



LifeGroup Discussion Questions

The Secret of Overcoming Anxiety | October 1, 2023

Summary

Today, Pastor Dale began a miniseries entitled *Fear Not: Embracing God's Peace in an Anxious World*. Anxiety runs rampant in today's world. By developing a biblical strategy for overcoming anxiety and making God the "one thing" in our lives, we can experience peace in the midst of life's challenges. The strategy involves three words: Abide, Behold and Pursue.

Scripture

The Lord is my light and my salvation — whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life — of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked advance against me to devour me, it is my enemies and my foes who will stumble and fall. Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then I will be confident. One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple. For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock. Then my head will be exalted above the enemies who surround me; at his sacred tent I will sacrifice with shouts of joy; I will sing and make music to the Lord. Hear my voice when I call, Lord; be merciful to me and answer me. My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" Your face, Lord, I will seek. Do not hide your face from me, do not turn your servant away in anger; you have been my helper. Do not reject me or forsake me, God my Savior. Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me. Teach me your way, Lord; lead me in a straight path because of my oppressors. Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes, for false witnesses rise up against me, spouting malicious accusations. I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord. -Psalm 27:1-14 (NIV)

And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow — not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below — indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord. -Romans 8:38-39 (NLT)

And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. -2 Corinthians 5:18 (NLT)

Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us. -Ephesians 2:18 (NLT)

Let's Start

What anxieties keep you up at night?

Gratitude and Prayer

How has God worked in your life since the last time we were together?

Let's Talk

1. David, in Psalm 27, imagines and prepares for potential challenges. Can you share a personal experience where preparing for the worst helped you face anxiety or fear? How did it turn out?
2. Pastor Dale talked about the concept of having a "one thing" in our lives that we look to for satisfaction. What are some common "one things" people tend to pursue, and how can these pursuits lead to anxiety?
3. How do the three words in the strategy Pastor Dale laid out to overcome anxiety — *abide* (dwelling in God's presence), *behold* (gazing on the beauty of the Lord) and *pursue* (seeking and doing God's will) — resonate with you? Which one do you need to focus on most in your life to overcome anxiety?
4. Share a personal experience where you felt God's presence or saw His beauty in a powerful way. How did that experience affect your anxiety or worries?
5. In what ways can the church community support one another in overcoming anxiety and making God the central focus of our lives?
6. Pastor Dale challenged everyone to a 40-day practice of *Retentio* (retention), *Contemplatio* (contemplate), and *Dilectio* (delight) with Scripture to help overcome anxiety. Are you willing to try this practice? How do you think it might impact your life?

Let's Act

Read through the following Scriptures for the next 40 days, rotating through the 10 passages as you discover how God can reveal Himself differently from the same passage.

David praised the LORD in the presence of the whole assembly, saying,

“Praise be to you, LORD,
the God of our father Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting.
Yours, LORD, is the greatness and the power
and the glory and the majesty and the splendor,
for everything in heaven and earth is yours.
Yours, LORD, is the kingdom;
you are exalted as head over all.
Wealth and honor come from you;
you are the ruler of all things.
In your hands are strength and power
to exalt and give strength to all.
Now, our God, we give you thanks,
and praise your glorious name.
-1 Chronicles 29:10-13 (NIV)

Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise;
his greatness no one can fathom.
One generation commends your works to another;
they tell of your mighty acts.
They speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty—
and I will meditate on your wonderful works.
They tell of the power of your awesome works—
and I will proclaim your great deeds. -Psalm 145:3-6

Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.”

Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.”

Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves. Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. -John 14:6-13 (NIV)

I will tell of the kindnesses of the LORD,
the deeds for which he is to be praised,
according to all the LORD has done for us—
yes, the many good things
he has done for Israel,
according to his compassion and many kindnesses.
He said, “Surely they are my people,
children who will be true to me”;
and so he became their Savior.
In all their distress he too was distressed,
and the angel of his presence saved them.
In his love and mercy he redeemed them;
he lifted them up and carried them
all the days of old. -Isaiah 63:7-9 (NIV)

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. -1 John 4:7-11 (NIV)

Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?
If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.
If I rise on the wings of the dawn,
if I settle on the far side of the sea,
even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand will hold me fast....
How precious to me are your thoughts, God!
How vast is the sum of them!
Were I to count them,
they would outnumber the grains of sand—
when I awake, I am still with you.
-Psalm 139:7-10, 17-18 (NIV)

For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God. I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing! -Galatians 2:19-21 (NIV)

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. For just as we share abundantly in the sufferings of Christ, so also our comfort abounds through Christ. If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort. -2 Corinthians 1:3-7 (NIV)

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good.

His love endures forever.

Give thanks to the God of gods.

His love endures forever.

Give thanks to the Lord of lords:

His love endures forever.

to him who alone does great wonders,

His love endures forever.

who by his understanding made the heavens,

His love endures forever.

-Psalm 136:1-5 (NIV)

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable — if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things....

I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through him who gives me strength. -Philippians 4:8,10-13 (NIV)
