

# Pray More Healing Retreat - Transcript

## Moving from Fear to Faith

### Part 1

#### Gary Zimak

Hi there, and welcome. My name is Gary Zimak, so great to be with you here for this online healing retreat. Today, we are going to talk about how to move *From Fear to Faith*. We're going to do this in 3 segments. And as somebody who has lived with anxiety throughout my life, I'm going to assure you that it is possible, and please believe me on this, it is possible to live a life filled with the peace brought by Jesus Christ. That's what we're going to do here today. I'll give you some concrete steps, ways that you can move *From Fear to Faith* with the help of the Lord. So with that in mind, let's begin in prayer, and turn to our Heavenly Father and ask for His help, for His blessing, for His inspiration on this session.

*In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Dear Father in heaven, we come before You with grateful hearts. We thank You for Your constant love, for Your concern about every piece of our life. Your concern about our anxiety, Your concern about our problems, Your concern about our uncertainty. You are always ready to become involved and to help us. So we turn to you, Father, and we ask for Your help. We ask You to continue to guide us, to help us to trust You and Your providential care. I ask you, Father, to stir up Your Holy Spirit in me, so that I can proclaim Your message. We also ask, Father, that You open our minds and our hearts, so that we are able to accept and understand and put into practice Your words for us today. Father, we ask for these things in the most holy and the most sacred name of Jesus Christ, Your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Well, are you ready to get started? I am so excited to be a part of this online healing retreat. You know, I think it's so critical for those of us who struggle with anxiety to realize that we don't have to live our lives in fear. I absolutely assure you, you do not have to live your life in fear. Now, I am going to give you concrete steps. These steps are not that difficult, I like to keep things simple, and it really is simple. But there are a couple of key concepts that you will have to understand in order for this talk to bear fruit in your life, and we'll talk about those as we go forward.

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But first, let me tell you that my story is well-documented. If you look at the internet, Google my name, look at some of the videos I've done, read the books that I've written. I've struggled with anxiety from the time that I was a small child, maybe about 6 or 7 years old. I thought my parents would die, I thought that I had every disease imaginable. I'm just one of these people who is naturally wired to be anxious. It doesn't mean you can't live your life in peace if you're this way, but some of us have this predisposition.

To give you an example, if my wife is out running some errands and she's late, my mind automatically assumes worst case. "She's been in an accident, something's happened," and many of you can relate to that, I'm sure. There are ways to train ourselves so that we don't do that, and that's where the examples and the advice that I'm going to give you will be helpful. We're not going to change the way we're wired, but we're going to change what we do when we begin to feel those feelings.

So I'd like to start with a question: In the Gospel of John, John chapter 1, the very first chapter, the very first recorded words of Jesus Christ are this: ***What are you looking for?*** And I would like to ask you that question today, I'd like to ask you to consider that. And, of course, scripture is the inspired word of God, so the Lord is asking you that question. "What are you looking for?" And I would suspect, I'm not a mind reader, but I would suspect that you're looking for peace, you are looking for freedom from the burden of anxiety, you're looking to stop worrying, you're looking to go through life not terrified of what might be around the corner. Very reasonable, very reasonable request. You want that peace in your life.

Well, I've got to give you some news before we go any further, okay. I'm going to be honest with you: I can't deliver that peace. Now, wait a minute, don't turn on me, don't panic. I can't deliver that peace. I can give you advice, I can tell you how I have been able to achieve peace in my life, I could point you in the right direction, but I, Gary Zimak, can't personally give you that peace. What's the good news? The good news is I have a friend who can give you that peace. In John 14:27, in what is known as His Farewell Discourse: The Lord had just finished celebrating the Last Supper, and He was awaiting His captors to come and take Him into captivity, and He gave this talk to His disciples. Among the things that Jesus said is this: ***Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.*** That's John 14:27, the words of Jesus Christ himself. And what is He saying? He's saying that He can give us that peace. Remember I told you not to panic because I can't do it? Well, I can't give you that peace, but this whole series of talks, and everything I do in my ministry, it all involves leading others to Christ, because He

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can give that peace. And that, my friends, is the secret. Jesus Christ can give you the peace that you are looking for.

Alright, let's start with some more good news. You ready for some good news? I'm sure you are. I want you to be free from anxieties. Very good, right? Gary Zimak wants us to be free from anxieties. Well, of course he does. That's why he's doing the *From Fear to Faith* series of talks. I do want you to be free from anxieties, because I don't want you to live your life in chains, as I did for many years, imprisoned by fear and terror. I want you to be free from anxieties. But, guess what? I borrowed those words. They're not my words. You know who said those words? ***I want you to be free from anxieties.*** Saint Paul said those words in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians, 7:32. ***I want you to be free from anxieties.***

So, see, this is starting to get better. Now, not only am I telling you that I, Gary Zimak, want you to be free from anxieties, but Saint Paul, who is a saint, is saying ***I want you to be free from anxieties.*** Well, that's good. I mean, a saint, Saint Paul, obviously the guy carries a lot of weight, very holy man, went through some incredible trials, he wants you to be free from anxieties. That's better, but it gets even better. What does our church teach about the bible? Sacred scripture is the inspired word of God. Every word of the bible is inspired by the Holy Spirit. So what does that mean? ***I want you to be free from anxieties.*** Me, I want you to be free from anxieties. Saint Paul, a canonized saint wants you to be free from anxieties. But also, and this is where this is such beautiful news, God Himself wants you to be free from anxieties, because He inspired Saint Paul to write those words, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7:32. ***I want you to be free from anxieties.***

So, in the business world, before I went full-time into ministry and began spreading the good news of Jesus Christ around the country on a full-time basis, I used to be in the business world. I was a software developer, and we would have these management meetings, and we would have the meetings, and we would have what we call takeaways. Now, if you're in the business world, you're probably familiar with that term. "What's the takeaway from this message that we're about to give?" Well, the first takeaway for you from this talk is God wants you to be free from anxieties. He does not want you to be at peace.

Now, there's a good chance you're hearing this and you might be panicking even more and saying "Oh no, I'm doing something wrong. God's going to be mad at me." No, no, no. If God wants you to be free from anxieties, you know why that's good news? It's because it's possible. God, who is all-loving, would never want or never expect you to do something that was impossible. So if He wants you to be free from anxieties, and notice there are no exclusions in that statement – He wants us all to be free from anxieties – if He wants it, then what does that mean? It's

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possible. I guarantee it is possible. So that's the first takeaway. The first takeaway for you: God wants you to be free from anxieties. He does not want you to worry. And also, it is possible. We'll talk about the how's as we go through this presentation, but the first thing to remember is that it is possible to live a life free from worry.

Before I give you some other interesting news, I want to share one thing: I am not a therapist, I am not a psychologist. As you may know, or a quick Google search will reveal, I am considered to be the leading Catholic speaker at overcoming anxiety. But I am not a professional in psychology, I don't have a... I am not a licensed therapist, or a psychologist, psychiatrist. What I am, who I am I should say, is a guy who has battled anxiety, and who has dealt with many Catholic therapists who have looked at my work, looked at the advice that I've been giving, and I've gotten approval from everyone saying "Yeah, this is right on target."

However, I'm going to tell you this because it's important to know: If what I talk about today still doesn't help you and you're still feeling that fear, you can't stop worrying, you're anxious, it's affecting your health, it's a bit problem, there's a good chance you may need therapy, and possibly even medicine. Don't rule that out. It's not the first course of action – the first course of action is turning to Lord and seeing what He can do. I never went through therapy. Medicine, for me, never worked out. I wasn't on it for very long, it just made me drowsy and not care about anything. But don't rule it out, because Jesus heals in many ways. So it's possible in your case it could be a biological condition. For most worriers, that's not the case. But I always have to say that, because I don't want you to feel bad about seeking professional, good, solid, professional help from a therapist, from a psychologist, or a psychiatrist. It might be necessary. Again, so don't rule it out. I just want that to be said.

So, let's talk about this other good news that I mentioned. 1931, in Krakow, Poland, Jesus appeared in a church-approved apparition to Saint Faustina Kowalska. You may know that the message that Jesus gave to Saint Faustina is the message of Divine Mercy. It's a very popular devotion in the church. But He also said some staggering things that I always like to use when I give my talks, because it's something that we need to know. Jesus revealed to Saint Faustina – again, this was in 1931 – the 2 greatest obstacles to holiness.

Now, right away you're thinking "The greatest obstacles to holiness? One of the capital sins, or multiple, one or two of the capital sins." You will be shocked to know that, according to Jesus – and again, this is a church-approved apparition, so the church looked at this appearance and said "Yeah, this is worthy of belief. It's a private revelation, but it is worthy of belief. You are free to believe it." The church

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gives you that opportunity to believe this – The 2 greatest obstacles to holiness, as revealed to Jesus to Saint Faustina, are you ready? Discouragement and anxiety. “Whoa, are you kidding?” Nope, it’s right in her diary, the diary of Saint Faustina. Discouragement and anxiety, the 2 greatest obstacles to holiness.

Now, if we ended the talk right here, what would happen? You would panic, right? Because who among us doesn’t deal with some degree of discouragement or anxiety each day? I mean, this is something that, as a full-time Catholic evangelist for several years, I would wake up each day and deal with discouragement, and deal with anxiety when I started to look at my bank account and wondered how I could pay my bills. But the good news, my friends, is this talk is not ending here. Jesus said this, yes, discouragement, anxiety, the 2 greatest obstacles to holiness. And I might add the reason why, Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta weighed in on discouragement, and she said that when we are discouraged, you know what it’s a sign of? It’s a sign of pride, because we trust in our own abilities and not in God. Wow.

We don’t think of it that way, but it’s true. When we become discouraged by the challenges we face in life, we’re thinking it’s all up to us. And we sometimes take God out of the picture, thinking “Oh, this problem can’t be fixed.” The God of the universe, He created everything from nothing. He can’t fix your problem? He can’t help you get a job? He can’t make a relationship, put a relationship back in order? He can’t help you overcome a sinful habit? He can do all of that stuff. He can do miracles. So, when we are discouraged, yeah, it could be a sign of pride, because we think too much about our own abilities, or lack thereof. And when you look at anxiety, it’s the same thing. Why is it that we worry? We worry because we don’t trust God. That’s the reason why we worry. If we trusted in God, and trusted that He would take care of us, and that He only desired what was best for us, we wouldn’t worry. But see, what happens is we don’t trust Him, and that’s why we worry.

Now, remember I said the talk’s not ending here? There’s some good news that Jesus gave to Saint Faustina after He dropped this bombshell, right, the 2 greatest obstacles, discouragement and anxiety. Jesus said that the reason we fall so many times, the reason we become discouraged, the reason we become anxious. Why? It’s because we don’t ask for help. “Are you kidding me?” No, that’s what He said. He says “I want to help you. I don’t want you to do this on your own. Ask for help.” Now, think about this: If you are struggling with worry, or if you’re looking to overcome your anxiety, do you seek the Lord’s help? Do you ask Him to help you with your problems? Or do you panic? So many of us forget to ask for help.

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So the Lord is saying “I want to help. Why are you not asking Me for help?” Yeah, it’s a tough message – anxiety and discouragement, the 2 greatest obstacles to holiness – but only if we don’t ask for help. The good news, my friends: We are not in this alone. Jesus wants to help us. And if we look at Saint Paul’s second letter to the Corinthians, specifically chapter 12, remember what Saint Paul said? He had this thorn in the flesh, this mysterious ailment, or person, or habit. We don’t know what it was, but it was something that really was hurting him, was really weakening him. Saint Paul said this. He asked 3 times for that thorn in the flesh to be removed. What did the Lord say? The Lord said no. ***My grace is sufficient.*** Why? ***Because my power*** says the Lord ***is made perfect in weakness.*** What we need to remember is that when we are weak, we are strong, provided that we turn to the one who is the strongest of all, the Lord. That’s what this will be all about.

We’re going to take a break now, and when we come back I will talk about the difference between fear and worry. There’s a huge difference. So hang in there, we are just getting started. We will be right back. Stay tuned.