

Week 4: Tackling Anxiety

Lesson from Victoria Mooneyham



Questions to Think About

Do you consider yourself an anxious person? Why or why not?



Read 2 Samuel 24:1-15 NLT (selected verses)

Once again the anger of the LORD burned against Israel, and he caused David to harm them by taking a census. “Go and count the people of Israel and Judah,” the LORD told him.

² So the king said to Joab and the commanders of the army, “Take a census of all the tribes of Israel—from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south—so I may know how many people there are.”

³ But Joab replied to the king, “May the LORD your God let you live to see a hundred times as many people as there are now! But why, my lord the king, do you want to do this?” ⁴ But the king insisted that they take the census, so Joab and the commanders of the army went out to count the people of Israel. ...

⁸ Having gone through the entire land for nine months and twenty days, they returned to Jerusalem. ⁹ Joab reported the number of people to the king. ... ¹⁰ But after he had taken the census, David’s

conscience began to bother him. And he said to the LORD, “I have sinned greatly by taking this census. Please forgive my guilt, LORD, for doing this foolish thing.”

¹¹ The next morning the word of the LORD came to the prophet Gad, who was David’s seer. This was the message: ¹² “Go and say to David, ‘This is what the LORD says: I will give you three choices. Choose one of these punishments, and I will inflict it on you.’” ¹³ So Gad came to David and asked him, “Will you choose three years of famine throughout your land, three months of fleeing from your enemies, or three days of severe plague throughout your land? Think this over and decide what answer I should give the LORD who sent me.” ¹⁴ “I’m in a desperate situation!” David replied to Gad. “But let us fall into the hands of the LORD, for his mercy is great. Do not let me fall into human hands.”

¹⁵ So the LORD sent a plague upon Israel that morning, and it lasted for three days. A total of 70,000 people died throughout the nation, from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south.



Watch the video “Tackling Anxiety”



Discussion Questions

1. David was called out on his sin by Joab, the commander of the army. Joab and the commanders of the army knew David was leading them into sin (vv. 3-4). As Christians, we’re called to help each other from falling into sin. Who offers you words of wisdom or helps you see reason when dealing with struggles and worries? At what point do you turn to the Lord?

2. It took David 9 months and 20 days to repent of his sin – a very specific and precise amount of time to record. The consequences of his sin probably made an impression on him. Is there an example in your life where anxiety or pride prevented you from repenting or offering forgiveness for a significant length of time? How long did it take? What convicted you to seek or offer forgiveness?

3. God and Gad use the pronoun “you” to David when offering and relaying the consequence options (vv. 12-13), but in verse 14 David uses the pronoun “us” for those who will be affected by the consequences of his sin, therefore acknowledging that his sin didn’t happen in a vacuum or bubble. Consider and discuss how your anxiety affects your life and your Christian witness to your friends, children, family, or others.

Therefore humble yourselves [demote, lower yourselves in your own estimation] **under the mighty hand of God, that in due time He may exalt you,** ⁷ **Casting the whole of your care** [all your anxieties, all your worries, all your concerns, once and for all] **on Him, for He cares for you affectionately and cares about you watchfully.**
- 1 Peter 5:6-7 AMPC

Further Exploration

Peter gives two imperatives in these verses: **humble yourself** and **cast your anxiety on the Lord**. Humility and anxiety are directly related.

If a sign of humility is surrendering our anxiety to God, our refusal to do so is pride. Which then means undo worry is prideful.

Why? Because pride can't admit it has anxieties (or does so unwillingly) as it doesn't like to admit that the cure is Someone who is wiser and stronger.

On the topic of anxiety, John Piper says, "... [P]ride is a form of unbelief and does not like to trust in God's future grace. Faith admits the need for help. Pride won't. Faith banks on God to give help. Pride won't. Faith casts anxieties on God. Pride won't."

To battle the anxious pride in your life, admit your anxieties and trust in the promise in verse seven: **He cares for you affectionately and cares about you watchfully**.



Next Steps

Remember the former days. Anxiety makes us only focus on today. Fear makes us worry about the future. Be encouraged by what you've seen God do for you, and remember that the God who did those wonderful, miraculous things yesterday is still in control of today and tomorrow.

This week try this exercise from Pastor Jonathan Pohluda. When you feel anxious, stop what you're doing and grab a piece of paper or your journal. Write down your anxieties in a bulleted list. When you're finished listing your anxieties, go back to the top of the page and write

God help me with:

Consistently use this exercise to turn your worries into prayer so that the time you spend dealing with your anxieties is now time spent in prayer.

Please note, if you're dealing with debilitating anxiety in your daily life, please seek help from a trusted medical professional or a Christian counselor. Asking for help and bearing one another's burdens are characteristics of humble Christians. We are meant to live in community and the sharing of our burdens to bring healing to our lives is not shameful, but a testimony of how God's people work together through hardships to bring glory to Him.



Closing Prayer

Holy Father,

There is nothing you don't see; no part of my life is secret or hidden from you and no worry or fear goes unnoticed. You see the desires of my heart. I lay my fears and my worries, my anxiety and my pride at your feet, Lord. Stay my mind on you and bestow on me your peace and direction. Help me to seek you alone and identify the lies of the enemy. Calm my heart and spirit as I know you are working out every detail in my life! In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.



Daily Prayer Plan

- Day 1 Read **Psalm 55**
Cry out to the Lord and cast your cares on Him.
- Day 2 Read **Joshua 1:6-9**
Be strong and courageous!
- Day 3 Read **Luke 21:34-36**
Anxiety can't see tomorrow, it only sees today.
- Day 4 Read **1 Samuel 30:1-6**
Find your strength in the Lord.
- Day 5 Read **John 16: 4b-33**
The Holy Spirit will guide you.