

March 30, 2003

Week Twenty-Four: "Overcoming Anxiety"

Day One: Small Group Guide

Read: Matthew 6:19-34 (p. 1083)

Read: Commentary (p. 1084)

Reflect: What causes anxiety in your life? What are the signs that you are anxious?

Dig: What might the connection between verses 22-23 and verse 24 be? In other words, why would Jesus speak of these two concepts so closely together?

How is verse 33 a key to the whole passage?

What insight do you get into Jesus' inner life by the way that he closes off this section of his sermon; verse 34?

Apply: Before you get on with your life's responsibilities today, make a list of all the things, activities, and responsibilities that call for your attention. Offer them all up to God, asking him to relieve you of worry. Replace that worry with a simple prayer of trust: "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."

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Day Two: "Double-Minded Thinking"

Read: Joshua 24:1-15 (p. 257)

Read: Commentary (p. 258)

Reflect: Are you ever tempted to live a double life in your mind....entertain fantasies of escape or another life?

Dig: What is the heading of this section (before verse one)? What does

this concept mean to you?

Why might Joshua first give them a short history lesson? (see verses 2-13)

What three commitments does Joshua call for in verse 14?

Are those still the three things we need to do in order to avoid being "double-minded"?

Apply: As a final prayer to close off this time with God and his Word, turn to p. 1527 in your Freedom in Christ Bible and mentally check off from the list provided the items which compete for your attention. Then use the prayer on the bottom of the page to seek your freedom and focus. Now go live in that joyful freedom!

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Day Three: "Living a 'Plan A' Life"

Read: Mark 7:8-9 (p. 1133)

Read: Commentary (p. 1134)

Reflect: If you could do one thing well in your life....just one thing, what would it be?

Dig: Read the context of these verses so you can understand what verses 8-9 are teaching. What did you learn from the context?

How does your tradition (family, personal habits, church) get in the way of God's commands? (verse 8)

How does Neil Anderson use commitment to marriage to illustrate his point regarding living a Plan A life?

Apply: What "Plan B" things in your life (plans, commitments, habitual sins) is God asking you to let go so that you can live Plan A?
Commit this to God in prayer.

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Day Four: "Knowing God and His Ways"

Read: Jeremiah 9 (p. 838)

Read: Commentary (p. 839)

Reflect: Whom do you know that lives completely out of God's will and ways? What is their life like? How anxious are they?

Dig: What "ways of the Lord" do you discover in verses 23-24?

Look up the two places in the New Testament where this text is quoted and note what more you learn about God and his ways from these texts:

1 Corinthians 1:31 (p. 1305) ...take note of verses 26-31.

2 Corinthians 10:17 (p. 1338)take note of the context.

Apply: The commentary tells us "anxiety arises out of a state of disconnection." How are you disconnected from God and his ways? Ask God to strengthen his connection to you and yours to him.

Week Twenty-Four: "Overcoming Anxiety"
Day Five: "Casting Anxiety on Christ"

Read: 1 Peter 5:6-10 (p. 1454)

Read: Commentary (p. 1456)

Reflect: Where do you bring your anxieties? For example, do you tend to talk them out, deny them, channel them into something else, pray them to God?

Dig: What does the Bible tie anxiety to, according to the initial thought of this passage? Can you see how pride can lead to anxiety?

What is the reason given to cast our cares on God?

How might Satan get a foothold through anxiety?

What reason is given to resist Satan (the "because" clause)?

What promise are we given at the close of this text?

Apply: Take a few minutes to go through the eight steps given in the commentary on page 1456. Thank God for taking on your anxieties.