

Matthew 6: 25-34 (Anxiety)

Ice Breaker Idea: Share a high and/or low from this week.

Questions:

1. The standard of living (as measured by most metrics) is at a high level in America, yet our culture carries the highest levels of anxiety worldwide. Discuss how fear contributes to this. What other factors contribute to this issue?
2. One cause of anxiety is 'vision without hope', a tendency to focus more on the negatives than the positives. Why do you think we tend to see the negatives more than the positives? What exercises may help you to shift your focus to the positives?
3. Fear and anxiety are more than you can handle alone, it can be overwhelming. Why do we often try to carry out burdens alone? What makes us resistant to passing our burdens to God?
4. "You can't do anything about it anyway!" Do you believe this? Does this reality lead you to hope or to hopelessness? How does this reality shift your perspective?
5. Pastor said that the comment "Fear and anxiety reveals a lack of trust" often receives the most pushback. What reasons for pushback might exist? How do you think God would answer these? Are there factors outside of lacking trust that contribute to our anxiety?
6. The things we attach the most value to often serve as sources of the most stress. Why does this happen? How might we approach this process of assigning value to things in a more Godly way?

"Digging Deeper"

Read 1 Peter 5: 6-8

1. Look at the commands God gives to us here (humble yourselves, cast your anxieties on Him, be sober-minded, be watchful). How do all these things work together as it relates to fear and anxiety?

Read Matthew 6: 19-21 & 6:34

1. How does this passage fit with the discussion on anxiety that follows it?
2. How do we balance a need to plan for the future and following Jesus' command from Matthew 6: 34?