

Talk About It

Small Group Discussion Guide

I Have Questions

Anxiety & Stress
September 7-10, 2023

Start Talking

What do you like most about autumn? Any fond memories as a child?

Main Idea

We are in Week 1 of the teaching series "I Have Questions". Cypress asked 10,000 people what questions weighed on them. This week, we will discuss the #1 response by a wide margin—anxiety and stress. Is there any hope? Can we break free? Thankfully, the resounding answer is YES! The presence of anxiety is unavoidable at times, but letting it become a prison is optional. Some of our struggle is genetic, but the root cause is sin, the Enemy, and lies repeated. When we feel anxious or stressed, we can identify the cause by asking: Is this a lie, an opportunity to flee, or something to lean into? The truth is you are not your struggle. You are God's masterpiece! Let's lean into what God has for YOU today!

Personalize It

1. Pastor Ken shared three truths on which the message was based: 1) No one is lost or beyond reach, nor broken beyond repair; 2) We didn't get here overnight, nor will we get to where we want to be by tomorrow; and 3) With Jesus and the right others, there is hope and a path. Which statement resonates with you the most and why?
2. "Transformation is learning a new way to think." What lie has been given too much influence in your life? What truth needs to be amplified and repeated to overwrite it?
3. Rachel's story is a familiar one. Fear and anxiety led her to feel out of control, even crazy. Was there a time in your life when fear and anxiety crippled you? How did you handle it? What treatment steps helped?

Let's Do It! Commit to a step and live it out this week!

1. Most of us find it very easy to believe the Enemy's lies about us, our worth, our sin, and our struggle. What lie has been allowed too much time in your mind? What truth can overwrite it? How will you reinforce that truth this week?
2. Your spiritual, mental, and physical well-being are interconnected and can influence one another. Examine your rest, nutrition, and exercise habits this week. Note how your physical state can affect what voices you listen to and your desire to pursue God and trust in His promises.

3. The truth must become louder than the lies! Learn how to recognize a lie and arm yourself with the promises of God in Scripture. Give a friend permission to check in on you this week to help you develop a pattern of new, healthy thinking based on God's truth over your life!

Let's Pray

Father, the battle in our minds is one of the hardest to win. The world can be very intimidating and overwhelming. And when we hear Your promises, we are so quick to discount them because of feelings of unworthiness. Lord, we confess that we often contribute to our own struggles through the entertainment we watch and the voices we listen to. Please help us recognize all deceitful and hurtful messages. Help us to develop an appetite for Your word and your promises. Help us to remember how precious we are in Your sight, and that this is a fallen world where we carry struggles we were never meant to carry. Lord, turn our hearts and minds to You, and please protect us when the Enemy's lies try to penetrate our hearts and keep us from trusting You fully. Thank You for fighting and winning the battles we never could and for the undeserved grace and love even in our failings. Thank You for life with You and my Christian brothers and sisters. In Jesus' precious, holy, and powerful name, Amen.

Key Scriptures

John 10:10 (NLT)

The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.

Romans 12:12 (NLT)

Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying.

2 Timothy 2:22 (NLT)

Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts.

1 Kings 19:3-4 (NLT)

Elijah was afraid and fled for his life. He went to Beersheba, a town in Judah, and he left his servant there. Then he went on alone into the wilderness, traveling all day. He sat down under a solitary broom tree and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life, for I am no better than my ancestors who have already died."

Acts 16:22-25 (NLT)

A mob quickly formed against Paul and Silas, and the city officials ordered them stripped and beaten with wooden rods. They were severely beaten, and then they were thrown into prison. The jailer was ordered to make sure they didn't escape. So the jailer put them into the inner dungeon and clamped their feet in the stocks. Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening.

Isaiah 26:3-4 (NLT)

You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you! Trust in the LORD always, for the LORD GOD is the eternal Rock.

1 Kings 19:10 (NLT)

Elijah replied, "I have zealously served the LORD God Almighty. But the people of Israel have broken their covenant with you, torn down your altars, and killed every one of your prophets. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too."

1 Kings 19:14 (NLT)

He replied again, "I have zealously served the LORD God Almighty. But the people of Israel have broken their covenant with you, torn down your altars, and killed every one of your prophets. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too."

1 Kings 19:18 (NLT)

Yet I will preserve 7,000 others in Israel who have never bowed down to Baal or kissed him!

John 8:32 (NLT)

And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

Isaiah 41:10 (NLT)

Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.



New Series... I Have Questions...

Why am I so anxious and stressed all the time....

Right out of the gate...

1. NO ONE is lost beyond reach, nor broken beyond repair
2. We didn't get here overnight, nor will we get to where we want to be by tomorrow
3. With Jesus and the right others, there is HOPE and A PATH

We are multifaceted individuals...

Three more statements as we begin our incredibly important conversation...

1. You need a great medical doctor, and you need to go every year
2. You need a great Christian counselor
3. You need a great church. You need a loving community to belong to and be a part of

Anxiety and Stress- has a Normal and Abnormal side to it...

While the presence of anxiety may be unavoidable-
The prison of anxiety is optional...

The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life.

NLT John 10:10

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

NLT Romans 12:2

When you feel anxious and stressed...

Identify- is this a lie, an opportunity to flee, or something to lean into

False thinking will never lead to a rich and satisfying life

1 Kings 18 Elijah defeats false prophets of Baal... the people turn to God
Wicked queen Jezebel hears about it, vows to kill Elijah

Elijah was afraid and fled for his life. He went to Beersheba, a town in Judah, and he left his servant there. Then he went on alone into the wilderness, traveling all day. He sat down under a solitary broom tree and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life, for I am no better than my ancestors who have already died."

NLT 1 Kings 19:3–4

Compare with Paul and Silas

A mob quickly formed against Paul and Silas, and the city officials ordered them stripped and beaten with wooden rods. They were severely beaten, and then they were thrown into prison. The jailer was ordered to make sure they didn't escape. So the jailer put them into the inner dungeon and clamped their feet in the stocks. Around midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening.

NLT Acts 16:22–25

You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you! Trust in the LORD always, for the LORD GOD is the eternal Rock.

NLT Isaiah 26:3–4

Let's return to Elijah...

Then he lay down and slept under the broom tree. But as he was sleeping, an angel touched him and told him, "Get up and eat!" He looked around and there beside his head was some bread baked on hot stones and a jar of water! So he ate and drank and lay down again. Then the angel of the LORD came again and touched him and said, "Get up and eat some more, or the journey ahead will be too much for you." So he got up and ate and drank, and the food gave him enough strength to travel forty days and forty nights to Mount Sinai, the mountain of God. There he came to a cave, where he spent the night.

NLT 1 Kings 19:5–9

Proper rest, nutrition, and exercise is a key ingredient to living a rich and satisfying life that God intends

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NLT 1 Kings 19:10

He replied again, "I have zealously served the LORD God Almighty. But the people of Israel have broken their covenant with you, torn down your altars, and killed every one of your prophets. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too."

NLT 1 Kings 19:14.

He repeated the lie, and by doing so, reinforced the lie planted in his head.... He believed it to be true, therefore his thoughts, emotions, and ACTIONS made it so...

Then the LORD told him, "Go back the same way you came, and travel to the wilderness of Damascus. When you arrive there, anoint Hazael to be king of Aram. Then anoint Jehu grandson of Nimshi to be king of Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from the town of Abel-meholah to replace you as my prophet. Anyone who escapes from Hazael will be killed by Jehu, and those who escape Jehu will be killed by Elisha! Yet I will preserve 7,000 others in Israel who have never bowed down to Baal or kissed him!"

NLT 1 Kings 19:15–18

Do what God has created and called you to do...

Replace the lies with the truth....

You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

NLT John 8:31–32

Do it in community with others...

Additional Scriptures:

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me—everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you.

NLT Philippians 4:6–9

Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take. Don't be impressed with your own wisdom. Instead, fear the LORD and turn away from evil. Then you will have healing for your body and strength for your bones.

NLT Proverbs 3:5–8