

## COPING WITH LIFE'S ANXIETIES

### *Note to the speaker:*

In the section "How God Helps Us to Cope With Anxieties," use experiences from the cited *Watchtower* articles and present this section with a warm manner and kindly tone of voice

### **TODAY'S WORLD FULL OF ANXIETY** (10 min.)

Worldwide today people are restless, fearful, anxious about future (g86 12/8 3-4; g90 8/8 31)

There is growing distrust, lack of confidence in governments and in institutions (g90 8/8 3-9)

Mankind is faced with monumental problems

On one hand, many suffer and worry because of shortages of food, goods, and energy (Mt 24:7)

Cost of living has soared, making it more and more difficult to provide for home and family (Re 6:6)

People in big cities, small towns, and rurals feel this pressure (Briefly mention local evidence and effects of these problems)

On other hand, there is waste of money and resources by governments and individuals

Many refuse to work for living

Bad living habits and failure of money to bring happiness build up tensions, frustrations (1Ti 6:9, 10)

All of this adds to economic and social problems

There is also skyrocketing unemployment and lack of daily necessities

Crushing national and international debt fuels inflation and even threatens the stability of some governments (g89 5/8 8)

For example, in Peru the government announced a "shock program" to control an economy that had seen more than a 2,000,000-percent increase in prices in five years (*The New York Times*, 8/17/90)

Many economists fear the collapse of the worldwide banking system (g86 10/22 7-11)

There continues to be a breakdown in family life, with broken homes, marriage failures, divorces, disobedient children, and loss of parental control

In the United States during 1985, there were 5 divorces—compared with 10.2 marriages—per 1,000 people; in 1986 a report from Moscow indicated that only 37 percent of marriages lasted three years and that 70 percent ended within a decade (w88 11/1 20; g86 7/8 10)

Greedy ones care little for the earth and its resources (g90 3/22 6-8)

Indiscriminate destruction of rain forests is a global concern

Many potential foods, medicines, and household products will be lost even before they can be discovered or developed

One botanist lamented: "We're destroying things we don't even know exist" (g90 3/22 11)

Such exploiters bring about conditions that breed war, terrorism, crime, and famines

### **MISTAKEN EFFORTS AT OVERCOMING ANXIETIES** (7 min.)

Mankind looks in the wrong direction and to wrong sources for overcoming anxieties (w80 7/15 4)

Many turn to drugs such as tranquilizers

But do these drugs relieve anxiety? The Wolfson Unit of Clinical Pharmacology estimates that about a quarter of those taking benzodiazepines for four months become dependent on them

Effects produced: insomnia, anxiety, depression, panic attacks, nausea, blurred vision, and muscle pain (g84 10/8 30)

Others turn to the accumulation of money as the answer

A woman from Canada stated: "I believed that money brought freedom from worry." After she married a financially secure man, she related: "Our financial situation allowed us freedom to enjoy anything the world had to offer . . . , [but] I still worried about money." Why? "We had so much to lose. It seems that the more you have, the less secure you feel. Money did not bring freedom from worry or anxiety" (g88 4/22 3-4)

There are parts of the world where security is thought to come from having large families so that in later years children will care for aged parents (g91 11/8 6, 9)

This also proves to be a false hope as more and more children leave home and loved ones, forgetting to honor their father and mother (Pr 30:11; w85 1/15 12)

Various solutions have been proposed and some tried to conquer environmental problems, but the facts are that the problems continue to worsen (g73 3/8 31)

### **HOW GOD HELPS US TO COPE WITH ANXIETIES** (20 min.)

The primary requirement in overcoming anxieties is to look in the *right* direction for relief (w80 7/15 6)

Remedy will come from Jehovah, not man or his institutions (Ps 3:8; Jer 10:23)

Past examples of those who trusted in Jehovah

Noah and family put confidence in Jehovah, survived Flood; Lot and daughters relied on Jehovah for deliverance from Sodom (Mt 24:37-39; Lu 17:28, 29; Heb 11:7)

Daniel in the den of lions (Da 6:20-22)

Today, and in the immediate future, God offers protection and help (Ps 46:1; Pr 18:10)  
Looking to Jehovah will enable us to be free from anxious care (Heb 13:5, 6)  
Establish right priorities now; make sure of more important things (Php 1:9-11)  
That means storing up “treasures in heaven” (Mt 6:19-21)  
Get a firm hold on the real life; stop being anxious about unimportant matters  
Doing so will enable us to overcome anxiety, fear, and worry (Mt 6:25-31; 1Ti 6:17-19; *w77* 4/1 197-206; *w89* 7/15 10-15)  
Keep life-style simple and wholesome (1Ti 6:6-8)  
In coping with personal problems, it is very important to cast your anxieties on Jehovah  
Illness, depression, guilty conscience, feeling of unworthiness, lack of self-control, persecution, prejudice, day-to-day problems, worry about the future, and personality conflicts are heavy burdens to bear  
Why try to handle them alone? Accept Jehovah’s help (Ps 55:22; *w82* 9/15 23-5)  
Accept help from mature brothers and sisters; talk things out with one you trust  
Supplicate Jehovah, and accept the answers that he supplies (*w88* 2/15 12, 17-18)

**BLESSINGS COME FROM COPING** (8 min.)

“To cope” means to contend or strive with success

This contest will bring relief and escape from constant fear and emotional upsets caused by loss of possessions  
Paul counted possessions and position as “refuse” and found joy in serving Jehovah (Php 3:8, 10, 11)

One trusting in Jehovah avoids frustration that comes from failure of material security; will reside in spiritual security and be undisturbed by calamity; will lie down in peace (Ps 4:8; Pr 1:33)

Cannot cope with world problems through human ingenuity (Jer 10:23)

Win struggle by gaining calmer, healthier life now (*g81* 1/8 6-8)

Cope with life’s anxieties by doing the will of God now, with eternal blessings in view (1Co 15:58; 1Jo 2:15-17)

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need be read. Source material in parentheses need not be mentioned)