

Anxiety Remade

(Mother's Day, May 13th, 2018)
Rhonda Johnson, Grace Point Church

Anxiety Causes:

A Truth: We are ...

A Lie: We are ...

Anxiety Insights: Philippians 4:5-9

How to Face Anxiety with God: 2 Cor. 12:9-10

1. Recognize ...
2. Consider ...
3. Name ...
4. Look ...
5. Have ...
6. Do ...

Anxiety Remade Becomes a Door to ...

(Jeremiah 17:7-8)

1. Anxiety remade ...
(Matthew 11:28-30, Psalm 23, John 10:10)
2. Anxiety remade ...
(Hebrews 4:14-16, 1 Corinthians 12:25-27)

For others God gives us ...

- C _____
- C _____

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This Week's Discussion Guide:

Welcome to "Week 5" of our small group season! After this week, we have six weeks left before we take a break for July and August. Last Sunday for Mother's Day, Rhonda shared with the moms and the rest of us about 'remaking our anxiety'.

Looking Back and Lightening Up:

Each week we look back and have an opportunity to share with our group how the week went and also share a few lighter things to help us get to know each other better. What is something encouraging that happened since our last meeting you can be thankful for?

Related to fears, what is something you used to be afraid of when you were a kid or are still afraid of that others wouldn't have guessed?

Looking Up: (Digging Deeper into Scripture)

Experiencing anxiety is a reality in this overwhelming and uncontrollable world. We face things that are threatening. We and our loved ones are vulnerable. Our heart often tries to convince us we are alone. This half truth causes us anxiety.

1. Take a look at **Philippians 4:5-9** How would you summarize the truth of this passage related to anxiety?

God engages our anxiety with the reassurance of His presence. Have you experienced God in the midst of a stressful situation? How was He with you?

Even though we know He is with us, we often forget to pray or have faith. Sometimes the situation seems so bad or overwhelming that His presence and love can feel irrelevant. He is still concerned for us even though we forget His truths. What truths from God's Word have reassured you in times of distress or darkness?

2. Read and discuss **2 Corinthians 12:9-10**. Do you really trust what God says in this verse? Why or why not? If needed, pray for more faith to trust God in His ways. God created us to depend on Him. Weakness is human (not a failure) and is revealed in circumstances, temptations, limits, weakens, and vulnerability. God alone is the source of power and it is His divine kindness to us in the midst of these circumstances.

3. Read and discuss Jeremiah 17:7-8 This was written to the Israelites as they were taken away from Jerusalem and forcefully taken into exile in Babylon. Stress, persecution, calamity surrounded them and yet what did Jeremiah prophesy life could be like???

Living life trusting God and walking WITH Him in Christ is the abundant life. Our hearts and minds filled with anxiety makes us feel like life and resources are scarce. But Jesus said life with Him is the opposite....Read **John 10:10**. Can you think of some other abundant promises God made in Scripture for those who trust Him? (i.e. In Christ we have everlasting life; God gives peace that passes understanding; God is abounding love, In Christ God separates our sin from us as far as the east is from the west; we who were once slaves to sin and orphans are now children of God and co-heirs with Christ)

By faith our anxiety can be transformed...not that we will never feel it, but the way we engage it becomes different in a fundamental way. Anxiety can become a door to joyful faith and love.

4. Rhonda shared that anxiety remade can become a helpful friend. It is a signal that we are forgetting God. **Psalms 23** is a beautiful passage that is not just for those who are facing death. It is for those who daily walk by faith through struggles. Read and discuss from this verse who God is and how He walks with us. What are the results of life over the long haul as we live life WITH Him?

5. Rhonda also shared that anxiety remade makes us a Christ-like friend to others. As we follow Jesus' example personally (read Hebrews 4:14-16) and also together in church life, God wants us to enter the troubles and concerns of others with compassion and clarity. (read 1 Corinthians 12:25-27)

Looking Ahead: (Personal Application)

With the time left (if there is time left :) care for one another in your group by walking through the 6 steps of anxiety remade Rhonda shared on Sunday. You can also unpack these questions later on over coffee with a group member.

1. What are your cues for anxiety? How do you know when you are anxious? What happens physically, mentally, emotionally? What do you obsessively pursue for relief or to numb the intense feelings? What happens in your relationships when you are anxious? Do you have a short fuse or do you withdraw or does something else come to mind as a result of feeling anxious?

2. We can gather reasons for trust. This is what makes a Christian understanding of anxiety unique. Reasons for trust in God are different for each person. Share how God builds your faith and trust. (i.e. Specific Bible verses; Nature; Worship, etc.)

3. Name some of your specific troubles and concerns with the group. Make note of these and pray for one another.

4. What hijacks your heart? This may take some personal time outside of the group for deeper consideration. Faith, peace and joy in our hearts can be replaced by a frantic desire to have various things: love from others, peoples approval or respect, financial security, success, comfort, etc.

The following are questions to help you discover what hijacks your heart: When you are praying or reading your Bible what distracts you? What captures your heart and you think about incessantly? What makes God's love for you irrelevant? What causes you to forget to think about God throughout your day?

5. Share with the group when are good times for you to set aside to have the honest conversation with God. Pray for one another to have the heart to make time with God a priority and for one another to have the faith to be honest with Him.

6. Do what needs doing today. This is a step that each of us will have to work out with God. Once you have His direction, consider sharing it with the group or someone else to give God praise that you are moving in trust in the midst of your anxiety.

We highly recommend you use this process regularly in alone time with God. Anxiety is remade over a lifetime. It is not a one and done self-improvement project. The more consistently you turn to Him when anxious, the more you will become like Christ.

Let your anxiety and fear be a door. By faith, it can be a friend leading us to an abundant life with Jesus in this overwhelming, uncontrollable world.

Before we wrap up, let's share some prayer requests and pray for each other.