

Intro:

Good morning. Cafe. Live streaming at home, SoCal, or wherever you might be...

We continue our UnStuck series this morning. I love the intro video, but when I think of being stuck this is what I think about:

- Philip's pic in his cone

Now I've been particularly stressed the last couple of weeks. Sermon prep, a family situation that created conflict between Amy & I, and trying to get airfare for two mission trips sorted out has just created that knot in my gut. And when I'm anxious and worried, I clam up tight! I don't talk about what's going on; instead, I turn my thoughts inward and become oblivious to people I really care about. (Ask Amy.)

I am convinced we have a deep friendship in our culture with anxiety. In our culture it is a sign of responsibility:

- Worry is a sign of preparedness
- Shows our care
- Lack of worry is a sign of carelessness
- Affects our health - invites illness
 - physical
 - emotional

If we don't think that stress and anxiety are about to overrun us, check out these figures:

- Anxiety Disorders affect 18.1% of adults in the United States (approximately 40 million adults between the ages of 18 to 54). - *National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)*
- Stress is a top health concern for U.S. teens between 9th and 12th grade, psychologists say that if they don't learn healthy ways to manage that stress now, it could have serious long-term health implications - *American Psychological Association*.
- Anxiety is the top presenting concern among college students (41.6%). - *APA*
 - ***Is it any wonder in 2016, the band Twentyone Pilots had a smash hit with the song: Stressed Out (Video)(9 seconds)***
 - *Wish we could turn back time, to the good old days*
When our momma sang us to sleep but now we're stressed out
- Anxiety disorders cost the U.S. more than \$42 billion a year, almost one third of the \$148 billion total mental health bill for the U.S. - *Economic Burden of Anxiety Disorders (a study of the ADAA)*

Our physical and emotional health aren't the only things affected, either:

- spiritual health
 - Worry and anxiety are barriers that will not allow us to accept God's grace until you understand that only HE grants peace and an absolute confidence and abundance of peace

You see, worry & anxiety promise results that cannot deliver - an illusion

- promises safety, but won't protect us.
- promises health, but doesn't heal us

Anxiety is based on a **lie** that we're believing over **truth**.

Anxiety/worry is an IDOL. And idolatry in God's Word is always sin.

So we have an anxiety issue. And I know that just talking about anxiety is making some of you more anxious! Inside your head just acknowledging

Jesus delivers peace!

Anxiety = Fear

- Drives us to control the situation
- When Fear drives, it is because we think that by giving anxiety it's head we will ward off bad results
- The problem is that **FEAR ALWAYS SITS IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT!**

I don't want us to think that anxiety is a uniquely American/Western issue.

I'm convinced that multiple men/women in our Scriptures experienced great anxiety.

Consider Abraham.

- (R) Genesis 12:10-20
 - Famine>Egypt>your my sister>taken by Pharaoh>plagues>shown the exit
 - See what's happening?
 - He fears. Fear drives. Logic & faith fly out the window.
- (R) Genesis 20:1,2
 - Here we go again
 - Half truth propagated as true
- (R) vs. 3-12

And he's not alone:

- Moses
- Joshua - be strong and courageous
- Gideon & all the Judges

- Hezekiah
- So many more...

Now contrast all of those and all of your own worry, anxiety and fear with Jesus:

Jesus does something we expect, He tells us not to worry in the sermon on the mount.

But so much better than that is **Jesus shows us how to deal with anxiety**: in the Garden

- (R) Matthew 26:36-39
 - So let me ask you: was Jesus anxious? Absolutely!
 - v. 38 - "my soul is crushed with grief to the point of death"
 - v. 39 - Father, could I please pass on this one!?
- (R) Luke 22:41-44
 - such agony of spirit that his sweat became like drops of blood
- He handled his anxiety in the presence of God
- It is taken before the throne
 - resolved in the presence of the Father
 - When Jesus leaves the garden, He leaves in peace

Story: what we did right. Prayer list before our move to Plainfield in 2007. Within a year, every concern was answered.

Steps to worry well:

I. **Cling to Jesus** -

- (R) - **Philippians 4:4-6** - the easy and simple answer: prayerful action and grateful heart
- (R) - **1 Peter 5:6,7** - give all your worries and cares to God
 - Not some...ALL
- (R) - **Matthew 11:29,30**
 - Hear it from the Message:

"Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. *Learn the unforced rhythms of grace.* I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."
 - Do you hear what Jesus wants us to do?
 - walk and work** - we're never alone
 - watch how I do it** - He's modeled it perfectly
 - learn the unforced rhythms of grace** - by walking with Jesus and watching how He does it, we learn how to walk in His grace (unforced and freeing)

(1) By the way, this is one of my wife's favorite passages...so much so that she's thinking of getting a tattoo of that on her arm...
 - trust His promises**

II. **Lead with your head - your heart will follow**

- Do you talk to your heart?
 - Knowing God's Word, letting it speak

- b) (R) - Psalm 42:5 - MSG

"Why are you down in the dumps, dear soul?
Why are you crying the blues?
Fix my eyes on God—
soon I'll be praising again.
He puts a smile on my face.
He's my God."

- c) Who is David talking to?
d) What is his advice?

III. **Allow the Holy Spirit room to deal with it. Take it to Him.**

- A. acknowledge it
- B. confess it
- C. release it
- D. accept peace
 - 1. Peace boosters:
 - a) know your triggers
 - b) refer back to the times when God provided peace in the midst of anxiety
 - c) worship - sing and release vocally your worship and praise of the Father

Conclusion:

- I. It's easy to beat up on Abraham and Sarah.
 - A. He didn't get it
 - B. Not just once, but two times!
 - C. We're not much different, are we?
- II. The great thing is that neither event defined Abraham.
 - A. Hebrews 11 gives us a number of things that God credited him with because of his faith
 - 1. But the instance that really causes me to pause is found in Genesis 22
 - a) (R) - Genesis 22:1,2 - a serious WTF moment
 - (1) He obeys and takes Isaac
 - b) (R) - Ge. 22:6,8
 - (1) Trusting God's provision
 - c) (R) - Ge. 22:9-18
 - (1) Because Abraham trusted God, He reaffirms His promise (Jesus)
- III. The best thing is that anxiety and worry don't have to define us. We know we worry well (and become unstuck) when we...
 - A. know Jesus and cling to Him.
 - 1. learn to walk with Him and in Him

2. focus on those “unforced rhythms of grace...”
 - B. learn to obey Him through His Word - leading with our head instead of our heart
 - C. trust that He will bring peace to our stressed out world - allow the Holy Spirit to lead

Let's pray.