

UPPER ROOM ADULT BIBLE STUDY

"The Gospel of John"

Pastor Jim Otte

2019-2020

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Lesson 40 – Matthew 6 “What Me Worry? Faithful Living in Anxious Times”

a. Matthew 6:25-34.<sup>25</sup> “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?<sup>26</sup> Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?<sup>27</sup> Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life<sup>[e]</sup>?”

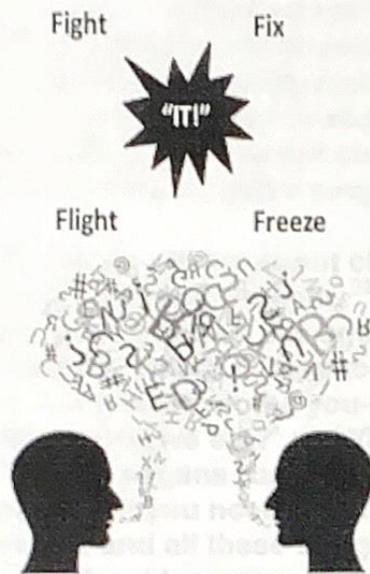
<sup>28</sup> “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin.<sup>29</sup> Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these.<sup>30</sup> If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?<sup>31</sup> So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’<sup>32</sup> For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.<sup>33</sup> But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.<sup>34</sup> Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

- a. “do not worry about your life” – “worry” is the habit of choosing to fret over aspects of life which you can’t influence or control. “Anxiety” is the physiological reaction your brain/body experience when a situation triggers uncertainty or loss of the norm.
- b. “eat or drink...body...wear.” – Basic necessities for survival of life are what is in question here.
- c. “Are you not much more valuable than they?” – This answers the basic fear, which unwanted or unanticipated change triggers: Does God still love me? What is my value to Him?
  - a. How do we determine “value” to what matters in life?
  - b. What changes have you experienced in the last two weeks – regarding what you value?
  - c. How do you feel about your own “value” to God?
- d. “you of little faith?” – Jesus connects our “faith” to the confidence we have in God’s promises to provide for those He values.
- e. “For the pagans run after all these things” – “running after” is implied as “chasing after something, which can’t satisfy.” This suggests a ‘scarcity mindset’ which always feels it needs more and more, i.e. enough is never enough.

- f. "seek first the kingdom, and all these things will be given to you as well." – "seeking first" takes place sequentially from the soul (within) out to the persona (outside):
- a. Begins with you remembering that you are God's "beloved" by virtue of your Baptism ("You are My child, whom I love, with you I AM, well-pleased).
    - i. In your thoughts: remind yourself five times a day – "I am God's beloved. We are God's beloved."
    - ii. In your words: tell yourself out loud, "I am God's beloved. We are God's beloved."
    - iii. In your deeds: let your actions reflect the reality of who you are as God's "beloved."
      1. In how you speak to people or in the presence of people (on social media or in person)
      2. In repairing any hurt feelings you cause.
      3. In taming the anxious instinct to think only of your own self-preservation (under stress).
      4. In allowing God to stretch your comfort zone.
- g. "don't worry about tomorrow" – "worry" is self-consuming.
- a. Figure out what you can do something about and what you can't.
  - b. Do what you can do something about.
  - c. Give the rest to God
- b. Psalm 94:18-19. When I said, "My foot is slipping," your unfailing love, LORD, supported me. <sup>19</sup> When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought me joy.
- c. Proverbs 12:25. Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up.
- d. 1 Peter 5:6-11. Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. <sup>7</sup> Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.  
<sup>8</sup> Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. <sup>9</sup> Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.  
<sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.
- e. Psalm 55:22. Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous be shaken.

f. Understanding Anxiety

## The Mind-Body Reaction 1/15,000<sup>th</sup> of a Sec.



### Mind-Body Stress Chemicals "Flood" You:

- Heart – 100 beats/minutes
- Breathing speeds up/shallower breaths
- Tightness in throat
- Increase blood-clotting
- Decreased appetite
- "A snake under every rock!"
- Hyper-vigilance
- Decreased interest in bonding
- Muscle tension
- Hear half of what's said
- Say what you shouldn't say
- Interpret inaccurately
- Body reacts in fight, flight, freeze, fix
- Rational thinking switches "OFF"
- Assumes the worst
- "Movie memories" triggered

3/18/2020

Rev Jim Otte, "IT!" Workshop, 2019

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### g. Meditative Practices Can Reduce Anxiety

- a. Breathe deeply and visualize God's loving presence.
- b. "Yahweh Prayer"
  - i. Yaaaaahhhhhh Wehhhhhhhhhh (5 times)
  - ii. "Jesus, you are the beloved."
  - iii. "Jesus, I am your beloved."
  - iv. "Jesus, we are your beloved."
  - v. "Yaaaaahhhhhh Wehhhhhhhhhh (5 times)
- c. Meditate while you wash your hands.
- d. Exercise and get 7-8 hours of sleep.
- e. Reduce "screen time" to no more than 2 hours per day.
- f. Take your meds.