

Non Anxious Christmas Part 1 | God, Self, Others

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TODAY: Non Anxious Christmas | Part 1 | God, Self, Others

Christmas can be/is a season of great anxiety

- Pandemic, Government tensions
- Christmas:
 - Consumerism
 - Relationships
 - Past trauma
 - Cold

Christmas can be/is a season of great peace

- Birth of Jesus
- Jesus is Prince of Peace
- Peace on earth scripture

Isaiah 9:6-7a

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end.

Anxiety is a symptom → We try to fix it quickly, instead of seeing it is a part of a larger system and addressing ROOT ISSUES...

Q: How do we move from an Anxiety filled Advent/Christmas → a Non Anxious Christmas?

- Being Non Anxious is a journey not a destination
- Dealing with Anxiety is not a problem to solve, but a tension to manage

Do not fear/be afraid is the most frequent command in the Bible

ILL. Edwin Friedman - A failure of nerve

- Family Systems Theory → Governmental Systems
- Coined: “a non-anxious presence”

Therapist Edwin Friedman coined the phrase, “self-defining, non-anxious, presence.

- Jewish Rabbi & Psychologist
- Family systems → Government
- West is built upon the myth of progress - evolutionary theory in human history
- West is progressing economically and technologically (medicine, etc.)
- BUT the West is regressing emotionally and relationally
- Friedman 5 aspects of an anxious culture: steps to regression into anxiety
 - Reactivity (24/7 news cycle - media makes money off our anxiety)
 - Herding instinct (humans are social beings - wired) (we move together)
 - Culture of blame displacement
 - Mark sayers
 - (symptoms instead of a system whole)

A 5 step cycle of failure:

1.) Reactivity

a.) Reactivity (24/7 news cycle - media makes money off our anxiety)

2.) Herding instinct

a.) Herding instinct (humans are social beings - wired) (we move together)

3.) Blame displacement

a.) Accusation and judgement are the language of pain

4.) A quick fix mentality

a.) low threshold for pain - no Biblical endurance

5.) Lack of well differentiated people/leadership

**The ONLY way to stop the cycle is to INTERJECT
a NON ANXIOUS LEADER**

- Jesus WAS/IS that leader
- You are HIS REPRESENTATIVE IN YOUR WORLD

ROOT SYSTEM

Matthew 22:36-40 - New International Version

36 “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”

37 Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

- 1.) Love God above all else
- 2.) Love myself as God does
- 3.) Love others as God does

Differentiated Person - Jesus
God, Self, Others

Philippians 4:6–7 ESV

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.

Psalms 112:6-7 NIV

6 Surely the righteous will never be shaken; they will be remembered forever. 7 They will have no fear of bad news; their hearts are steadfast, trusting in the Lord.

Joshua 1:9

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”

1 Peter 5:7 NIV

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

John Mark Comer - 5 Counter Cycle

1.) Slow down spirituality

- a.) How you respond to an interruption is who you really are - CS Lewis
- b.) Margin
- c.) Space
- d.) Welcome Interruption
- e.) 3 mile an hour God - Kosuke Koyama
- f.) Retreat & Return - 1 minute pause
 - i.) Jesus often withdraws to lonely places and prayed
 - ii.) Do we “often withdraw”??

2.) Sabbath Rhythm

- a.) A form of spiritual warfare
- b.) The world, the flesh, the devil
- c.) A vacation is “earned”, Sabbath is a “gift”
- d.) Embrace limitations
- e.) People who are in delight are hard to tempt
- f.) Where is the enemy tempting you to go beyond your limitations?

3.) Church (Koinonia = the intense vulnerable committed relational bond in Jesus)

- a.) “Spiritual Friendship”
- b.) Western Individualism → Loneliness
- c.) The Church

4.) Contemplative Prayer

- a.) The opposite of contemplation isn't action, it is reaction
- b.) Abiding
- c.) Yielding, Trusting
- d.) ILL. Mother Theresa - We both listen

5.) Indifference

- a.) Not apathy
- b.) “Freedom” or Detachment

- c.) “We don’t need to control and manipulate the people and circumstances in our life in order to live at peace and happiness” - John Mark Comer
- d.) “Do not fear” doesn’t mean bad things won’t happen, but “No matter what happens, you can live a life that is set free from fear if you release the need for control and abide in me.”

Matthew 14:13 - when Jesus heard what had happened he withdrew by boat to a solitary place..... crowds followed him...

- They leave by boat
- Vs. They were alone...
- Vs.. 27 Take courage it is I do not be afraid

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“Fear is inevitable, but shame over it is optional. Fear is wired into our very brains, into the most primitive part of us. This is not a mistake on the part of our Maker. It is strategic so that we survive. God knows this and He has compassion, not condemnation, toward our fear. I discovered when He says, “Do not fear” to someone in Scripture it is almost always to someone who is already afraid. It is not a rebuke but a reassurance.” - Holly Gerth

Doesn’t mean you never feel fear - Fear is an invitation to circle back to the Father.

- You come to fear God above all others
- **We can’t do this without You**
- **Upstream - no more strength**
- **AWARENESS**
- **Dependence**

PRAYER

SALVATION

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