



Thinking Right-Side Up In an ~~upside-down~~ World

Tackling Our Anxiety

(Philippians 4:6-7)

Introduction: Anxiety is incompatible with "right-side up" thinking.

How Does Anxiety Work? (4:6a)

- Anxiety consumes your THOUGHTS.
 - It focuses your attention on the THREAT alone.
 - It SQUEEZES all other thoughts out.
- Anxiety programs your BELIEFS.
 - "God doesn't really care...so I can't trust Him with this."
 - "I'm on my own...so it's up to me to avoid this threat!"
- Anxiety hijacks your EMOTIONS.
- Anxiety dictates your ACTIONS.

Biblical Example: Martha (Luke 10:38-42).

So, What's Our Battle Plan? (4:6b)

- TURN to God.
 - Cling to what is TRUE about God (see Matthew 6:31-33!).
 - Express your DESIRES to God.

What's the Reward? (4:7)

- PROTECTION from self-destructive thoughts and feelings so we can keep our heads & stay engaged in the storm.

Conclusion: So, who will you trust to call the shots of how you handle the "threats" in your life? Anxiety, or God's peace?



Icebreakers:

1. Would you rather watch a suspenseful movie that scared you at times or a silly one that made you laugh?
2. What is a silly thing that you are afraid of (either now or when you were a little kid)?

Sermon Summary: Each of us has to choose who will call the shots when we face threats and feel fear. If we allow anxiety to be the boss, we'll slide into God-dishonoring, self-destructive behavior. But if we turn to God and express our desires to Him, His peace will protect us from unhinged thoughts and feelings so we can make the best choices.

Discussion Questions: (*Read Philippians 4:6-7 together.*)

1. What are the most common things Americans are anxious about?
2. Can you be anxious and follow Jesus at the same time? Explain!

*** How does Anxiety Work?**

3. Can you think of any biblical examples of people who allowed anxiety to narrow their focus to the threats in front of them?
4. If God really DOES care about us, why does He allow us to face real threats and feel real fear? Why not just keep it all away from us?
5. What can we do to regain control over our emotions when anxiety hijacks them, escalating them beyond our control?
6. When you are in the grip of anxiety, do you tend more towards frenzied action to fix your problem or becoming paralyzed?

*** So, What's Our Battle Plan?**

7. Why do we tend NOT to avoid honest, rigorous prayer when we see threats in front of us?
8. What can we do when it doesn't SEEM like God is taking care of us like a good Father would? How do we handle that tension?

*** What's the Reward?**

9. Why doesn't God always reward us by giving us what we ask for?
10. Is the peace of God a good enough reward to justify trusting Him? Why or why not?