**BETTER TOGETHER** in 2022

June 12, 2022

Robert Jackman, *Campus Pastor*

**Fill Up**

**The Emptiness of Anxiety**



Anxiety is one of our world’s biggest problems. Over 40 million American adults struggle with anxiety disorders. But anxiety is not just a problem for adults; it affects old and young alike.

**Anxiety** – feelings of worry, nervousness, fear, unease, uncertainty, dread, being unwell

Different levels of anxiety:

**Mild** – general unease

**Moderate** – more noticeable and sustained symptoms

**Severe** – debilitating and chronic

It is as though anxiety knows all your insecurities and uses them against you. Anxiety can get to the point where it is the loudest voice in the room, and sometimes it feels like it is the only one you can hear. It brings with it disorder and chaos of the mind and heart. It will make you restless, weigh you down according to Proverbs 12, and bring an incredible sense of emptiness to your life. It’s a big problem!

In its severe form, anxiety can make you nervous, restless, cause you feelings of doom or dread, rapid heart rate, trouble breathing, cause you to hyperventilate, sweat, tremble, feel weak, lethargic, give you gastrointestinal problems, cause you to have OCD tendencies, create panic attacks, and literally make you feel like you are going crazy and that you have lost all sense of control …and it can lead you to sin.

In our world today, anxiety is much like **gravity**.

*Our anxieties do not empty tomorrow of its sorrows, but only empties today of its strengths.* – **Charles Spurgeon**

The problem of anxiety in a person’s life might need to be examined from a physiological standpoint, but we cannot neglect the spiritual component of anxiety, because anytime you take God out of the equation in anything in life, you do so at your own peril.

If you feel anxious …

Do not rule out **spiritual** **attack**.

When you are anxious, whether it is mild, moderate, or severe, we need to be clear on this …

Anxiety is not from **God**.

**Does God have an antidote for our anxieties?**

**The answer is yes!** God has good news for us. God does not want our joy in life to be emptied by our anxieties. Scripture tells us that Jesus came that we might have fullness of life. So whether you have mild, moderate, or severe anxieties, it will help us this morning to know some things about God as talk about His antidote for our anxieties.

1. God is **near**.

The Lord is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on him in truth.

**Psalm 145:18**

1. God **understands**.

Anxiety is not a **sin**; it is an emotion. It is true that we can react to anxiety in sinful ways, but anxiety in and of itself is not sin … it is an emotion.

God does not **condemn** you for feeling anxious; He has **compassion** on you.

*Now that we know what we have—Jesus, this great High Priest with ready access to God—let’s not let it slip through our fingers. We don’t have a priest who is out of touch with our reality. He’s been through weakness and testing, experienced it all—all but the sin. So let’s walk right up to him and get what he is so ready to give. Take the mercy, accept the help.* ***Hebrews 4:14-16*** *The Message*

1. God wants to **help** you.

*I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come?*

*My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.*

***Psalm 121:1-2***

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

***Psalm 46:1***

And the reason God wants to help you is because …

1. God **cares**. He cares deeply for you.

To discover God’s antidote for our anxiety, we can begin by looking at 1 Peter, chapter 5.

***Humble yourselves****, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you,* ***casting all your anxieties on him****, because* ***he cares for you****.* **1 Peter 5:6-7**

Why **carry** your anxieties when you can **cast** them on God?

**Humility** is key to freedom from anxiety.

In the book of Philippians, Paul gives us an understanding of how to cast our anxieties on God.

***The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything,*** *but in everything* ***by prayer*** *and supplication with thanksgiving* ***let your requests be made known to God****. And* ***the peace of God****, which surpasses all understanding,* ***will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus*** **Philippians 4:5-9**

*“Inner calm or tranquility is promised to the believer who has a thankful attitude based on unwavering confidence that God is able and willing to do what is best for His children”* – **John MacArthur**

When we face anxiety,

1. It signals that it is time to **pray**.
2. We turn our **worry** into **worship**.
3. We experience God’s **peace**.

We experience God’s peace because of who is in **control**.

*The Lord gives strength to his people; the Lord blesses his people with peace.*  **Psalm 29:11**

Casting takes **practice**.

*The mind controlled by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.* **Romans 8:6**

*Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. What you have learned[e] and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.* ***1 Peter 5:8-9***

The road to our recovery and our taking on the mind of Christ can take some time and it can sometimes feel messy …and it certainly will not be perfected until He comes back.

Casting is an **ongoing** process.

We live in an anxious world, one full of many troubles. Hardships will arise, sickness is a part of this world, death is a part of this life, stress can be just around the corner, trauma can occur, fear and worry can seem like a relentless invader. Yes …

The **presence** of anxiety may seem unavoidable, but the **prison** of it is optional.

*Cast your burden on the Lord and He will sustain you.* ***Psalm 55:22***

**Why carry our anxieties when we can cast them on God?**

*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.* ***John 14:27***