, transforming deception with Biblical truth.

RENEWING OUR MINDS USING R.E.A.C.T.

R -	RECOGNIZE	the real problem; identify the emotion and the source of that emotion.
E -	EVALUATE	your thoughts; ask God what you are thinking and believing that is causing this emotion

		to surface.
A -	AFFIRM	by admitting you alone are accountable for your emotional response. Ask God to show you anything in your life He wants to deal with.
C -	CONFRONT	in faith; recognize your emotions seem more real than God's Word. Ask the Holy Spirit to replace the negative emotion with His Godly emotion which motivates your Godly behavior.
T -	TRUST	in God, His Word, and the Holy Spirit to work in your life. Thank God He is in the process of conforming you to His image and allowing you to walk in your new identity in Christ.

RECOGNIZING OUR EMOTIONS:

In recognizing what emotion we are experiencing, we need to ask ourselves, “Has something made me produce this emotion, or do I feel this all the time?” In either case, recognizing our emotions and the source is necessary in dealing with them.

EVALUATING OUR EMOTIONS:

Start by acknowledging what emotion you are experiencing. Review the chart, “How Do You Feel?” on page 43. You can ask God, “How am I responding to people, situations, and circumstances?” to help identify what I am feeling. Then begin to ask God what your thoughts and beliefs are that are causing this emotion to surface.

AFFIRMING OUR EMOTIONS:

Affirmation is simply admitting to something in your life God needs to deal with. It is so easy to become upset at a person instead of dealing with what is going on inside us. The Bible teaches we are accountable for the decisions we make. Remember, we are responsible for our emotional response, no matter the cause. No one puts the emotion in us, they simply bring it out.

CONFRONTING THE EMOTIONS:

You cannot appease an emotion. With any emotion, we need to enlist the power of the Holy Spirit in addressing it. You simply confront it in faith, asking the Holy Spirit to “put off” your negative emotion and replace it by “putting on” His Godly emotion which motivates Godly behavior. It might take time but God’s promises never fail and He will allow you to overcome the destructive power of the emotion in your life.

TRUSTING GOD:

There can be no real or meaningful changes in lifestyle apart from the work of the Holy Spirit. Thank God He is allowing you to walk in your new identity in Christ. You are being conformed to His image. The end result will be you living in holiness and worshipping God which leads to experiencing the abundant life God promised!

HOW DO YOU FEEL?

<p>LONELY</p> <p>left out friendless forsaken lost isolated withdrawn lonesome insignificant separate rejected withdrawn</p>	<p>ANGRY</p> <p>furious hacked off aggravated mad hard irritated distant frustrated boiling indignant out of control</p>	<p>SAD</p> <p>dejected unhappy dreary woeful depressed cheerless blue grieving gloomy glum downcast heavy-hearted</p>	<p>HAPPY</p> <p>joyful ecstatic cheerful upbeat glad pleased delighted light bright vivacious elated bouncy</p>	<p>LOVING</p> <p>tender affectionate warm accepting kind devoted forgiving loyal sympathetic caring</p>
<p>GUILTY</p> <p>ashamed criticized cursed damned doomed dirty judged trapped embarrassed</p>	<p>INADEQUATE</p> <p>weak small useless bashful meager deficient inept powerless vulnerable</p>	<p>PEACEFUL</p> <p>calm quiet serene collected sedate content composed cool tranquil</p>	<p>BELONGING</p> <p>popular famous needed important well-known accepted attached influential valuable worthwhile</p>	<p>SECURE</p> <p>safe protected stable optimistic sure poised hopeful confident assured</p>
<p>AFRAID</p> <p>anxious frightened alarmed jumpy fearful shocked unnerved tight scared terrified timid shaky</p>	<p>HATEFUL</p> <p>hostile unfriendly mean critical quarrelsome nasty jealous spiteful harsh</p>	<p>POWERFUL</p> <p>strong energetic assertive upbeat great dominant pushy assured sure aggressive confident intoxicated</p>	<p>INNOCENT</p> <p>pardoned pure forgiven clean set free released exonerated fresh naïve acquitted justified</p>	<p>OTHER:</p>

ACTIVE STEPS:

To continue this transformation in making you outwardly what God has already made you to be inwardly we recommend the following classes and books:

- 1. Free Indeed! God's Empowering Word Infused in our Lives Makes us Free Indeed.**
This is a 9-week bible study held at His Truth Transforms International, local churches, home Bible Studies, or can be purchased and completed on your own.
- 2. Pneumanetics Original Series.** This 18-book series will cover every aspect of your Christian life. You can purchase the books and/or take our two semester training class, which is beneficial for personal growth or equipping you as a Biblical counselor. The following topics are:

SESSION 1 THE BASICS

- Book 1 Introduction
- Book 2 The Sufficiency of Scripture
- Book 3 The Nature of Man
- Book 4 The Fall of Man
- Book 5 The Self-Life
- Book 6 Spiritual Warfare

SESSION 2 THE BEGINNING

- Book 7 Our New Life in Christ
- Book 8 It Took a Miracle (Forgiveness)
- Book 9 Candidate for a Miracle (Being Filled with the Spirit)
- Book 10 Living on the Cutting Edge

SESSION 3 THE BELIEFS

- Book 11 Belief Systems
- Book 12 The Torah Syndrome (Legalism and Standards)
- Book 13 Becoming Who You Already Are (Building a Christian Identity)
- Book 14 FatherHunger/MotherHunger (AWOL Parents)

SESSION 4 THE BENEFITS

- Book 15 ABBA Father (Knowing God as Father)
- Book 16 A God for All Seasons
- Book 17 The Grace Connection
- Book 18 Worship His Majesty

- 3. Visit HTTI'S Bookstore** to order the additional books on *Preventing Emotional Meltdown; Overcoming Emotions that Destroy Series* which are "God's Solution for Man's Anger," "God's Solution for Man's Anxiety," "God's Solution for Man's Depression," "God's Solution for Man's Fear," and "God's Solution for Man's Guilt," as well as other books written by Jim Craddock.

Also, to learn more about the classes and seminars offered, or sign up for counseling at www.HisTruthTransforms.org.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

James Henry Craddock, author, lecturer, pioneer in biblical counseling, and founder of several God-focused and life-changing ministries, came to Christ through the ministry of The Navigators on Okinawa, where he served as a nuclear weapons disposal technician. Following graduation from the University of Colorado, he joined Campus Crusade for Christ, where he ministered for 15 years to college students, speaking on more than 50 campuses each year.

In 1973, Jim founded Scope Ministries International, a ministry of biblical counseling. He has authored over 27 publications, including *Pneumanetics Original*, *Pneumanetics*, and co-authored *Be Transformed*, which continues to be used by individuals, churches and biblical counseling centers. In 1986, Jim founded the International Association of Biblical Counselors to unite the discipline of biblical counseling.

Following the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building bombing in Oklahoma City, World Trade Center attacks in New York City, and several natural disasters, Jim wrote a Rapid Response Manual, which was used as a prototype by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA), to assist ministries in their disaster relief outreach. BGEA called on Jim to lead the counseling at The International Conferences for Itinerant Evangelists at Amsterdam 83, 86 & 2000 and to provide counseling at many of the BGEA Conferences around the world.

In 2006, Jim's latest calling was His Truth Transforms International. A faith-based, non-denominational 501(c)(3) ministry founded on the sufficiency of Christ and His Word.

On April 1, 2014, Jim went home to his Heavenly Father. We are so thankful that he spent his life taking biblical truths and transforming them into principles that, when applied, will transform a person's life from the inside out. Jim devoted his life to helping others know the one true God. He is greatly missed!

ABOUT HIS TRUTH TRANSFORMS INTERNATIONAL

– providing Biblical tools for effective ministry –

His Truth Transforms International (HTTI) was founded in 2006 by Jim and Doris Craddock and Christi Craddock Taylor. This unique nonprofit, faith-based, non-denominational 501(c)(3) ministry was founded on the sufficiency of Christ and His Word. HTTI is designed to utilize Biblical truth in the development of material and programs that will enhance a Believer's walk with Christ and their ministry for Christ. HTTI offers personal and group counseling, classes, seminars, published books and material that will deepen a believer's personal relationship with Christ, as well as equip one to disciple others, both locally and internationally.

HTTI's heartfelt conviction is that biblical counseling must have a solid foundation in the Word of God in order to provide answers to hurting people. HTTI's goal is not to fix a person's problems, but rather to see a person transformed from the inside out through the Holy Spirit, God, and His Word.

HTTI does not charge for their counseling. The ministry is funded through the generous gifts of people who have a heart for helping others or who have been personally impacted by their lives being transformed through God's work in this ministry. Donations can be made at www.HisTruthTransforms.org/Give.