



Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
Pastor Terry's Thoughts of the Week

Anxious? There's an APP for that.

“What? Me worry?” Don't worry, be happy. These all might be considered “common” phrases. But when we use them we are often being sarcastic. We do worry. We worry about the country, the world, our families, ourselves, our communities—the list could go on.

Many of us have champion worriers in our families. My mother was a choice example. I once asked her what she would do if she didn't have something to worry about. She said she'd worry that she'd missed something! A champion worrier.

Many of us (actually not me!) have phones that have APPs on them. Applications. A button can be pushed and you can get information, directions, spelling help, direct contact with businesses and much, much more. I have never seen an APP for help with anxiety. Maybe I'm looking in the wrong place.



One APP you probably won't find on your phone is promises. That's where Jesus takes over. When we become anxious, we need to remember Jesus' promises that he is with us, he will guide us, and he will take care of us. I seem to remember something about knowing the number of hairs on our head and caring about the lilies of the field! If God cares for us and knows us like he

knows the number of grains of sand on the beach, we should begin to be assured that we are safe.

But our sinful nature has a habit of looking for disaster, even in the face of peace, prosperity and happiness. We are humans who tend to forget God's goodness.

Do you remember the time shortly after 9/11? People suddenly were constantly looking over their shoulder. Plane trips were put on hold. We began a new worry, one we had not been aware of before. This country was vulnerable. Our streets and communities were vulnerable.

Since that time security has doubled, tripled and quadrupled. Have you tried to renew your driver's license lately?

But someone said something very smart and calming, at least for me, at that time. We were reminded that if we went into hiding, if we stopped our daily activities, then the "enemy" has won.

When I lived in the city, we were very aware of the "take back the streets" nights. People were asked to sit on their front steps, chat with their neighbors and do all this after the sun when down. It did help to get us to know our neighbors.

How do you keep your heart and mind on key with that APP? Keep being aware of God's promises and remind yourself, a lot, about the anxiety Jesus could have had. Note that Paul didn't exactly lead a peaceful life. Many of the first Christians had a tough time under the Caesars. Yet, the only complaining I see in the Bible are those of Paul and Jesus about misinterpreting the promises God has given and treating people with less than brotherly and sisterly love.

God has given us promise of peace and safety. We may not feel physically safe at some given time, but the eternal promise is there. Fight the good fight and remember the promise!

TMK

-- *Week of August 15, 2010*