

MEN'S LIFE BLOOMINGTON & GOD @ WORK

Tuesday, February 26, 2019

The Battle Against Anxiety

Overview: Do you find yourself in a battle with being anxious, concerned or worried in your everyday life? Perhaps it's getting the kids to school on time, a problem at work, or a health issue you're dealing with. We all deal with anxiety and there's a simple but powerful remedy – God. We are called to release those worries, and trust in his provision. "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you." 1 Peter 5:7

Hearing Our Stories: John Rabold

Segment Questions:

- Name some characters in the bible and their experiences with anxiety and worry. What was Jesus' approach with their concerns?
- Discuss a time in your life where your anxiety, stress, or doubt was met with God's comfort and healing? Do those experiences help you deal with additional bouts of anxiety?
- Knowing what we know now through the bible and accounts of Jesus' life, if you were transported back in time as one of Jesus' disciples, do you think you'd still experience some of the same anxieties they did? Why or why not?
- What are some ways you cope with anxiety or stress? How (or do) you rely on God, and if so, what is your approach?

Action Questions:

- What are some practical ways we can set ourselves up for success against anxiety, doubt, and all the oftentimes negative emotions we encounter?
- How can we as men put ourselves out there to help other men dealing with difficult life situations

Personal Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, I pray that we trust in your comfort and care as we approach each day. I pray for peace by removing any anxiety we're experiencing. Thank you, Lord, for these men and this gathering in fellowship. Bless their walk as we leave here.

Introduction

Anxiety is a feeling that everyone experiences, some more than others, and some with the ability to address it easier than most. It can be subtle to severe, and can lead to other experiences, like depression, doubt, worry, and confusion. It is often easily addressed, but it can also linger with no hope in sight. As men, it is often a feeling that doesn't get shared within our community, often due to the impression or worry that we may appear weak or lacking a sense of control. Anxiety is often a symptom that we don't turn to God with for help. Instead, as men, we try to "fix" the problem ourselves, often making matters worse.

This past half year has been both amazing and emotionally and physically draining on myself and my family. The birth of our 3rd child has been an incredible blessing to our family and has shifted the dynamic in our household. With that blessing, came challenges that are both new and old to our family. We saw our 2-month-old son (at the time) experience a hospital stay for an illness, my wife endure an emergency appendectomy and severe stomach issues since, a significant lack of sleep over the past 8 months, doubt over whether to send our oldest to kindergarten, and worries about future career decisions and direction. So many of these experiences led to doubt, anxiety, and exhaustion. At times it's been hard to stop and enjoy being in the presence of the moment with these worries burdening our family. However, there was one simple remedy that always seemed to put my wife and I at ease – it was turning to God for provision on the matter. There are multiple places you can turn to in the bible to see what God says about anxiety and doubt. Simply turning our troubles over to him, has helped us feel an incredible sense of peace and calmness.

Scriptures:

Philippians 4:6 - Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Psalms 94:19 - When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought me joy.

Proverbs 3:5 - Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding

Matthew 6:25-34 - "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? "And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Matthew 11:28-30 - "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Jeremiah 29:11 - For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Isaiah 41:13 - For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.