

Anxiety

May 24, 2020

All our lives have been upset in recent months by implications of the Corona virus, and this has caused anxiety from one degree to another for many people. Occasional anxiety is a normal part of life – worry about paying bills, landing a new job, or speaking in front of an audience.

(I'm not talking about the persistent, seemingly uncontrollable, and overwhelming anxiety that is defined as "anxiety disorder". This kind of anxiety causes fear and irrational dread of everyday situations and interferes with daily activities. An anxiety disorder is a real, serious, mental health issue and a person suffering from it needs to seek professional help.)

Often, the root of our anxiety is feeling like a situation is out of our control. We human beings like to think that we're in control of our lives, and many things going on in the world around us are very much *not* within our control.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus reminds us not to worry about things but to put our trust in God. Today's devotional reading is Matthew 6:25-34.

- 1) What do you think Jesus means, "do not worry about your life..."?

- 2) What does he mean when he says, "do not worry about tomorrow"?

- 3) What does it look like in your life to pursue His Kingdom first?

- 4) What spiritual principle is Jesus teaching in this section of his sermon?

5) From the following list, what are your three biggest concerns?

children doing ok in school parents getting old current job situation
financial struggles getting ahead at works adult children not making it
having to start over health issues life isn't meeting expectations
retired and not feeling valued being left alone in the future
loved one getting hurt other: _____

6) If you were to take this passage seriously, how would it affect your list?

Close by asking God to help you experience peace in Him.

If you are offering encouragement to someone feeling anxious, remind them that God loves them and cares about them (Exodus 34:6-7). His words offer tenderness and encouragement when anxiety can feel overwhelming:

Psalm 94:19 (NIV)

When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought joy to my soul.

1 Peter 5:7 (NIV)

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

Matthew 11:28 (NIV)

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”