

SMALL GROUPS

LIFE IS BETTER TOGETHER

“What Do I Do When I’m Anxious”

ICEBREAKER |

What is your favorite amusement park or theme park ride?

INTRODUCTION |

A lot of us are living in increased anxiety right now, living our lives tense and uptight. Where we are stressed out and worked up and worried. Where we are on edge. If it's not us, it's someone we know who is feeling overwhelmed and stressed and easily irritated. God has an answer for our anxiety, and wants to lighten the load for us today!

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We all have anxiety on some level, some more than others. We all deal with our anxiety in different ways, too. But it's something that we can overcome through the help from the Father.

Pastor Dave shared 3 truths with us to tackle our anxieties. Let's read the same passage he read and follow along.

“God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.” Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.

1Peter 5:5-7 (NIV)

The first truth is: God Deeply Cares About You! We all know that God cares, but do we know that He is crazy, madly, deeply in love with us? He does!

But it's not that we don't know that He cares, it's that we aren't sure He'll come through. We all have those friends we can count on, but then there are others we know may drop the ball. We have to believe that God will come through for us when it counts!

What are some helpful ways that you've been able to train your brain to believe that God cares for you?

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The next truth is: Pound Your Pride. When we are humble, we see God in a different light. We understand that He is in control ultimately. When we are prideful, we try to take the reins and rule our own life. Take a look at how David handled this situation:

Lord, my heart is not proud; my eyes are not haughty. I don't concern myself with matters too great or too awesome for me to grasp. Instead, I have calmed and quieted myself.

Psalm 131:1-2 (NLT)

When David felt out of control in his life, instead of trying to grab hold, he let go and let God. He calmed himself down, stayed quiet and listened to the Lord.

Has there ever been a time when you tried to keep control instead of letting God have the say? Did it work out for you?

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The third truth: Transfer All Anxieties onto God. God knows how heavy the weight of anxiety is on you. Jesus Himself was pushed to the limits and tested as far as we are on a daily basis. Read the two following scriptures:

For we do not have a High Priest who is unable to sympathize and understand our weaknesses and temptations, but One who has been tempted [knowing exactly how it feels to be human] in every respect as we are...

Hebrews 4:15 (AMP)

Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.

1 Peter 5:7 (NIV)

Not only does He know, He wants to carry them for us.

There are times in your life where it's just too much. You can't hold on anymore, much less carry those burdens. God doesn't ask for some or even most – He wants ALL of your anxieties. And He said to cast them, literally throw them on top of Him, like you're all done with them.

What are some of the reasons that are holding you back from giving all your anxieties to God?

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God has designed community as a place where we cast off our anxieties. Take a look at this verse:

Help carry one another's burdens, and in this way you will obey the law of Christ.

Galatians 6:2 (GNT)

When we get together, whether in person or just virtually, we have an opportunity to carry each other's burdens and anxieties. That means we come with an uplifting story or word from God that encourages. That also means we have a safe place to share what has been bothering us. When we help carry each other's burdens, it actually lightens the load on us.

Has there ever been a time when you were able to carry someone else's anxiety and lighten their load? How did that lighten your own load?

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

These aren't three easy steps, but they are effective. If you got burdened down with worry and anxiety over the last year, you may not fix it overnight. But this week, you can begin to lighten the load by:

1. Trusting that God Deeply Cares for You,
2. Pound Your Pride, and
3. Transfer All Anxiety onto God.

S.O.A.P.

Day 1: *God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.*

2 Timothy 1:7 (NLT)

Day 2: *You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in You.*

Isaiah 26:3 (NIV)

Day 3: *And the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.*

1 Peter 5:10 (NIV)

Day 4: *But those who trust the LORD will find new strength. They will be strong like eagles soaring upward on wings; they will walk and run without getting tired.*

Isaiah 40:31 (CEV)

Day 5: *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.*

Romans 8:38 (NLT)