



Introduction

We're in a four week series where we're seeing what Jesus said about worry, anxiety, and fear. Through this series, we're learning some practical spiritual lessons to help us when we're battling these kinds of emotions. In this third lesson, we learn that God can help us make a major difference in the life of someone facing fear or anxiety.

To watch this week's sermon before your group discussion, go to www.journeyoffaith.com/messages

Share Your Story

1. Think back to a time when you helped someone through their fear or anxiety. What did that experience teach you?
2. What has God been teaching you as you wrestle with your own feelings of fear and anxiety?

Hear God's Story

1. Read Matthew 9:35-36. Note here that Jesus didn't see the people AS their struggles; instead, He saw them as meaningful, beautiful children of God who needed His love. What does it look like for you when you begin to internally define yourself as your struggles, rather than by how God sees you?
2. Read Galatians 6:2. A.) What does Paul mean by this? B.) How can we be there for others who are going through a hard time, and help them feel truly heard and seen? C.) How does embracing healthy emotional boundaries play into this?
3. In one of his letters, Paul reminded Christians that we have a role to play in shaping our inner dialogue about what's true. Read what he wrote in the last part of 2 Corinthians 10:5. A.) How does this play out when we come alongside others when they express their worried thoughts, and help to reshape those thoughts in a healthy and loving way? B.) How does this play out with ourselves and our own thought life?

Create a New Story

1. When those around us become anxious or worried, it's so beneficial to root ourselves in God's love for them. What are some things we can say to ourselves this next week as we come alongside others going through emotional hardship?

2. When someone is sharing it's unfortunately very human to be thinking about what we're going to say while they're talking, rather than truly being present and hearing them. What's one way you can model the power of presence better this next week?

Further Studies: Being a Godly Steward Through the Storms

Truly being there for others who are going through difficult times in the way God encourages us to do requires the humble discipline of ongoing self-awareness on our part. There's something we can learn here from a few crisis and trauma specialists; in particular, something they call "trauma stewardship." We may not always help people through the most extreme cases of trauma, but general feelings of fear and anxiety that others struggle with can be similarly debilitating for them. There's a lesson here that can help us along this journey.

Read the below excerpt then move onto the discussion questions.

"Trauma stewardship calls us to engage oppression and trauma—whether through our careers or in our personal lives—by caring for, tending to, and responsibly guiding [others] who are struggling. At the same time, we do not internalize others' struggles or assume them as our own. Trauma stewardship practitioners believe that if we are to alleviate the suffering of others ... in the long term, we must respond to even the most urgent human ... conditions in a sustainable and intentional way. By developing the deep sense of awareness needed to care for ourselves while caring for others and the world around us, we can greatly enhance our potential to work for change, ethically and with integrity, for generations to come."

- Burk, Connie, and Laura van Dernoot Lipskey. "Trauma Stewardship: An Everyday Guide to Caring for Self While Caring for Others." 11-12. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2009.

DISCUSS

1. How does what the authors here mention relate to the teachings of what the Bible calls us to represent?
2. What's the hardest part for you of actually doing this as you come alongside others?
3. Imagine fully embodying this teaching. What difference would it make with those God sends along your path to show His love to; and, what difference would it make for you personally?

For Parents: Repackaging for Youth

1. For those who have young children in the home, what are some ways you could teach this lesson to them that takes into account their age and learning level?

For questions about this curriculum, contact Pastor Matthew Jensen at matthew.jensen@journeyoffaith.com