

TRANSFORMED: THE CARES OF LIFE

Feb 26, 2017 | Pastor Randy Remington

We're studying how God transforms our lives and makes us more like Jesus. As we have seen for the last 7 weeks he does that in so many different ways. This week's study is a little different; Jesus called it the "cares of life" and this can involve even your fears and anxiety. So let's read Psalm 27 together:

The Lord is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked advance against me to devour me, it is my enemies and my foes who will stumble and fall. Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then I will be confident. "One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek him in his temple. For in the day of trouble he will keep me safe in his dwelling; he will hide me in the shelter of his sacred tent and set me high upon a rock. Then my head will be exalted above the enemies who surround me; at his sacred tent I will sacrifice with shouts of joy; I will sing and make music to the Lord. Hear my voice when I call, Lord; be merciful to me and answer me. My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" Your face, Lord, I will seek. Do not hide your face from me, do not turn your servant away in anger; you have been my helper. Do not reject me or forsake me, God my Savior. Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me. Teach me your way, Lord; lead me in a straight path because of my oppressors. Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes, for false witnesses rise up against me, spouting malicious accusations. I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord." (Psalm 27:1-14)

Jesus addressed the issue of the "cares of life". He understood how this can affect our lives in so many ways and can actually overrun the system.

Our current culture has been tagged the "age of anxiety" but now has become "high anxiety". Experts tell us that as many as 56 million people in our country have some form of "anxiety disorder".

In the youth of our culture, experts are telling us that young people are plagued by loneliness and anxiety, (or fear). Some of this comes from the constant threat of terrorism, school shootings, climate concerns, economic woes and many more.

The contrast of childhood fears and adult fears:

Childhood fear: Doctors.

Adult fear: Doctor's bills.

Childhood fear: Bad dreams.

Adult fear: Unfulfilled dreams.

Childhood fear: Strangers.

Adult fear: Crippling social anxiety.

Childhood fear: Clowns.

Adult fear: Clowns.

There seems to be no argument that this plagues our society, but in reality this has been an issue for many centuries. As we look at Psalm 27, we see the honesty of David and what he is facing.

"Anxiety weighs down the heart." (Proverbs 12:25)

Ironically, we live in one of the safest times in world history, the most affluent times and the communication technology is off the charts. Yet anxiety, unsettledness, loneliness and fear is rampant.

"We are the healthiest, wealthiest, and longest-lived people in history. And we are increasingly afraid. This is one of the great paradoxes of our time." Daniel Gardner (The science of fear)

"Fear is a spirit that wants to take you on a guided tour of a Godless future"

The Multiple Reasons for potential worry, fear and anxiety for David:

"2 When the wicked advance against me to devour me, it is my enemies and my foes who will stumble and fall. (Opposition)

"3 Though an army besiege me, my heart will not fear; though war break out against me, even then I will be confident." (Isolation)

"Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me." (Rejection)

"12 Do not turn me over to the desire of my foes, for false witnesses rise up against me, spouting malicious accusations." (Accusation)

God understands what an important issue this is. The most repeated phrase in the scriptures, "fear not" (or something similar) is found in the scriptures nearly 400 times.

But even before David gave us these reasons listed above, he began the Psalm with:

"1 The Lord is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid?"

THE SINGULAR SOLUTION (FOCUS):

"4 One thing I ask from the Lord, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze on the beauty of the Lord and to seek (Inquire) him in his temple."

1. DWELL - IN THE HOUSE OF THE LORD

Anxiety starts with momentary atheism: I must be aware of, and connected to, the presence of God on a daily basis.

Remember in the Old Testament the "Tabernacle" was the place where God's presence and Glory was. Today, Believers are that place where God's Spirit dwells.

David is saying that I want to live with this awareness that God is constantly with me.

- **Think of your anxiety as an alarm clock. Every time you're anxious, pray.**

Maybe God is saying in the middle of this, "I'm making you more like my son through this". Or possibly he is saying "you are sharing in the sufferings of Christ as you walk through this". Maybe he is pointing to something in us that has taken his place? Jesus will always take us to the root or heart of what is going on.

"I don't worry, I worship."

- **In moments of anxiety don't listen to your heart, speak to your heart.**

Our culture says; "follow your heart", David many times talked to his heart. So what do we do, begin to "pray" this verse and verses like it:

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." (Isaiah 41:10)

2. "GAZE - ON THE BEAUTY OF THE LORD"

The word "beauty" is more than just pretty, it has to do with value and worth. He is saying "God is my treasure", it's what I desire and focus on. Incidentally, whatever we fixate on, we will have a tendency to worry about.

- **Worry doesn't give you control, so gaze on the one who is in control.**

"Emotion follows devotion." We can have our focus on many things, it can become our "one thing" ...which in truth is out of our control. Re-direct your devotion.

What you desire, you will seek after. What you seek after, you will sacrifice for.

What you sacrifice for, you will treasure. What you treasure, you will serve.

What you serve, you will worship. What you worship, you will be made in the image of.

3. SEEK - HIM IN HIS TEMPLE

- The ancient wisdom in this text is to reorient our lives around seeking God's will, His dreams and his plans for us.

Randy: "the decisions I regret the most were made out of fear"

*"But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."
(Matthew 6:33)*

"The peace which the world offers us is the peace of escape, the peace which comes from the avoidance of trouble and from refusing to face things. The peace which Jesus offers us is the peace of conquest. No experience of life can ever take it from us and no sorrow, no danger, no suffering can ever make it less. It is independent of outward circumstances." William Barclay

"Run to the rock that is higher than us"

"The seed falling among the thorns refers to someone who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, making it unfruitful." (Matthew 13:22)

"I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord." (:13-14)

"Anxiety is the feeling of worry, nervousness or unease typically about some future event with an uncertain outcome"

"Anxiety is a form of fear. It is the fear of not having control over the future. We tend to worry about the future not the past"

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. We're learning the different ways God transform us to the image of Christ. As we began to look at how he transforms through the, "cares of life" what comes to your mind? What are some of the cares in your life that you have experienced?
2. In Psalm 27, David gives us situations that the potential for fear and anxiety was very real. (Page 2 and 3) So what is the difference between David and the many today that are plagued and bound by fear and anxiety? What do you see in verse one that may help answer this question? 1"The Lord is my light and my salvation—whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life—of whom shall I be afraid"?
3. On page 3 of our notes, we see a "singular solution" or focus. This will be seen out of Psalm 27. He first part of the singular solution is: Dwell - in the house of the Lord. (Bottom of page 3) Also in your discussion how do you see this statement tying in? "Anxiety starts with momentary atheism" (Very involved question but don't miss the alarm clock and the part our heart plays)
4. On page 4, the second part of the solution is: Gaze upon the beauty of the Lord. Please discuss what beauty is in this context, also how does your desire and devotion come into play?
5. Lastly the solution involves us to Seek him in his temple. When we are faced with such uncertainty around us, what are we to do? What does this quote say about these times? "The ancient wisdom in this text is to reorient our lives around seeking God's will, His dreams and his plans for us"