

Sermon Title: Don't be anxious.

- Today we're going to be looking at what Jesus has to say about worry and anxiety.
  - If you struggle with this, there is hope and freedom.
  - If you don't struggle with this, this is hope and freedom.

### Matthew 6:24-34

What makes this teaching of Jesus difficult?

- This teaching is sometimes misunderstood.
  - It seems as though Jesus is just saying to have more faith.
- The therefore in verse 25 is critical, because it brings us back to verse 24.
  - What Jesus is talking about here isn't mental health as much as he's talking about our focus on the material things of this world.
- The other difficult saying is in verse 30 where it seems Jesus is calling out people for having little faith.
  - Well, you know how the 'tone' can be misinterpreted when we get an email or even a text? The same can happen in our reading of scripture.
  - Looking at the Greek in verse 30, the word Jesus is using is Oligopistoi, which means "little faiths".
  - Most scholars agree it seems to be a gentle chiding, almost like a loving teasing.
  - He later uses that same term with his disciples, and those same men are who he entrusted his ministry to. So, it seems their little faith did not disqualify them. Likewise, Our worries and anxieties do not disqualify us.

As we unpack this text, it's important to remember what Jesus is doing throughout the entire Sermon on the Mount. He's not talking about rules to follow any more but a way of life to enjoy, with him!

- John 10:10: I came that they might have life and have it abundantly.
- Are you living this abundant life? Am I?
- A personal story about preparing for today.
  - In this present moment is where we can experience God's presence.

A word picture I'd read in a book, *Becoming Whole*

- In describing this separation, we can feel, the author likened this human experience to baseball fans in the Skydome.
  - Just like baseball fans focused on a game, when we're so focused on what is happening right in front of us it's like the Skydome closes, and we can't see or experience God and all that he's up to in the world.
  - But when the Skydome is open, we remember God's involvement, his hand, his Kingdom is in and moving through all things.

Awareness of the Kingdom of God, seeking it, is what Jesus says is the antidote to this worry and anxiety. Verse 33

- Seeking the Kingdom of God is like keeping the Skydome open. When we're seeking the Kingdom of God, we're looking for him in all things, the ordinary things of our lives.
- The sacred isn't separate from this human life, it's interwoven through it. God is in it all and he invites us to partner with him in bringing his Kingdom!

How do we live in a way that seeks the Kingdom of God and keeps that Skydome open?

1. **Spend time in nature:**
  - a. We see it in our scripture today, where Jesus says, look at the birds, consider the lilies. For some of us, there's something about being in nature.
2. **Be curious about what God is up to in your ordinary life:**
  - a. Writer and Speaker Paula D'Arcy says that 'God comes to you disguised as your life.'
  - b. What is God saying to me? What am I going to do about it?
3. **Be still:**
  - a. What are your rhythms? Do they include stillness? A time to just be with the Lord?
  - b. **Luke 10:41-42**

Depending on your personality, how you're wired and even your season of life, this being still and sitting at Jesus' feet can be challenging.

- One practice: contemplative prayer of Psalm 46:10
- Close your eyes, take a couple of deep breaths, and enter a posture of prayer.
- Be still and know that I am God.

Sermon Title: Don't be anxious.

### Matthew 6:24-34

What makes this teaching of Jesus difficult?

- This teaching is sometimes \_\_\_\_\_.
- What Jesus is talking about here isn't mental health as much as he's talking about our focus on the \_\_\_\_\_ things of this world.
- Verse 30: Oligopistoi, which means "\_\_\_\_\_"
- Our worries and anxieties do not \_\_\_\_\_ us.

As we unpack this text, it's important to remember what Jesus is doing throughout the entire Sermon on the Mount. He's not talking about rules to follow but a way of life to enjoy, with him!

- John 10:10: I came that they might have life and have it \_\_\_\_\_.
- In this present moment is where we can \_\_\_\_\_ God's presence.

A word picture from the book, *Becoming Whole*:

- Just like baseball fans focused on a game, when we're so focused on what is happening right in front of us it's like the \_\_\_\_\_ closes, and we can't see or experience God and all that he's up to in the world.
- But when the Skydome is open, we remember God's involvement, his hand, his Kingdom is in and moving through all things.

Focus on the Kingdom of God, seeking it, is what Jesus says is the \_\_\_\_\_ to this worry and anxiety. (Verse 33)

- The sacred isn't separate from this human life, it's interwoven through it. God is in it all and he invites us to partner with him in bringing his Kingdom!

How do we live in a way that seeks the Kingdom of God and keeps that Skydome open?

1. **Spend time in \_\_\_\_\_:**
2. **Be curious about what God is up to in your \_\_\_\_\_:**
  - a. 'God comes to you disguised as your life.' - Paula D'Arcy
  - b. What is God saying to me? What am I going to do about it?
3. \_\_\_\_\_:
  - a. Be still and know that I am God. Psalm 46:10