

Anxiety Week Two Notes

Scofield Foster

Anxiety is a *real thing*, and God does want something better for us.

What is anxiety?

- Anxiety is when the fear alarm in our body goes off, creating a physiological and emotional response. This happens when we feel threatened or out of control, and it is not always a bad thing.
- Two types of stress:
 - » Eustress - Healthy stress. Creates a sense of urgency that moves us to prepare for responsibility.
 - » Distress - Unhealthy stress. When we've planned, prepared, and prayed for something but are still stuck in anxiety. "Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow. It empties today of its strength." -Corrie Ten Boom

Things to keep in mind:

- We don't all struggle with anxiety in the same way.
 - » A person who struggles with anxiety is not worse than a person who doesn't, and a person who doesn't struggle with anxiety is not better than a person who does.
- We are not alone.
 - » We need to connect with people who are wise, people who are old enough to guide or mentor us.

What *should* we be anxious about?

- Ephesians 2:1-3
 - » Verse 1 – Even while we are physically living, we are spiritually dead because of sin.
 - » Verse 2 – When we disobey God, we are obeying the devil, the enemy of God, which makes us enemies of God.
 - » Verse 3 – Because of our sin, we were subject to God's wrath and anger. It is right for God to judge and punish us.
- Luke 12:4-5
 - » The one thing we should actually fear is God's judgment—spending eternity away from him because of our sin. This is the great crisis of our lives.
- Ephesians 2:4-5; Hebrews 9:27-28
 - » This is the gospel: **The great crisis of our lives has been dealt with by Christ on the cross.**
 - » If Jesus is our King, the Satisfier of our souls, he has taken care of our biggest problem, and all other crises pale in comparison. In the midst of crisis, this is the truth that we can cling to.

The Lies at the Root of Our Anxiety?

- The gospel does not just impact our eternal destiny. It also affects our everyday struggle with anxiety by bringing peace and freedom.
- How? **At the root of our anxiety is a lie**, and the gospel addresses this lie.

Two lies that we believe:

Lie 1 - Our value depends on what people think about us.

- For example, “If people think less of me, I am less. What others think of me impacts my value. How worthy others think I am determines how worthy I am.”
- Galatians 4:5:
 - » If Christ bought our freedom with his life, then what is our value/worth? The life of the King of the universe.
 - » Because of Jesus, our value is not something that can be threatened, and it does not hang in the balance. It is secure.

Lie 2 - Our future depends on our ability to control it

- When we don't get the one thing that we wanted next, it feels like our entire future is out of control, and we become anxious.
- We try to take responsibility not just for what is ours but also for what is God's.
- Romans 8:28
 - » If we are in Jesus, God is committed to taking every situation in our lives (good and bad) and turning it into an opportunity for us to experience his goodness on a deeper level and teach us not to find happiness in this world.

Review

- The one thing we should actually fear—the great crisis of our lives, God's wrath and judgment—has already been dealt with in Christ
- The gospel is not only for our eternity. It exposes and frees us from the lies that are at the core of what makes us anxious.

Application

- Ask yourself, “What is a lie about my value or my future that is feeding my anxiety?”
- Be in community and talk about your anxiety. Ask someone, “What is the lie you think I might be believing that is causing my anxiety?”

The gospel frees us, *over time*, from the thought patterns and lies that we've told ourselves that cause our anxiety. It takes work and community.