

How knowing God frees us from anxiety

Living in relationship with God- session 8

Introduction

"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging"

Psalm 46:1-3

The heart of anxiety: our lack of control (Mark 4:35-41, p. 1006)

a. What lies behind our anxieties?

- i. A (potential) threat to something we value*
- ii. Our inability to control the situation*

b. How might anxiety disguise itself?

- i. Anger*

*"Listen to anger and you will frequently find fear. A woman rages at her husband for coming home late with alcohol on his breath. Sure, there is the "You are wrong" component. But there is also "I am afraid you are losing interest in me. I am afraid you could be tempted by another woman. And when you add alcohol, I get even more afraid." **Running Scared***

- ii. Withdrawing*

- iii. Busyness*

c. Why is anxiety a problem?

- i. It controls us...*
- ii. ...which stops us serving others...*
- iii. ... and trusting God.*

d. False solutions to anxiety

i. *Escapism*

ii. *Trying to seize control*

2. The Christian answer to anxiety: Trust God

a. You have a secure future (Rev. 1:17-18, p. 1234)

"Most men ebb and flow in wretchedness between the fear of death and the hardships of life"

Seneca, Roman Philosopher

"Jesus shared in our humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who hold the power of death- that is, the devil- and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death" Hebrews 2:14

b. You have a sovereign Father

*"You did not receive a spirit that makes you a **slave again to fear**, but you received the **Spirit of Sonship**. And by him we cry 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children." Romans 8:15*

i. *A Father who has chosen us (Ephesians 1:3-5, p. 1173)*

So... know you are perfectly secure

ii. *A Father who loves us (1 John 3:1-3, p. 1226)*

So... know you are perfectly accepted

iii. *A Father who trains us (Hebrews 12:7-13, p. 1210)*

So... submit to your loving Father's good plans

Small Groups – Matthew 6:19–34

Next Time

Next time we'll be thinking about how knowing God frees us from **guilt**

Talk: Hebrews 10:11-25

Bible-studies: Luke 7:36-50

Some questions to get you going-

- What are the chief causes of guilt in your life?
- How does Jesus' death on the cross address those areas of guilt?

Taking it further

Memory Verse

“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!” **1 John 3:1**

Further Bible-study- Psalm 46

This Psalm reflects on how knowing the Lord’s presence with us is a great antidote to worry. Since Jesus, we have the added wonder of knowing that the ‘LORD Almighty’ is also our ‘Heavenly Father’.

- What could give cause for fear/anxiety in the psalm?
- These events are speculations about what could happen in the future. What do you get anxious about in the future?
- What reasons does the Psalmist find not to fear?
- In the midst of turmoil in life, why is it hard to ‘be still’? (v10)
- What is the purpose of being still? What should we be reminding ourselves of? (v10-11)

For the book-worms

<i>Running Scared</i>	Edward T. Welch	A book tackling the whole area of worry and fear, and how the Bible resources us to fight it
<i>‘Sons of God’ in Knowing God</i>	J. I. Packer	A wonderful chapter on the theme of having God as our Father.
http://www.ccef.org/resources/blog/what-good-dont-worry-times-the-se	D. Powlinson	A three part article on the area of anxiety. The CCEF website has lots of helpful resources.