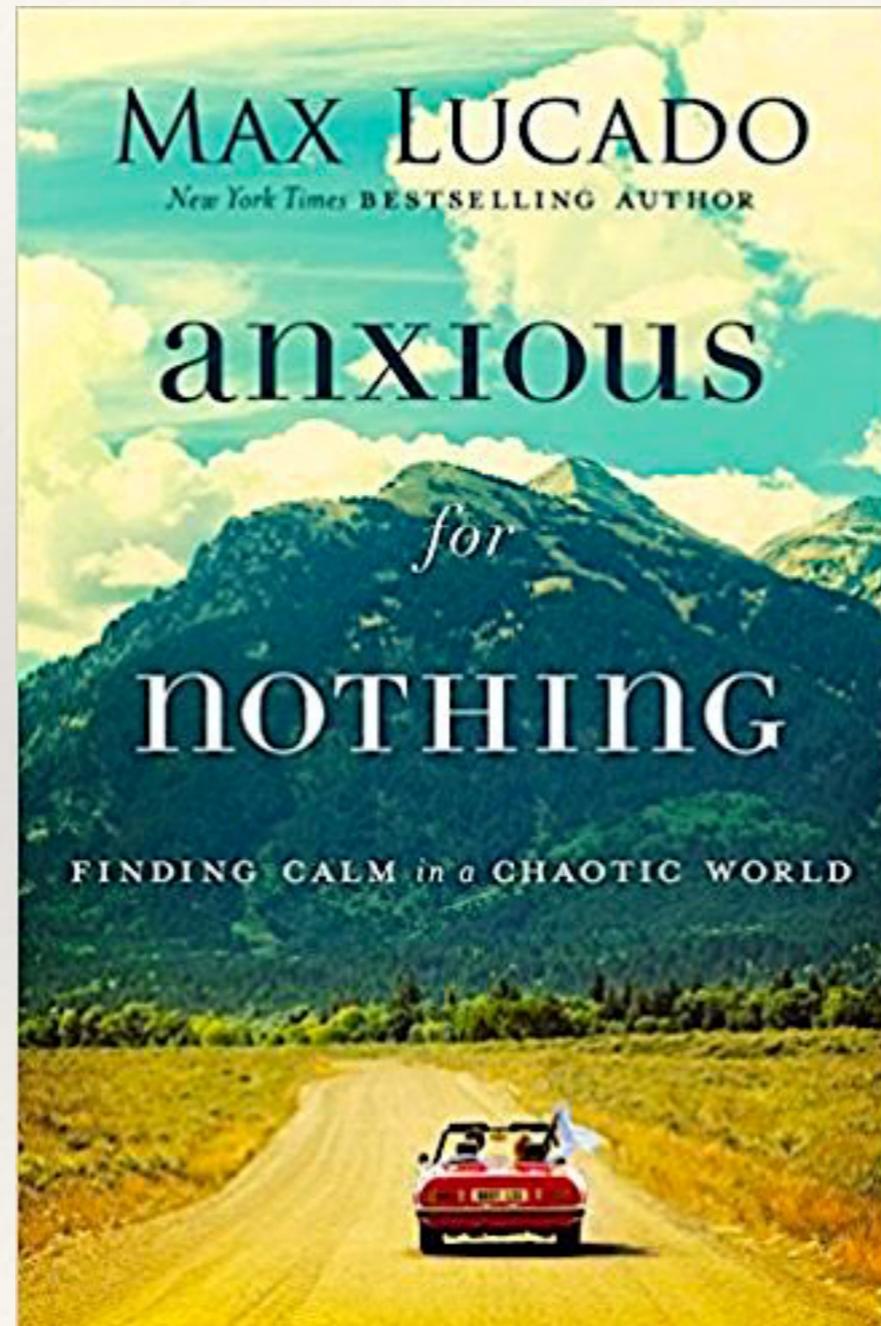


Anxious for Nothing



Less Fret, More Faith

- It's a low-grade fear. An edginess, a dread.
- It's not so much a storm as the certainty that one is coming. Always . . . coming. You can't relax.
- There's trouble out there! So you don't sleep well.
- You don't laugh often. You don't enjoy the sun. You don't whistle as you walk.
- Anxiety is trepidation. It's a suspicion, an apprehension.

Less Fret, More Faith

- The origin of the word that Hawaiians use for us non-Hawaiians is *haole*.
- It is the Hawaiian word for “no breath.”
- One explanation: “Our forefather thought settlers were always in a hurry to build plantations, harbors, and ranches. To the native Hawaiians they seemed short of breath.”
- Anxiety takes our breath (and often our sleep).

Less Fret, More Faith

- “The United State is now the most anxious nation in the world.” (*Slate*, January 31, 2011).
- The land of Stars and Stripes has become a country of stress and strife.
- Stress-related ailments cost the nation \$300 billion.
- Americans have more than doubled their spending on anti-anxiety medication like Xanax and Valium.

C.A.L.M.

- Celebrate God's goodness: "Rejoice in the Lord always" (verse 4).
- Ask God for help: "Let your requests be made known to God" (verse 6).
- Leave your concerns with Him: "With thanksgiving" (verse 6).
- Meditate on good things: "Think about the things that are good and worth of praise" (verse 8).

Celebrate God's Goodness

Rejoice in the Lord's Sovereignty

- The tempests in our life consist of the the big Ds of life; difficulties, divorce, disease, and death.
- Paul had reason to be anxious: he was beaten, he had endured shipwrecks, storms, and starvation.
- In the midst of his circumstances, he calls for us to, “Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I say rejoice (4:4).
- This is call for a decision and a deeply rooted confidence that God exists and He is in control.

Rejoice in the Lord's Sovereignty

- Control - psychologists studied the impact of combat on soldiers who became “emotionally dead” but fighter pilots claimed to be happy in their assignments.
- We need to trust that God is in control.
- “God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13).
- “There is no wisdom, no insight, no plan that can succeed against the Lord (Proverbs 21:30).

Rejoice in the Lord's Sovereignty

- “In everything, God works for the good of those who love Him” (Romans 8:28)
- “He will keep in perfect peace all those who trust in Him, whose thoughts turn often to the Lord (Is. 26:3).
- “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and whose hope is in the Lord. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and will not fear when heat comes, but its leaf will be green, and will not be *anxious* (Jeremiah 17:7-8).

Rejoice in the Lord's Mercy

- Guilt - guilt came first, with anxiety in tow. “Guilt drove the truck, but anxiety bounced in the flatbed.”
- Dealing with guilt: numb it, deny it, minimize it, bury it, punish it, avoid the mention of it, offset it, embody it.
- Guilt sucks the life out of our souls. Grace restores it.
- “God’s grace is the fertile soil out of which courage sprouts.”

Rejoice in the Lord Always

- Thank the Lord for your amygdalae (almond-shaped neural clusters inside your brain).
- It operates like an alarm system. We don't like alarm systems that are supersensitive.
- Paul says “rejoice in the Lord always” not just on paydays, Friday, good days or birthdays.

Rejoice in the Lord Always

- Does God care?
 - Deism says no. God created the universe and then abandoned it.
 - Pantheism says no. Creation has no story or purpose.
 - Atheism says no. There is no God and no divine plan.
 - Christianity says there is a God who is personally and powerfully involved in His creation.

Ask God for Help

Contagious Calm

- Anxiety is needless because God is near.
- “Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything” (4:5-6).
- Gentleness (*epieikes*) describes a temperament that is seasoned and mature. This gentleness is “evident to all.”
- We can calmly take our concerns to God because He is as near as our next breath.

Prayer, Not Despair

- Parable of contrast - unrighteous judge (Luke 18:3-8).
- Prayer principles:
 - Specific prayer is a serious prayer.
 - Specific prayer is an opportunity for us to see God at work.
 - Specific prayer creates a lighten load.

Leave Your Concerns With Him

Great Gratitude

- The widest river is a body of water called “If Only.”
- “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7).
- Gratitude is a mindful awareness of the benefits of life.
- It improves self-esteem, relationships, sleep, longevity.

Great Gratitude

- Paul says he has learned the “secret” of being content (Philippians 4:12). He doesn’t say principle or concept.
- Does your happiness depend on what you drive? Wear? Deposit” Spray on? - the rat race of materialism.
- Paul encourages us to focus on a different list.
- What he had in Christ was far greater - He mentions Jesus 40 times in the 104 verses.

Great Gratitude

- Can death take our joy? No, Jesus will never leave us.
- Can failure take our joy? No, Jesus is greater than sin.
- Can betrayal take our joy? No, Jesus will never leave us.
- Can sickness take our joy? No, God has promised, whether on this side of the grave or the other, to heal us.
- Can disappointment take our joy? No, because even though our plans may not work out, God's plan will.

God's Peace, Your Peace

- Mariners describe a tempest that no sailor can escape as the “perfect storm.”
- You don't need to be a fisherman to experience a perfect storm in your life.
- “The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:7).

God's Peace, Your Peace

- “Peace I leave with you: my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid” (John 14:27).
- God constructs a fortress around our hearts and minds: “A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing. Our helper He, amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.”
- Acts 27 - Paul and the crew set out and encounter a terrifying storm in the Mediterranean.

Meditate on Good Things

Think About What You Think About

- Your problem is not your problem but the way you see it.
- Philippians 4:8-9 - true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, praiseworthy.
- Healing from anxiety requires healthy thinking.
- “O my soul, bless God, don’t forget a single blessing” (Psalm 103:2).

Cling to Christ

- We are to abide in Christ, He is the vine (John 15:4-10).
- God is like a vine keeper. He lives and loves to coax the best out of his vines. He pampers, prunes, blesses, and cuts to produce the best fruit.
- Jesus used the word abide 10 times in 7 verses.
- He tells the story of Kent Brantly and his wife, Amber.
- Jesus says, “look and consider” (Matthew 6:26).

C.A.L.M.

- Choose the tranquil-tree over the anxie-tree.
- Christians battle anxiety. Jesus battled anxiety in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36-44).
- Philippians 4:4-8 has the feel of a “decision tree.”
- CALM - Celebrate God’s goodness. Ask God for help. Leave your concerns with God. Meditate on good things.

MAX LUCADO

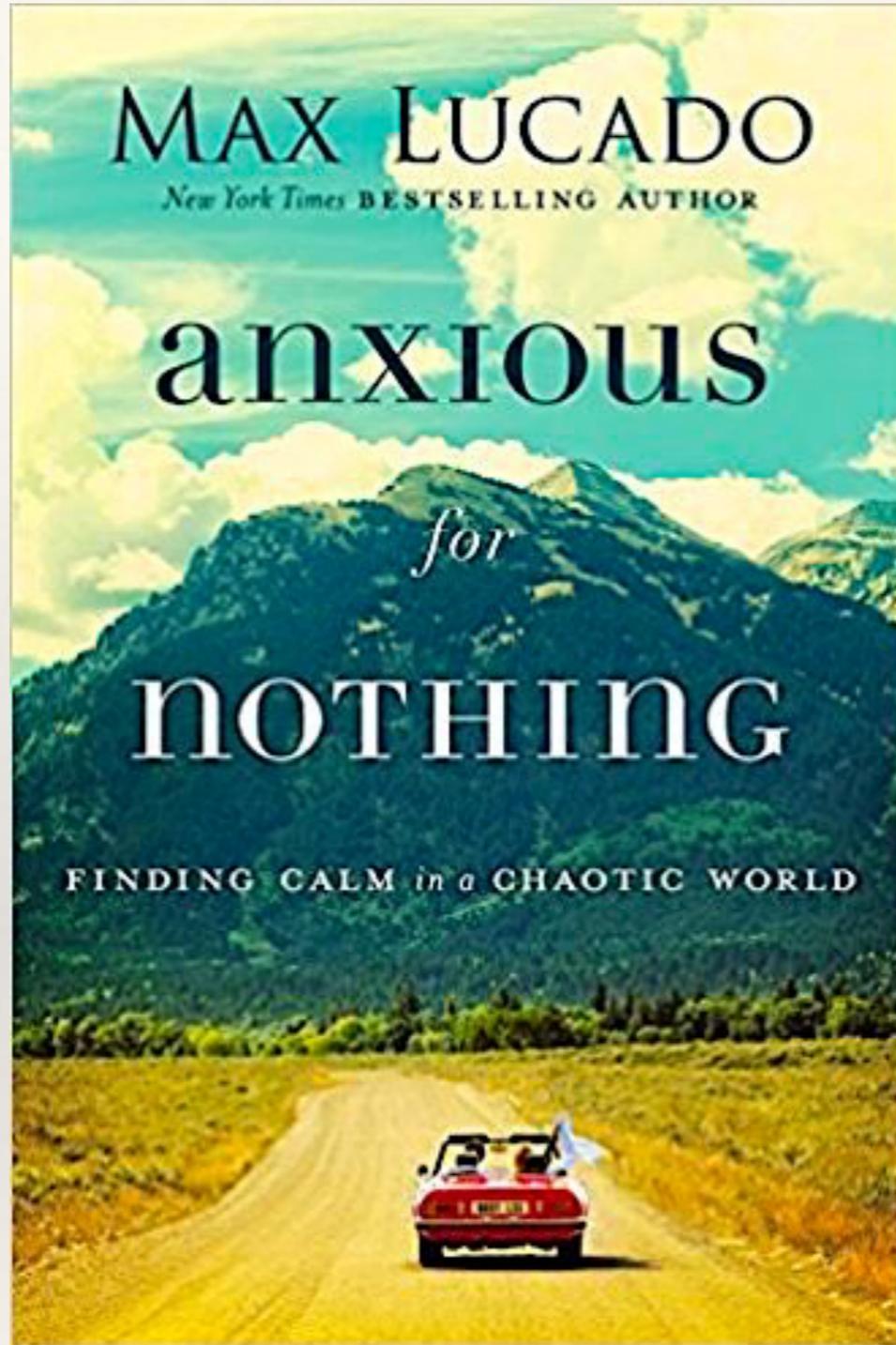
New York Times BESTSELLING AUTHOR

anxious

for

NOTHING

FINDING CALM *in a* CHAOTIC WORLD



Next Week

