

Fear & Anxiety

Typical Problems

What is Fear?

1. Merriam Webster: “An unpleasant often strong emotion caused by anticipation or awareness of danger and accompanied by increased autonomic activity”
2. It is (one of the) check engine light of the soul. ***If you will listen, fear will tell you what is important to you.***

What are we Afraid of?

1. List of our common fears:
2. List of our common phobias:
3. What are your top three? What does that say about what is important to you?

The Obvious Look of Fear

1. The emotional feeling -
2. The physical manifestations -
3. Your dreams -

Methods for Handling our Fears

1. We try to tell our fear the truth.
2. We medicate our feelings.
3. We desensitize ourselves to our fears.
4. We overprotect.
5. We become OCD or superstitious.
6. Less obvious coping strategies:
 - a. Busy stress
 - b. Paralyzed depression
 - c. Defensive anger
7. When the above methods fail or start to negatively impact the rest of our lives, we start to look for help.

We Must Learn to Listen to Our Fears

1. Fear teaches us:
 - a. What I feel is valuable and important.
 - b. What I believe I need for peace.
 - c. Who I believe is in control.
 - d. What I believe life should be like.
 - e. What I believe about God and His attitude towards me.
 - f. Where I have put my hope.
2. Fear reminds us that we are *dependent* creatures by design.
3. If we are dependent creatures, we need a bigger and stronger hope.

The Double-Sided Coin of Fear and Hope

1. The right response to fear is to actively put our hope in God.
 - a. Psalm 56:3-4
 - ³When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.
 - ⁴ In God, whose word I praise—
in God I trust and am not afraid.
What can mere mortals do to me?
2. Why don't we do that every time?
3. What is the antidote for our doubts?
4. We must *know* God as:
 - a. Father: Luke 15:11-20 & Romans 8:14-39
 - b. King: Psalm 9
 - c. Sovereign: Ephesians 1:11-14
 - d. Good: Psalm 145
 - e. Faithful: 2 Timothy 2:11-13
 - f. Love: Ephesians 3:14-21
 - g. And then to know how He feels about all our desires and fears.
5. As we grow in *knowing* God, the instances of fear will naturally decrease... but even when fear comes, if we respond by hoping in God, we worship Him in profoundly powerful ways.
 - a. Fear → Thanksgiving → Desperate Requests → Peace of God