

True REST

finding HOPE for what keeps you up at night

“for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.” II Tim. 1:7

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Session 2

*There is so much fear in us. Fear of people, fear of God, and much raw, undefined, free-floating anxiety....we should not be afraid of our fears. We can confront them, give words to them, and lead them into the presence of the one who says, “Do not be afraid, it is I.” Our inclination is to show our Lord only what we feel comfortable with. But the more we dare to reveal our **whole trembling self**, the more we will be able to sense that God’s love, which is perfect love, casts out all fears. (Henri Nouwen)*

Mary = Passion of the Christ = “Don’t look at what you see; remember what you know.”

“Yes Lord” is always the right response:

“What will we do in the midnight of our need, when the light of life is gone, when our personal cupboards are despairingly bare?....If we have come often to God in the sunshine of our lives, our anxious feet will find the familiar pathway, even in the darkest night. Though blinded by disaster, though hounded by doubt, though confused by life which seems out of hand, we can find our way to God intuitively because going to Him has become second nature, a way of life. (Richard Exley – The Other God)

Trust the ONE who is trustworthy = Isaiah 14:24, Col 1:17

“I shudder to think what I could have missed in life because of my disobedience. I am so thankful that God in His grace does not allow me to win...He teaches me over and over again, that He does know best...(and) I am learning to remember, before I even get there, that eventually this (the center of His will) will be what is best for me, and more important, what is best for His glory.” (Katie Davis, Kisses from Katie)

Forget clarity – Misconception to think that if we could just see....

“Craving clarity, we attempt to eliminate the risk of trusting God. Fear of the unknown path stretching ahead of us destroys childlike trust in the Father’s active goodness and unrestricted love....we often presume that trust will dispel the confusion, illuminate the darkness, vanquish the uncertainty, and redeem the time. But the crowd of witnesses in Hebrews 11 testifies that this is not the case. Our trust does not bring final clarity on this earth. It does not still the chaos or dull the pain or provide a crutch. When all else is unclear, the heart of trust says, as Jesus did on the cross, ‘Into your hands I commit my spirit.’ (Luke 23:46)” (Brennan Manning, Ruthless Trust)

Let go of expectations – where “what if” becomes “even if”

Prepared....to live = settle the issue = “Whatever my lot, thou has taught me to say, it is well....”

“Those two simple words have taken the fear out of life. Replacing ‘what if’ with ‘even if’ is one of the most liberating exchanges we can ever make. ***We trade our irrational fears of an uncertain future for the loving assurance of an unchanging God.*** We see that even if the worst happens, God will carry us. He will still be good. And he will never leave us.” (Vaneetha Rendal Risner, “What if the Worst Happens?” contributor to desiringgod.org)

Repetition quickens our response: Gen 48:15

- “*Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.*” (Rom 12:2b, NLT)
- Value of opportunities, experience and hindsight:
- “On belay”
- Josh 1:5 “I will not fail you or forsake you...” = Hebrew for forsake?

ZOOM Out! (remember fear can lead to self-absorption!)

Esther – “If I perish, I perish” - Esther 4:13-16 (*Where is verse 14.5?*)

- Life is uncertain = Esther certainly didn’t know the outcome
- God is at work = His silence is not absence
- Develop your “explanatory style” – “But God” – Joseph Gen 50:20
- Live in expectation of God...living life on your toes = we’re on offense!

Your current reality vs. the greater reality = Moses (the bigger picture!)

- Moses' Mother = current reality = Ex 2:1-4 = I must try to save him
- God told Moses to go = Ex. 3:10
- Moses consumed by all sorts of fears = Ex. 4:10-12
- God's pronouncement of Moses centuries later through the testimony of Stephen = Acts 7:22 – "a man of power in words and deeds"

ZOOM Out and embrace the greater reality: "You've got to put your baby (your fears) in the basket."

Monitor Your Mind

Praying our fears – two extremes of dealing with fears:

Religion – stuff them; deny them

Secular = express them; become a victim to them

But God says to PRAY your fear; pray about everything:

Psalms = language of lament; primer on how to pray

"(the Psalms) doesn't say we should be under aware of our emotions or over awed by emotions. Not stuffing or bowing to them. Not denying or venting them. But praying them.....where we **pre-reflectively** pour them out in the **presence of God and we process them there.**" (Tim Keller, "Praying our Fears")

Survival mode vs. Prayer mode

Survival mode: reactionary: "Survival mode is simply reacting to the circumstances around you. It is a pinball existence. And to be perfectly honest, it's predictable, monotonous and boring." (Mark Batterson, In a Pit with a Lion on a Snowy Day)

Jerry Sittser (A Grace Disguised) calls this living in the "terror of randomness" = no peace, no purpose, nothing proactive. Eeyorish = pessimistic or gloomy

Prayer mode: RAS = "Your spiritual antenna is up and your radar is on. Your reticular activating system is on red alert. Prayer puts you in a proactive posture." (Batterson)

So when the RAS is engaged.....if we are dealing with a particular fear
and we are living in prayer mode (processing our fears with the Lord)
we begin to notice answers to those prayers, how God is using those fears, teaching us how to surrender those fears, bringing peace to those fears, etc.

THEREFORE..... life may be **unplanned but we are not unprepared**. We are looking for God's fingerprints.

Come often = I Thess 5:17 *Pray without ceasing*. (pray continually)

Embed prayer in your daily life = whenever, wherever, however = no one "right" way

A.W. Tozer said you can't separate the sacred from the secular.

A wandering mind is an opportunity to be an offered prayer = let your mind wander!

Come boldly

"Bold prayers honor God and God honors bold prayers." (Batterson) = John 15:7
"ask whatever you wish..." Luke 11:8-9 "Yet because of your **shameless audacity**, he will get up and give you as much as you need. Ask, and it will be given to you; search and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you."

Come honestly

God delights in an honest heart = "It is a hidden heart, not a selfish heart that is hardest to change....I must pray what is in me, not what I wish were in me." (John Ortberg, The Me I Want to Be)

Choose to praise - be a worshiper! Ps. 42:5 - Praise redirects our focus!

- a. *He is good* = Ps. 145:8-9
- b. *He is sovereign* (in complete control) = Ps. 145:10-13a - authority in kingdom
- c. *He is faithful* = Ps. 145:13b-16
- d. *He is righteous* (just or fair) = Ps. 145:17-21

"...I have committed to return to a place of worship. A place where it is too dark to see anything but Him. A place too quiet to hear anything other than the sound of my own praise. "Nevertheless I will look again toward Your holy temple Lord..." And like the bird that can only learn to sing in the dark, I will follow the sound of my Master, urging me to walk in faith and trust, regardless of what the world is doing around me. And there, in the land of promise, I will rest my weary bones...and cease to fear..." (Angie Smith, What Women Fear)

.....because the **only** constant in this broken and fallen world is God - His character and His word. All else **begs** us to fall apart in fear and panic!