

BIBLE STUDY

Topic: Stress & Anxiety

This bible study can be done alone or as part of a small group. Prayerfully read the scripture, and then use the provided space to journal your reflections.

PART I

Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat [or drink], or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds in the sky; they do not sow or reap, they gather nothing into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are not you more important than they? Can any of you by worrying add a single moment to your life-span? Why are you anxious about clothes? Learn from the way the wild flowers grow. They do not work or spin. But I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was clothed like one of them. If God so clothes the grass of the field, which grows today and is thrown into the oven tomorrow, will he not much more provide for you, O you of little faith?

So do not worry and say, 'What are we to eat?' or 'What are we to drink?' or 'What are we to wear?' All these things the pagans seek. Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom [of God] and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides. Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself. Sufficient for a day is its own evil. (Matthew 6:25-34)

Questions:

1. Prayerfully read the above scripture. What sticks out to you in this passage?

2. Jesus gives us a cure for our worries & anxiety when he says, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." What does this mean to you? How can you incorporate this mentality in practical ways in your life?

3. In this passage, Jesus points out that the worry and concern of anxiety is pointless. Worry is the preoccupation in the present with the fear of what may take place in the future. Instead, Jesus tells us, "Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself." How do you deal with your own worries and concerns? Is this the same way that Jesus is asking you to respond in these instances?

PART II

Then he made the disciples get into the boat and precede him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. After doing so, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When it was evening he was there alone. Meanwhile the boat, already a few miles offshore, was being tossed about by the waves, for the wind was against it. During the fourth watch of the night, he came toward them, walking on the sea. When the disciples saw him walking on the sea they were terrified. "It is a ghost," they said, and they cried out in fear. At once [Jesus] spoke to them, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid." Peter said to him in reply, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." Peter got out of the boat and began to walk on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw how [strong] the wind was he became frightened; and, beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!"

Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" After they got into the boat, the wind died down. Those who were in the boat did him homage, saying, "Truly, you are the Son of God." (Matthew 14:22-33)

Questions:

1. Prayerfully read the above scripture. What sticks out to you in this passage?

2. Some of the earliest commentaries on this scripture point out that the waves are what could have actually harmed Peter, and yet it is the wind he is afraid of. These early commentaries conclude that it is Peter's anxiety that causes him to sink, not the actual waves. Do you agree with this idea? How might this be true in your own life?

3. When Peter calls out, Jesus immediately saves him. How can you remind yourself that Jesus is waiting to immediately respond and pull you out of the wind and waves of your life?
