

FEAR, WORRY, ANXIETY
and the GOD OF PEACE

Introduction: Panic!

3 Possibilities:

1. We haven't **studied** parts of **the map** that speak to our struggle...
 2. We don't know how **to apply the map's information** in our particular daily voyage.
 3. Or maybe we **have** studied the map...but **We don't submit** to the map.
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1. _____ the map about fear, worry, anxiety

A. Survey of scripture: the overview

1. 2 Timothy 1:7 We have all we need to be confident, not fearful, servants
2. Philippians 4:6-9 Instead of anxiety, pray, think rightly, take godly action
3. Luke 12:22-34 (see also Matthew 6:25-34) Anxiety is unnecessary, ineffective, pagan
4. 1 Peter 5:6-7 There is a relationship between pride and anxiety
5. 1 John 4: 7-21 Perfect love casts out fear
6. Matthew 10: 28-31 Do not fear men, fear God

Homework: Look up one of these passages each day for the next week. Study it in context, meditate on it, talk to God about it.

B. Find your current location and determine what path took you there.

What are your fears, worries or anxieties?

Rate them on a continuum from concern, worry, anxiety, fear, panic

Common fears:

Fear of man (Biblical examples: Exodus 32:22-24; 1 Samuel 15:24; Matthew 15:11-12;
Jeremiah 17:5-8; Galatians 1:10; Colossians 3:22 -23)

Phobias

Finances

Illness, pain, death

Sins of loved ones

OCD behaviors

Emotions arise from our inner man: belief, desires, thoughts; and behavior

(i.e. Gen 4:7; John 13:17; Mt 5:3-12) Recommend: Feeling and Faith (Borgman)

Homework:

- Take the issues you wrote down and connect them to the survey scriptures. Look up some of the other 450 Scriptures on fear. Where do your fears fit in God's diagnosis?
- This week, begin a fear journal. The journal will help you become more aware of what types of things engender fear, how often and to what extent.

At least 3 times this week when you become aware of feeling fearful, answer the following questions:

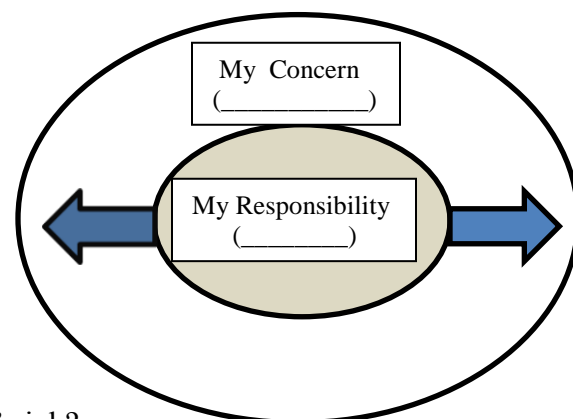
- What was my situation?
- What was I thinking at the time?
- What was I feeling on a 'fear scale' of 1-5: concern, worry, anxiety, fear, panic?
- What did I want?
- What did I do? (escape, cope, etc.)

C. Identify the destination: God's peace. (Psm 46:10)

1. Right fear

- Fear of God (Eccl 12:13)
- Fear of evil (Proverbs 22:3)
- Concern for others (2 Corinthians 11:28-29)
- Core of the circle: 1 Cor. 10:31; 2 Cor. 5:9

Homework: In each fear that you wrote down, discern what are you responsible for, and what is God's job? Place them in the circles.



D. Identify unapproved, unauthorized deviations

1. Expanding the circle: desiring control

Comfort, treasure on earth, other's attitudes/choices, health, reputation, success, safety

2. Idolatry: *Anything* or *Anyone* that begins to _____ our *Hearts* and *Minds* and *Affections* more than God. Giving yourself to some person, goal, ideal, concern or object...some treasure.

The things you are anxious about reveal your idols.

-- What am I pre-occupied with?

--What am I afraid God will not give me?

--Am I willing to sin to get it, sin if I fear I can't get it, or sin if I fear I'm going to lose it?

3. Sins driven by fear (dwell on things that are not true; seek your own; changes goal)

Homework: Distinguish between right fears and wrong fears.

Identify where you have taken any unauthorized deviations from course...

- How has your fear controlled you rather than God controlling you?
- What does your fear say about what idols you have erected?
- How has fear tempted you to other sins?

2. _____ the map

A. Return: Seek the map's author; talk to Him rather than about Him. (Psalm 56)

Homework: You have listed your fears, and seen the right and wrong ways to fear.
Now lay your fears before God.

- Read Psalm 56: How are these verses like what you are feeling. How are they different?
- What do you learn about God from this Psalm? How does that help you?
- Write your own Psalm in which you are honest about your feelings and fears, you cry out to the Lord for help, strength, peace; You acknowledge God's character.

B. Repent—turn a 180 to get back on course (2 Corinthians 7:9-10)

1. Repent of sinful fear (1 John 1:8-9; Proverbs 28:13)
2. Repent of idolatry
3. Live out repentance: Psalm 131
4. God's response to genuine repentance: Luke 15:2-24

Homework: Take some time this week to bring your fears before God, discern idolatries and areas where fear has controlled you, and get serious with Him in godly repentance. It will be refreshing to your soul. Consider memorizing Psm 131.

C. Replace deviations with going in the right direction

1. Growth in Fear of God

Homework: Read Proverbs 2:1-6. How will you specifically apply these verses?
What is your daily time in the Word? _____.
Consider readings in Isa 1-12; 40-66, Jeremiah 1-12; Job 1-2; 38-42

2. Growth in love (1 John 4:18) Perfect love _____ fear.
See prayer in Ephesians 3:16-21.

Homework:

- Pray this prayer personally. Understand that God has set His love on you, personally, in Christ.
- Make a list of 5 ways you can chose to put on love for someone in your life. (maybe someone who is a source of anxiety for you). This may mean praying for that person, writing a card, making a meal, or any other tangible expression of giving. From the list, chose at least 2 that you will do this week.

3. Growth in Righteous thinking

a. Take thoughts captive

- Lamentations 3:17-21: His first step was _____ truth to mind.
- 2 Corinthians 10:5: Taking every thought captive to the _____ of Christ.

b. Put off, put on (Ephesians 4:22-24) What thoughts to put on: (Philippians 4:8-9)

1. Character of God
2. Justification
3. Future glory (Romans 8:18)
4. God's promises (Matthew 6:19-33; Phil 4:6-7; Psm 139:16; Psm 16; Romans 8:28-29; 1 Cor 10:13; Psm 27:1; Isa 41:10; Psm 46: 1-3,7,10)

Homework: Begin to take your thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ.

- Study one attribute/day for the next 3 weeks... It will be life changing!
Suggested titles: *The Attributes of God*, A. W. Pink, or
The Attributes of God, Volumes 1 & 2 by A.W. Tozer
- Read 2 Corinthians 10: 5
 - a. Give 3 examples of 'speculations' and 'lofty things raised up' from your own life.
 - b. Describe the process meant by 'taking every thought captive'.
 - c. What would it look like to implement this verse in your life?
- Now re-write each situation from your fear journal, considering what you have learned
 - a. Next to your fearful thoughts, write out truth from the Bible that you can change your fearful thoughts to.
 - b. Write what you should have been wanting, according to 2 Cor. 5:9.
 - c. Write what you could have done differently in order to please God, if anything.
 - d. Write out three examples of times this week when you are able to replace wrong thoughts with right thoughts. What was the result?
- What is your absolute worst case scenario? What would make that so bad?
Write out: What would still be true about God if that happened?

3. _____ to the map

Why we don't:

A. Wrong focus on self (Isa 53:6; Phil 2:21; 2 Tim 3:2; 2 Cor 5:15)

Homework: What will it take in your life to get your focus more on the Lord?
How have you been distracted from full devotion to Him? Get back to spiritual discipline.
Our enemy would love to see you fall here. So be determined! Daily in the Word. Daily time of prayer and thoughtful meditation on truth.
Weekly memorization of one helpful 'fighter verse'.

B. Pride (1 Peter 5:5-7)

Until we humble ourselves, we won't cast our anxieties and cares on Him.

Homework: Repentance is a beautiful transaction between an anxious believer and her caring God. Repent, and Put on Humility.

- Read “From Pride to Humility” by Stuart Scott, and “Humility, True Greatness,” by Mahaney.
- Pray for relief and deliverance from whatever circumstance is triggering our anxiety, but always do so with an attitude of acceptance of whatever God’s providential will may be, in confidence that His will is better than our plans or desires.

C. Unbelief

Fear and anxiety is not a strange, separate part of your life, but has everything to do with your relationship to God. He is working even now to draw you to Him, thru the map He’s given.

Homework: Ask God to give you faith to believe that His will for you comes from wisdom and goodness and is meant for your good. Then ask for a heart that is submissive to His providential will when it is contrary to your own plans.

And just becauseOne last bit of **Homework**

- Write out and Memorize: Psalm 55:22
*Cast your burden upon the LORD and He will sustain you;
 He will never allow the righteous to be shaken.*

Conclusion: Be still, my soul

Lord, I am willing to
 Receive what you give,
 Lack what you withhold,
 Relinquish what you take.