

GOD'S WAY TO FIGHT
FEAR AND ANXIETY

Pastor Robert Jones
Biblical Procedures for Handling Difficult Life Problems

INTRODUCTION

Hebrew fm fear = after page *N.T. Bible checked page*

<> Good news: The Bible abounds with truth about these topics, and gives us foundational base for handling their complexities

<> Bad news: Apply God's truth is a complex task
Applying

I. DEFINING OUR TOPIC *Range from mild to severe here. Issue of degree.*

A. Spectrum of Popular Terminology

Concern Worry Anxiety Fear Panic

B. Medical (Body) vs. Spiritual (Heart) Issues. (See Welch below)

1. Organic causes: Endocrine disorders, drugs, mitral valve prolapse
2. Non-organic causes:
 - a) Body can affect heart
 - b) Heart can affect body

C. DSM-III-R Perspectives: "Anxiety Disorders"
(see Quick Reference to the Diagnostic Criteria from DSM-III-R, 13,139-150)

Symptoms of panic disorder/attack:

- * Shortness of breath or smothering sensations
- * Dizziness, faintness
- * Palpitations, accelerated heart
- * Trembling, shaking
- * Sweating
- * Choking
- * Nausea, abdominal distress
- * Depersonalization or derealization
- * Numbness, tingling sensations
- * Flushes (hot flashes), chills
- * Chest pain or discomfort
- * Fear of dying
- * Fear of going crazy or doing something uncontrolled

ANXIETY DISORDERS (or Anxiety and Phobic Neuroses) (139)

	Panic disorder
300.21	with agoraphobia <i>Specify current severity of agoraphobic avoidance</i> <i>Specify current severity of panic attacks</i>
300.01	without agoraphobia <i>Specify: current severity of panic attacks</i>
300.22	Agoraphobia without history of panic disorder <i>Specify with or without limited symptom attacks</i>
300.23	Social phobia <i>Specify if generalized type</i>
300.29	Simple phobia
300.30	Obsessive compulsive disorder (or Obsessive compulsive neurosis)
309.89	Post-traumatic stress disorder <i>Specify if delayed onset</i>
300.02	Generalized anxiety disorder
300.00	Anxiety disorder NOS

COPEs (HCA River Park Hospital hotline) T.V. advertisement symptoms:

- * Constant worrying
- * Insomnia
- * Panic attacks
- * Fear of losing control
- * Racing heart beat

D. Working Perspective on the Essence of the Heart Problems:

1. It is fear of some negative consequence *Ecce...*

<> "I won't get something I want" *house, car, job, etc.*

<> "I will get something I don't want" *cancer, death of my child, my wife will have an accident in the car*

2. The fear may be wise / legitimate or sinful / irrational

*(a wild beast
a venomous snake)
or God if you're an unbeliever.*

3. The degree, object and expression of fear may vary

*God or
cancer
or
someone's
opinion*

4. Roots:

a) Idolatry: Serving yourself, people and things more than God

b) Unbelief: Believing lies more than God's promises

*I must provide for myself
instead of letting God provide for me.*

*Just listen to me (cult) -
the TV-add or music, etc.
The thing that
becomes the
most capti-
vating to
me.*

II. KEY PASSAGES

A. MATTHEW 6:19-34. (Also Piper, 56-59; MacArthur, 13-29; Gale, 16-22)

Broader Context: *Sermon on the Mount* Contrasts between two ways - *Jesus is contrasting 2 ways of life,*

1. Call to single-hearted devotion toward God (v.19-24) *light/darkness*
*"serve" - not whether you attend a S.S. class. your fundamental worship inclination -
towards God or somebody else.*

2. Call to not worry but to trust in God your Father (v.25-34)

a) Structure of passage:

<> Three negative imperatives (do not worry)

<> One positive imperative (do seek God's kingdom)

b) Verb worry = Greek "merimnao" (care)

<> Positive sense in 1 Cor 7:32-34; 12:25; 2 Cor 11:28; Phil 2:20

<> Negative sense here and Matt 10:19; 13:22; Luke 10:41; 21:34; Phil 4:6; 1 Pet 5:7

c) Reason to not worry

For each of the 3 "do not worrises" in

[1] Because the God who provides for birds and flowers is your Father, and he values you much more than them (vv.25-30)!

[2] Because worrying characterizes pagans, not those who belong to and who are known by God your Father (vv.31-32)!

three passages - are 3 reasons not to worry.

[3] Because worrying can't improve your future, and it instead diverts you from your present responsibilities (v.34)!

B. PHILIPPIANS 4:6-9. (Also MacArthur, 31-41; Adams)

- 1. Prohibition: Command not to fear (v. 6)
God forbids you to worry. Worry is a sin. We're forbidden to worry about anything.
- 2. Prescription: Counsel in dealing with fear (vv. 6-9)

"PTO" Dynamic:

- 1) Pray (vv. 6-7)
 - * About everything
 - * With specific requests
 - * With thanksgiving

If you petition God more than you praise God, you're using God. Think of a friend who only comes when they need something. You say they're using you.

2) THINK (v. 8) *Think truth; think Godly thoughts.*

The things we are to think about included the things He's done & made. The author of all things good & pure is God. Learning to think rightly, we deal with fear by recognizing lies & dealing with truth.

3) OBEY (v. 9)

Use Priolo's "P.T.A." Anxiety Journal (A = Actions)

Pray think action

- ① once you've decided the thing you are anxious about, write a biblical prayer about the spec. situation
- ② list the biblical thoughts (~~that~~) or references
- ③ biblical actions

3. Promise: God's commitment to provide his peace (v.7,9)

Humility is the overarching theme. The reason God cares for you.

Go after the lies w/ God's truth, (The worst thing that could happen is my wife would get killed in an accident. The worst thing is that God would be dethroned.)

C. 1 PETER 5:7. (Also MacArthur, 43-52)

- 1. Context: Humble yourself before God and others
- 2. Command: Cast your anxiety upon him
- 3. Reason: Because God Cares for you

Truths about God in the text and context

- <> His power, v.11
- <> His care, vv.6-7
- <> His grace, v.5
- <> His promise to exalt you, v.10

D. JOHN 14-17, esp JOHN 14

See my Bible study assignment, "John 14 and the Problem of Anxiety"

You'll come up w/ a whole list of reasons not to worry

E. PSALMS. (MacArthur appendix, 121-139; T. Keller)

* Great verses to memorize: 94:18-19; 23:1; 34:4; 46:1-2,7,11; 56:3; 119:165

* Great chapters to study: Psalm 3; 4; 23; 27; 34; 46, 37

* Great themes to explore: God as refuge, God as protector

III. SELF-COUNSELING AND COUNSELING STEPS

A. Gather general data (Situational Heat)

1. Patterns. When? Where? How often? Triggers? What? Etc.

<> Use some type of D.P.P. form

<> Use "Counseling Homework on Handling 'Fear'"

2. Medical aspects.

B. Give hope. "The Bible is all about this stuff!"

C. Establish goal

1. To know, love and please God in the midst of your pressures

2. Not necessarily to rid yourself of all anxiety, at least not immediately

3. Present a progressive sanctification agenda

My goal is not to make you a worry-free person. But to help you learn how to fight against the worries you have & to put ~~worry~~ to death. them

progressively section

D. Identify sinful behavior (bad fruit)

1. Especially sins of omission even more than commission

2. Use the two great commandments to expose sin (Matt 22:37-40)

can't do w/out bad requires

usually people who are filled w/ anxiety - are those who are kept from ministering to others because of self-focus

This lack of love is usually keeping them from reaching out.

E. Identify heart issues (bad roots)

What is the one thing that you crave, savor, fear, focus on, etc.?

PSALM 27

F. Expose idolatry and call CE to repentance (bad roots)

You're determining what the 1 thing is that you're looking for other than Christ.

TOPLED idols produce depression. But those who worry about idols, being toppled - and fearful & worried.

G. Stress God's provision in Christ and call CE to faith (cross, good roots)

1. God's love and grace as grounds for fighting fear:

- <> 1 John 4:18
- <> Romans 8:15-17
- <> Galatians 4:1-7
- <> Luke 12:32
- <> Hebrews 2:10-18

Use Bobick's "Watering the Soil" (2 minutes per day):

- > I am completely righteous in Christ (Justification)
- > I am completely accepted in Christ (Adoption)
- > I can grow and change in Christ (Sanctification)

This deals w/ many of the fears. Fear failure, rejection, punishment

2. Battling fear & worry with God's promises -- Based on Piper, 59-61

Form of Anxiety

- Risky new adventure/meeting
- My ministry being useless/empty
- Being too weak to do my work
- Decisions about the future
- Facing opponents
- Welfare of those I love
- Being sick
- Getting old
- Dying
- Shipwreck faith/fall away from God

Promise for Battling Unbelief

- Isaiah 41:10
- Isaiah 55:11
- 2 Cor 12:9
- Psalm 32:8
- Rom 8:31
- Matt 7:11; Mark 10:29-30
- Psalm 34:19; Rom 5:3-5
- Isaiah 46:4
- Rom 14:7-9
- Phil 1:6; Heb 7:25

3. Fearing God more than other people or things

- Matthew 10:28
- Psalm 34:9

4. Study and assign Key Passages above (under II). *John 14 AA victory study given earlier.*

F. Exhort CE to bold obedience in light of God's promises (good fruit)

- <> 2 Timothy 1
- <> 2 Timothy 4:17



Use of Think cards and Stop cards

Stop: I'm doing it.

G. Continue to encourage the CE

1 Thessalonians 5:14

RECOMMENDED BIBLICAL COUNSELING RESOURCES

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- Faith Baptist Counseling Ministries. "God's Answer for Fear."
- Gale, Stanley D. "Worry Unmasked." Journal of Pastoral Practice 9:4, pp. 16-22. *Speaks of worry as an idolatry*
- Keller, Timothy. "Psalm 27 and the Problem of Anxiety." Message in series from Psalms on "Ancient Solutions to Modern Problems." Contact Elaine at Redeemer Presbyterian Church (New York, NY), 212-808-4460, x21.
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- Mack, Wayne. Homework Manual for Biblical Counseling, Vol. 1. "Anxiety and Worry," pp. 14-15; "Fear," pp. 72-74.
- Murray, John. "The Fear of God." Chapter 10 in Principles of Conduct: Aspects of Biblical Ethics. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1955.
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- Radio Bible Class. What Can I Do with My Worry? Grand Rapids, 1992.
- Smith, Bob. "Counseling People with Panic Attacks." The Biblical Counselor, March 1994.
- Welch, Edward T. Counselor's Guide to the Brain and Its Disorders: Knowing the Difference Between Sin and Sickness. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991. Esp. pp. 215-228.
- Wickert, Daniel. "Panic, Genes, and Drugs." The Biblical Counselor, January 1994.

Helpful but may address 1 aspect or perspective

** One of best tapes by Keller*

nothing to do with counseling & fear part of best issue.

medical side

In terms of Scripture, this is checked (filled up) not many studies. Seeing anxiety as unhealthy! (Chapter 3)

JOHN 14 AND THE PROBLEM OF ANXIETY
Bible Study Growth Assignment
Pastor Robert Jones

In John 14, Jesus urges his disciples, and you, not to be troubled, but instead to trust in him and in God the Father. And he gives solid reasons why you need not be ruled with anxiety. By meditating on and believing his words you can find the peace he offers.

Instructions for using the Observation Worksheet below:

1. Pray before reading. Ask God to speak to you in this chapter.
2. Read the passage carefully.
3. Read it again. Underline commands to trust or to not be troubled.
4. Read it again. Circle every title or pronoun that refers to Jesus.
5. Read it again. Underline with a squiggly line every reference to the Holy Spirit.
6. Read it again and list on a separate sheet (or in right margin) the various truths that provide reasons to trust and not be troubled.

JOHN 14:1-31 (NIV) OBSERVATION WORKSHEET

1 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me.

2 In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

4 You know the way to the place where I am going."

5 Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

7 If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him."

8 Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us."

9 Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?

10 Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.

11 Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.

12 I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

13 And I will do whatever you ask in my name,
so that the Son may bring glory to the Father.

14 You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

15 If you love me, you will obey what I command.

16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another
Counselor to be with you forever--

17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him,
because it neither sees him nor knows him.
But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

18 I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

19 Before long, the world will not see me anymore,
but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.

20 On that day you will realize that I am in my Father,
and you are in me, and I am in you.

21 Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who
loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father,
and I too will love him and show myself to him."

22 Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "But, Lord, why do
you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?"

23 Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my
teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him
and make our home with him.

24 He who does not love me will not obey my teaching.
These words you hear are not my own; they belong to
the Father who sent me.

25 All this I have spoken while still with you.

26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father
will send in my name, will teach you all things and
will remind you of everything I have said to you.

27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.
I do not give to you as the world gives.
Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

28 You heard me say, 'I am going away and I am coming back
to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going
to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.

29 I have told you now before it happens, so that when it
does happen you will believe.

30 I will not speak with you much longer, for the prince of
this world is coming. He has no hold on me,

31 but the world must learn that I love the Father and
that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me.
Come now; let us leave."