

# Be Anxious For Nothing

by Carter Conlon

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of trusting in God's faithfulness and provision in all circumstances. It highlights the principle of being thankful and praying with thanksgiving, even in challenging situations, as God promises to sustain and glorify Himself through our lives. The speaker shares personal testimonies and biblical examples to illustrate God's faithfulness and miraculous provision, encouraging listeners to seek first the kingdom of God and trust in His abundant supply.*

**Scripture:** Philippians 4:6, Luke 12:22, Hebrews 10:23, Psalm 23:1

**Topics:** "Trusting God's Faithfulness", "Thankfulness in Adversity"

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## Description

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## Transcript

If you're not, you may be as well. And you know, it's just been such a wonderful presence of the Lord here tonight. Who can deny that? And we've heard some marvelous testimonies of people who have come through difficult situations and have learned to be thankful.

Now, the reason they've learned to be thankful is because they've learned a principle that is indispensable in your walk with God. And the principle just is, God will always be faithful to you. He will give you and I the amount of strength that we need to do what we're called to do and when we're called to do it, that he alone might be glorified.

He becomes our sustainer, he becomes our life. He is the one who lifts us, he carries us. He promises to not just redeem us, but to make our life purposeful on the earth.

And then ultimately to bring us home with him to glory forever. It is an amazing, amazing thing to walk with God. I'm gonna share just a very, very short message this evening and we're gonna go to the communion table together to just celebrate with thanksgiving what God has done for us through his son, Jesus Christ.

And if you have a chance to get some crackers or bread or juice at home so that you can join with us, we would appreciate that very, very much. I wanted to share with you from Philippians chapter four. If you

have a Bible or any kind of device where you can go to the word of God with us tonight.

So father, I just thank you, I thank you God with all my heart that you will teach us how to learn to pray with thanksgiving. You gave us this admonition in scripture and I thank you that it's learned through experience, not just off of a page, but actually by walking with you and finding out over the years that you don't fail those who put their trust in you. God almighty, as David the king once said, I've been young and now I'm old and I've never seen the righteous forsaken or his seed begging for bread.

And God, I can say the same thing now too as King David once said, I have seen you. I have walked with you in the valley. I've walked with you through sickness, through trial, through difficulty, through heartache and hardship.

You've always been there and you do, as the scripture says, take us from strength to strength. Thank you God for how good you are Lord, how you have sustained Pastor William and yet given him this incredible joy in the midst of the illness that he suffers. Thank you God, thank you for Ross and his wife Sarah Lord who went through a very hard time as a pastor and his wife.

And we thank you that you brought them here to us and there's such a richness of their confidence in you. And thank you for this young couple Lord who have found joy in spite of difficult family situations. Lord, they found joy and they can be thankful that you are a keeper and sustainer of all life.

Thank you for Emmy tonight, oh God, who found her family in the family of God. Thank you Lord Jesus Christ. We are so grateful, we are so grateful Lord.

And God, we just ask Lord that you give us the grace to actually learn from these testimonies, not just to hear them but actually learn and to enter into the experience of learning to pray with thanksgiving. And we thank you for it, in Jesus' name, amen. Philippians chapter four, beginning at just verses six and seven.

The apostle Paul says, be anxious for nothing. Now here's a guy, we heard it from Ross tonight, from Pastor Ross tonight. You know, he had a reason to be anxious, if anybody ever did.

I mean, this guy was shipwrecked. Every time he preached, he crawled out from under a pile of rocks. Somebody was trying to kill him.

He was in jail, more often he was beaten, he was stoned, he was whipped, he was betrayed, he was, like he had a reason to be anxious. But Paul is the guy into whose hand God puts this quill that writes on a parchment to this particular church. And we're reading it tonight where he says, be anxious for nothing.

In other words, don't worry about it. That's what he's saying. Don't worry about where you're gonna go.

Don't worry about how you're gonna get there. Don't worry about what you're gonna do when you get there. Don't worry about what your life is gonna amount to.

God has a plan for you that's bigger than you can even think or imagine. So be anxious for nothing. Now that's, then in itself, that's four words we could focus on for the rest of our Christian life and try to get to the bottom of that.

Because you and I know how hard it is not to be anxious about anything. We spend half of our life, more than half of our life, you know, I came from a home of worriers. My mother was a worrier.

She worried if she had nothing to worry about. So that's how much she worried. She just worried about everything.

She used to say, don't tell me worrying doesn't do any good. None of the things I worry about ever happen. 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 understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. So there's just something about praying with thanksgiving. The end result of that, of not being anxious, of having a heart that just really trusts in God, is a peace which passes understanding.

In other words, it's not based on anything we smell, taste, think, feel, know, see. It's something that's based on a confidence in God. And when people look at those of us who have this confidence in God, it passes their understanding, in other words, as much as it passes ours.

They don't see, there has to be a reason for this. Just like the king who saw the fourth man in the fire when he threw three Hebrew boys into the fire for their defiance in the sense of refusing to bow down to an idol. And he saw a fourth man, so he saw a peace as they walked in the fire, and I'm assuming they're praising God in that fire.

They're just kind of walking through the flames. The smoke is not touching them, the fire is not burning them. And the king sees a fourth man.

There's something happening here that passes understanding. And when you and I have confidence in God, there's this presence of God that people see, even before we understand it or know it. They see something in us.

Now, Jesus himself, I wanna just read to you his words before we go to communion tonight. In Luke chapter 12, let me just read it to you. Beginning at verse 22, I want you just to listen with your heart, listen with the deepest part of your heart tonight.

Then he said to his disciples, therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. In other words, don't live your life worried about these things. Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing.

Consider the ravens, they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn, and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? I remember when the Lord was leading me to leave my career and to pastor this little group of Christian people that were meeting in a hotel, who were offering me a salary that didn't even pay for my electrical bill. That's how low that salary was gonna be.

In the natural, it was foolishness, but yet, in my heart, I felt drawn by God. But I'm not gonna suggest there wasn't a battle. I'm not gonna suggest to you that I wasn't concerned or worried about my children, about how I'm gonna clothe them, how I'm gonna feed them, where we're gonna live, and how are we gonna pay our bills.

That's just kind of a natural part of humanness. And I remember I was preaching one Sunday to this little group of people while I was still a police officer in the city of Ottawa, Canada, and as I was preaching, now I was actually preaching on verses, these verses, I was preaching on give your all to God, follow God, walk with God. I was in the battle of my life, because I'm preaching something that I'm in the throes of

wondering whether I'm gonna live it myself.

And as it was wintertime, and as I was preaching, I was standing in front of a window in this hotel that we were having church in, and I looked out, and there was about four or five little brown sparrows, and they were in the driveway, and it was snow, so a truck had plowed it, and they're pecking at the ground, I can't see what they're eating, but they gotta be eating something, because they're all pecking at the ground. And this verse immediately came into my mind. Consider the ravens, they neither sow nor reap, neither have storehouse nor barn, and God feeds them.

Of how much more value are you than the birds? But you know, sometimes God's trying to give us comfort, we just kind of push it out of our mind. Yeah, that's nice, and we just go back to our message. And as I was preaching, and I'm still exhorting the people to live for God, give their all to God, I looked out the window again, and there are those four birds again, or five birds, and they're all pecking at the same spot, and I still can't see what they're eating.

And again, the Lord said to me, are you not worth more than these birds? It's amazing, God was saying, I don't want you to worry about what your future's gonna be, and how you're going to feed your children, and where you're going to live, and the things that you're gonna have. And he goes on to say, and which of you, by worrying, can add one cubit to his stature? In other words, by all of your worry, can you make yourself any taller? Can you make yourself bigger than you are? If you then are not able to do the least, why are you anxious for the rest? Consider the lilies, how they grow. They neither toil nor spin, and yet I say to you, even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these.

You know, I love the fact that he spoke so simply to us. He said, just take a look at the flowers. He said, I dressed them, and look at how they look.

And they don't, they're not worried about it. They just let me do what I do, and I'm faithful to them. If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you? Oh, you of little faith.

And do not seek what you should eat, or what you should drink, or have an anxious mind. For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Heavenly Father knows that you need these things. But seek, and I like what in the Gospel of Matthew it says first, but in Luke it just says, seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.

This has been one of the verses of my life as a believer in Jesus Christ. When our house burnt down, when we went into full-time ministry, and we lost everything, and we had to stay at the home of another pastor, and we didn't even have clothes for our children, and we didn't have a place to live, and I remember I went out, I used to jog in those days, and I went out for a run one January morning, and I quoted this verse back to God. I said, Lord, you told me that if I sought first your kingdom and your righteousness, that you would add all these things to me.

So I'm just gonna take you at your word. I'm just gonna go and jog. I can't worry about it, because I can't change the situation.

But I'm going to trust you to be who you say you are to me. And most of you know the story that within just a short season, so much provision came in from so many unexpected places that we eventually were able to purchase a brand new home outright. We paid cash for it, all new furniture.

We got all new clothes for our children. And I even got a pair of skates. I'm a Canadian, so I got a pair of skates that I've always wanted, and I could never afford them.

And as recently, I still have them in my garage, even recently, until I gave them away to somebody. And he said, do not fear, little flock, for it is your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. It's the pleasure of God.

He's not a reluctant God. He didn't go to the cross and die for you and go back to heaven just to fold his arms and just kind of watch and see how you're gonna make out in life. No, he died to be God to you and to me.

He died for those that are online tonight. He died, the scripture says, so you might have life, and that you might have it more abundantly. The writer of Hebrews in chapter 10, verse 23 says, don't cast away your confidence in one part of the scripture, he says, but in verse 23, he said, he who promised is faithful.

Now, I stand before you tonight. I've been saved 43 or four years now, and I can tell you, God has been faithful. Through flood, through fire, through trial, through sickness, through difficulty, through sorrow, through mountaintop, through times of excitement, times of despair, all of these times that came our way, God has been faithful.

And I've come to the point in life, thank God, that I'm not worried about what I'm gonna wear or where I'm going to live or what I'm gonna eat. Obviously, I'm not worried about what I'm gonna eat. I got enough here to keep me for about a good 50, 60 days if all else fails.

But I can tell you over the years that God has been faithful. God has been faithful. I remember one time in our farmhouse, we ran out of water.

Actually, iron got into our well and ruined the water supply and it would be detrimental to our health. We didn't have any money, we had nothing. And I remember bringing my little kids, Pastor Teresa and the little kids into the room and I opened the Bible and I showed them the promise.

Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. I also showed them in James, he said, if you ask for something to consume it on your lusts, you won't receive anything from the Lord. And I said, so this is not for our lusts.

God knows we need water and we don't have the money. The contractor said it was gonna cost \$3,000 to dig a brand new well and connect it to the house. I said, but I'm gonna have him do it anyway because we need water and God knows we need water and he's gonna provide.

Now all these things, and I've always held to that. I'm seeking first the kingdom of God. His promises that he would provide.

So we had the contractor come in and he dug a new well and he hit this beautiful vein of crystal clear cold water. It was absolutely amazing. Connected it to the house and the day before the invoice for it was due to arrive, I went to the mailbox and there was a card in the mailbox from my father.

I thought that was strange. So I opened the card and he said, your grandmother when she died left money for your education and we didn't use it all for your education and so this is what was left. And it was a check for \$3,000 in the mail.

And now listen, the bill came to about \$2,981 so we had enough left to go for a large all dressed pizza as a family and celebrate after paying for the water supply. I remember when we went into full time ministry, I could be here all night telling you about the faithfulness of God but these were kind of the early days and God's goodness, he builds us in the early days so we can trust him for the bigger days. You know, I'm gonna be one day on a field in a war torn area of the world more than one time and I'm gonna have to have faith so he doesn't take you from zero to that kind of faith.

He starts building our confidence in him. For those that are listening online tonight, you start at the beginning and let God prove to you how faithful he is and how faithful he will be and before you know it, you'll be praying with thanksgiving. You'll be praying because the only way I know how to pray with thanksgiving is you know that God is going to answer your prayer.

And I remember thinking when I went into full time ministry and we started taking people into our house on top of this. We took in a lady with her two children who had come back to the Lord and another pastor to pastor a group of French speaking people that began to attend the church and there was just all kinds of people. A principal and his wife and their three kids, I think it was, we had a full house, I'll tell you.

At one winter, we had 17 people. And I remember thinking, we can't even feed ourselves. How are we gonna feed these people? But God, again, you said seek first your kingdom and your righteousness and I've just had the secret joy and so did Pastor Teresa, just letting him do a miracle one more time.

And I remember wondering, we've got to somehow get food for all these people and one day I get a knock on my door and it's a farmer and he's a Christian man and he said, the Lord spoke to me and told me to fill your freezer with beef and fill it with the best of beef, fillet. And he said, no, for real. No, no, it gets even better.

And he said, and as soon as it starts to get down, every time it gets down, you call me and I'll fill it again. And when it gets down, you call me and I'll fill it again. And he was always faithful.

And then I remember the pastor who came to pastor the French church, we had a van where we picked up kids and took them to church on Sunday. He shows up one day and the whole van, the whole minibus is full of grapefruit and it's full of bread. And he said, well, I was at this food bank and they're just overflowing, they don't know what to do with all the food.

And they said, we don't want this to spoil. So he said, I'll take it. You're talking like we had about, we had to have at least a thousand grapefruit.

And I remember thinking, what are we gonna do with a thousand grapefruit? He said, I don't know. He said, it seemed a shame to waste it. So we started knocking on doors and asking people if they wanted grapefruit in the area.

And everybody was really glad and the poor know the poor. Long story short, we had all the fruit and bread we ever needed. We had way more than we ever needed.

And we started feeding families. And we ended up, by the time we left, we were feeding 237 families in the community by the goodness of our God, by the grace of our God, the provision of God. That's why David could say, my cup overflows.

Now, he didn't just fill my cup in the presence of my enemies or in my need, but he filled that cup so much that it was overflowing. And we had so much food, we had to start giving it away. We had to start, and we ended up getting a storage facility and other people found out about it.

And then a huge food bank in the city of Ottawa contacted us and said, would you be interested in being our Eastern division? Which means we could have got an attractor trailer load full of food every week and brought it out. It's just amazing. There's no end to what God can do if we will seek him first and his kingdom and let all these things be added unto us.

Now, I've been all over the world. I've seen God do, you know the story, many of you. I've seen him, if you haven't, it's all in a book called, It's Time to Pray.

And I've seen God stop civil war. I've stood in front of governments. I've been in the homes of prime ministers and leaders and presidents.

I've been in so many places throughout the world. I've just seen God do what only God can do. And there's certain miracles that really stick in your mind.

And one is this, some of them are fading. And one though is as fresh as yesterday. And it's called the Great Spaghetti Miracle that happened in our life.

And I'm gonna ask Pastor Teresa to come and share about this story. And as she'll need her microphone over there on the other side, and as she does, then we're gonna go to the communion table. Now, this was a miracle of miracles.

I've read about this in scripture, in the Old Testament, but I've lived to see it. I've lived to see this miracle happen. Well, we never get tired of telling this story, but we were young in the faith.

And it was before the freezer full of beef. And I put a pound of hamburger on the counter. And I went about 300 yards down the road to my mom's house.

And while I was there, someone said to me, who's that in your driveway? So I look over and it was a car I didn't recognize. So I walked back and it was a family of five. And they had, when Pastor Carter and I had been ministering in Eastern Canada, hundreds of miles away, we said, look, if you ever are in the area, stop by, and they did.

And so that was good, family of five, we're a family of five. That's all right, I know how to thin a sauce with the best of them, so that was no problem. But when a short while later, I heard a motorcycle in the driveway, and lo and behold, it was Pastor Carter's brother and a friend, and they were motoring across Canada, and they never visit us their whole married life.

And he just shows up and it's like, wow, that's very cool. Come on in, so welcoming everybody in when literally I heard another car in the driveway. And I look out and this was a family of seven.

They had five children and they were a church family. And I knew for them to be visiting us at suppertime, I knew that was very deliberate, and I knew that they needed to be at our house. So I welcomed them in, and by this time, you can barely navigate across the kitchen, there's so many people in there.

When Pastor Carter comes home, and yes, he has my sister and her son with him. They just traveled an hour to get there. And I had this one pound of spaghetti, and I remember just like, the Lord said to me,

don't look in the pot, don't look in the pot, and just put a bright smile on.

And I just kept, when it came to supper, I just kept ladling out. I just kept pouring out, pouring out, pouring out. I couldn't believe it, I was getting more excited.

And by the end of it, there was spaghetti to spare. It was an absolute miracle. It was a miracle.

And it was my first known miracle. We were very young in ministry, and God is, he said, God, the promise that the Lord will provide was so true and so real. And every one of those people, I realized, were guided to our house.

And I couldn't provide for them, we couldn't provide, but God provided. And because they were brought to us unannounced, but this was of the Lord. And these are things like, when you have an open home, an open heart, an open life, God will bring the people that need to come into your life, and he will supply your needs.

And when I'm telling you, when a miracle happens in your own kitchen, when a miracle happens through the most mundane of ways, and yet he miraculously provides, you are forever changed. So don't, please don't back up. God, if you seek first the kingdom of God, everything you and I need to serve him and one another in our generation will be supernaturally provided again, and again, and again, amen.

Praise God. Yeah. I just remember being in the kitchen, and the Lord spoke to both of us, don't look in the pot, just keep serving.

And she was generously serving this meat sauce, and I'm kind of of the mind of just, could you just hold back and just maybe a little less? She's generously putting it, and big plates of spaghetti, and we fed, I don't know, 20, 24 people, whatever it was, and there were leftovers. Truly amazing. I mean, only God could have done that.

It was one pound of hamburger with a little can of tomato sauce and maybe a couple of extra things, but it could never have fed that many people. It was not, no chance. And this is the God that we serve.

And I'm just so thankful today that the God of the big things is also the God of the little things, right? He sees our need. And for many who are going into Thanksgiving, you need God to be with you in a big way and some in a small way. But I tell you from experience, He will not fail you.

And if you will pray with thanksgiving, be anxious for nothing, as the scripture says, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving. So here's how you pray. God, thank you.

Thank you that when my supply is short, yours isn't. Thank you, Lord, that when I run out of love this Thanksgiving, you don't, and your supply of love will start pouring through me. When I only got a pound, you got tons of love.

So you'll just keep pouring love through me when my supply is gone. When my patience is gone, yours is everlasting, and you will start pouring through my life. And when my words of kindness are gone, yours are still there, and you got more words in your vocabulary than the world can contain.

And so, Lord, I just yield my body as that pot yielded itself to that spaghetti sauce. I yield my body to you, Lord, and I just ask you to be God and prove yourself to be God. And when you allow Him to prove Himself to be God in the small things, then you start moving to the bigger things throughout life.

And you might find yourself in a place where you need an absolute miracle of God. I have over the course of my life. But you'll remember the spaghetti, you understand? You'll remember the water.

You'll remember the beef in the freezer. You'll remember how God never failed. You'll remember the van of bread and grapefruit showing up, and you had so much, you had to start giving to the poor.

You'll remember how God does things. And you'll find that He's lavishly generous. He's lavishly generous.

"Fear not, little flock,' Jesus said, "it is your Father's delight to give you the kingdom." It's in His heart to give it to you. And so we don't draw back. And I refuse to live in an anxious place.

A lot of people, they just live their lives worrying about everything. But I refuse to worry. I'll never go back there again for the rest of my life because I know Him and I know how faithful He is.

Whatever He asks me to do, that's what I will do. That's been the theme of my life. I'll do, God, what you ask me to do.

I don't have to worry about it. You will supply everything that I need. So Father, as we head to this communion table tonight, as we're preparing now to go get the bread and get the juice together to celebrate, to celebrate with thanksgiving what you did for us on the cross, to celebrate the fact that we have become a family, to celebrate the fact that even when life throws us a curve, God, Lord, we are still able to find your purpose in it.

And you still promise to give us the strength, my God, to navigate the difficult places. We think of the apostle Paul who said, be anxious for nothing. Yet the man had literally gone through hell and earth, but yet there was a dividing joy and a trust in him, God, that he could pray with thanksgiving.

So I ask you, Lord, this thanksgiving, that you would enable us to pray with thanksgiving. You would enable us to have grateful hearts and to believe you for the supply that we're all going to need in the situations we find ourselves in. Thank you that you made it all available at the cross in Jesus' name.

We'll be back in just one moment. We'll have communion together, and then we'll close out tonight.

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