

Anxious for Nothing Week 1: Celebrate God’s Goodness

Video:

- “Why do I feel this way?”
 - How can you relate? _____
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American statistics on anxiety (from Max Lucado’s *Anxious for Nothing*)

- Anxiety disorders in the United States are the number one mental health problem among women and are second only to alcohol and drug abuse among men.
- The United States is now the most anxious nation in the world.
- Citizens in other countries ironically enjoy more tranquility. They experience one-fifth the anxiety levels of Americans, despite having less resources to pursue their “happiness.”
- The average child today exhibits the same level of anxiety as the average psychiatric patient in the 1950s.

What is anxiety? (from Google Dictionary)

- “to be troubled with cares” or “to take thought” —to be distracted in thought
- “a **feeling** of worry, nervousness, or unease, typically about an imminent event or something with an uncertain outcome.
- “a nervous disorder characterized by a state of excessive uneasiness and apprehension, typically with compulsive behavior or panic attacks.”

Where does it come from?

- Anxiety is the fruit of a root problem (belief problem).
 - The root problem is fear.
 - Fear comes from unbelief (lack of trusting God).
- Our actions are the fruit of what we believe.

Now what do we do?

- Experiencing some level of anxiety and worry is normal.
 - Since anxiety is a **fruit** problem, we’ve got to go after the **root**—our beliefs.
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Romans 12:2 (NLT) Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Key Passage for this Series:

Philippians 4:4-8 (NIV) ⁴Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ⁸Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

“The presence of anxiety is unavoidable, but the prison of anxiety is optional.”

– Max Lucado, *Anxious for Nothing*

Practical “How-to’s” on overcoming Anxiety – C.A.L.M.

- Celebrate - God’s goodness
- Ask – God for help
- Leave - it with Him
- Meditate - on good things/truth/who He is

Celebrate – Who He is

He is Able (powerful, sovereign)

He is Good (gracious, kind, loving)

Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

- o What is something you can rejoice in the Lord about: _____

Mark 4:35-41 (NLT) ³⁵As evening came, Jesus said to his disciples, “Let’s cross to the other side of the lake.” ³⁶So they took Jesus in the boat and started out, leaving the crowds behind (although other boats followed). ³⁷But soon a fierce storm came up. High waves were breaking into the boat, and it began to fill with water. ³⁸Jesus was sleeping at the back of the boat with his head on a cushion. The disciples woke him up, shouting, “Teacher, don’t you care that we’re going to drown?” ³⁹When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Silence! Be still!” Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm. ⁴⁰Then he asked them, “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?” ⁴¹The disciples were absolutely terrified. “Who is this man?” they asked each other. “Even the wind and waves obey him!”

What is your most recent “storm”? _____

How did you/are you seeing His ability and Goodness at work? _____

Psalm 13:1-6 (NLT) ¹O LORD, how long will you forget me? Forever? How long will you look the other way? ²How long must I struggle with anguish in my soul, with sorrow in my heart every day? How long will my enemy have the upper hand? ³Turn and answer me, O LORD my God! Restore the sparkle to my eyes, or I will die. ⁴Don’t let my enemies gloat, saying, “We have defeated him!” Don’t let them rejoice at my downfall. ⁵But I trust in your unfailing love. I will rejoice because you have rescued me. ⁶I will sing to the LORD because he is good to me.

Psalm 34:1-6 (NLT) ¹I will praise the LORD at all times. I will constantly speak his praises. ²I will boast only in the LORD; let all who are helpless take heart. ³Come, let us tell of the LORD’s greatness; let us exalt his name together. ⁴I prayed to the LORD, and he answered me. He freed me from all my fears. ⁵Those who look to him for help will be radiant with joy; no shadow of shame will darken their faces. ⁶In my desperation I prayed, and the LORD listened; he saved me from all my troubles.

Next Steps

- **We, as a church:**
 - o Be a people that Celebrates God’s Goodness as often as we can.
 - o Be a people of His Word.
 - o Be a people of empathy, that we’d be gracious and patient with those struggling with anxiety.
- **You, as an individual**
 - o Humble yourself to live in light of God’s word... to submit to Him.
 - o Do your part of Celebrating God together
 - ♦ Sharing your stories
 - ♦ Listening to others, not fixing, praying, inviting, sharing
 - o Practices of daily Celebration.

Discussion questions for home, or Life Group:

Choose a passage from the sermon or consider using: *Acts 17:22-28*

1. Share what was significant to you from the sermon.
2. In what ways do you recognize anxiety impacting you or those around you?
3. How do you tend to manage stress and anxiety?
4. What does celebrating God’s goodness look like for you?
5. How do you remind yourself of God’s character and presence?

Practical step: Take 5 minutes each day this week to stop and remember who God is.

BONUS: Read Philippians 4:4-8 two or three times this week.

For resources on this and related topics, visit: www.reallifeministries.com/anxiety-resources