

It Runs in the Family: Anxiety and the Fatherhood of God

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[0 : 00] I I I

I I In fact, many of you have said a lot of pastors, a lot of churches aren't talking about this issue. And so thank you for just bringing it out in the open and letting us have a conversation about the real struggle that we have with worry and anxiety.

Because the Bible has a lot to say about it, does it not? And listen, I've already said many times we recognize that you need a holistic approach to this topic. There are physical realities, mental realities that have to be taken into account of.

But there's also a spiritual reality, and we're approaching this issue from God's Word, from the spiritual perspective of how to win victory over anxiety and worry.

In fact, our theme verse has been Philippians 4, verse 6, which says this, Do not be, say it, anxious about what? Anything easier said than done.

[2 : 24] Don't be anxious about anything, Paul says. Now, we talked about the fact that what Paul means there, the word anxious is a present active imperative. It means do not be continually anxious about anything.

We mentioned this very first week is this. Notice this on the screen, that the presence of anxiety is unavoidable, but the prison of anxiety is optional.

You're going to have worries. You're going to experience anxiety, but you don't have to live in that prison. You don't have to live in a continual state. It doesn't have to be a master over you.

There is freedom. There is the peace of God. Amen? And so we've looked at also an outline of Philippians 3. This was kind of the first three weeks in this series.

We talked about God's calming presence. The Lord is at hand. You're never alone in your anxiety.

We also talked about there are things that you need to do, just like when the warning light that says you need to change the oil comes on.

[3 : 24] You take it to a professional and get it looked at. When the warning light of anxiety and worry comes up in your life, stop and go to God. Who better to fix you than the one who created you?

Amen? And what are the things that Philippians 4 tells us to do? We are to stop and praise. Rejoice in the Lord always. And again, I say rejoice. Stop and pray. Let your request be made known to God.

Stop and ponder. That is, think on the truth of God. Whatever is true and honorable and pure. Think on these things. And what's going to happen when we do that?

When that becomes the practice of our life? The controlling peace. The very peace that God has comes. And we don't just experience it.

It guards us. It fights for us. It defeats the thief of worry that wants to capture your heart and mind. That's awesome truth.

[4 : 24] Amen? That was the first three weeks in about a minute or two. Okay? And so that's kind of where we've been so far. But we're not going to just stop at Philippians chapter 4 because there are other passages in the Bible that address this topic as well.

And who better than to address the topic of anxiety and worry than Jesus himself? That's where we focus this evening here in Luke chapter 12.

If you're able to stand, please do so as we honor the reading of God's Word. Luke chapter 12, very, very famous passage on the topic of worry and anxiety.

And there is a parallel passage in Matthew 6 as well. But we're looking at Luke 12 and verse 22. And watch what Jesus says here. He said to his disciples. So he's talking to his own people. Therefore I tell you, do not what? Be anxious about your life. Like what you'll eat. Or your body.

[5 : 25] Or what you'll put on. Life is more than food. And the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens. They neither sow nor reap. And they have neither storehouse nor barn.

And yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? And which of you, by being anxious, can add a single hour to his span of life?

If you then are not able to do a small thing as that, why are you anxious about the rest? Consider the lilies. How they grow.

They neither toil nor spin. Yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory has not been arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass which is alive in the field today and tomorrow it's thrown in the oven, how much more will he clothe you?

Oh, you of little faith. And do not seek what you are to eat or what you are to drink or be worried. For all the nations of the world seek after these things.

[6 : 27] And your Father knows that you need them. Instead, seek his kingdom. And all these things will be added to you.

Let's pray. Lord, help me tonight preach your word. Help me be faithful to the text. Help me be faithful to what Jesus taught his disciples and wants to teach his disciples right here in this room tonight and those watching online.

So come, talk to us. Speak to us. We have been so well fed by your word and what you have taught us about this struggle of anxiety and worry. And you have more to say to us.

So talk to us tonight. In Jesus' name we pray. And God's people said, amen. Amen. You can be seated. A few years ago, Alice made a decision that would forever alter her past.

Alice thought it would be a really fun idea to do one of those mail-in DNA tests. Y'all ever done one of those? She thought it'd be a really cool idea, so she mailed it in.

[7 : 31] But she knew what the results were going to be. I mean, after all, she grew up a child of Irish-American Catholics. She was taken to church every single Sunday, and they would boast and boast about their Irish heritage.

And that's why Alice was so confused when she got her results back. The test revealed that Alice wasn't Irish at all.

She was mostly Jewish. Clearly, somebody made a mistake, and so she took another DNA test, and the results came back the same. So she made her sister take a DNA test, and her test results came back Jewish as well.

She began to get really shaken to her core. Questions began to flood her mind. Was there an adoption in my family that I didn't know about?

Was there like a family secret that no one told me? She began to question her story. Alice said, quote, Alice was determined that she was going to find the answer.

[8 : 50] And so through months of research and additional family DNA studies, she concluded that this mystery that had to be solved, the missing link was somewhere on her father's side.

And then one day, everything took a turn. Through her research, her path crossed with another woman by the name of Jessica Benson. Jessica's father was born in the same city on the same day in the same hospital as Alice's father.

And to make things even more interesting, Jessica's father was born in the same hospital as Alice's father. Were only one digit apart. Jessica agreed that she too would take a DNA test, and she was shocked with her results.

You see, she was certain that she was Jewish, and her results came back Irish. This is when the two of them began to realize what had happened.

There wasn't a family secret that had been hidden. There was a mistake that had never been uncovered. That over a hundred years ago, on September the 23rd, 1913, at a hospital in the Bronx, the wrong babies were sent home with the wrong families.

[10 : 18] Their fathers had been accidentally given to the wrong parents. And in that moment, Alice and Jessica and their entire families had to accept that they had spent their entire life believing the wrong family story.

Can you even get your mind around that? Can you even imagine what that would be like? Can you imagine thinking your entire life that your story was one thing, only to realize it was something different?

Can you imagine spending your entire life thinking that you were Norwegian, only to uncover that you came from this? Now don't laugh, that's my uncle, alright?

That's my uncle. I'm from Tennessee, I can make that joke, alright? Some of you are going home tonight, and the first thing you're going to do is take a DNA test. Where did I come from?

But seriously though, imagine that all the things that you thought you came from, the past that you believed in, that none of it was as you believed.

[11 : 30] I know that you would be shaken, like Alice and Jessica, to the core, and here's why. Are you all with me tonight? Listen, here's why. For better or for worse, whether you like it or not, family shapes our identity.

Our family shapes our identity. You know that. That's why you have photographs framed on the wall. It's why you keep photo albums of your kids or grandkids, whether you actually have the pictures or you have a digital photo album.

It's why sometimes at weddings, they will show all those pictures you wished your parents would have deleted and erased. Right? Those teenage years you want to forget about. They show all those pictures because they're telling your story.

It's why sometimes at a funeral, there'll be a collage of pictures that are telling this family story of a loved one. Why? Because like it or not, family shapes our identity.

And you say, Pastor, that's nice and all, and I know that that's true, but what in the world does that have to do with anxiety? What in the world does that have to do with worry?

[12 : 45] I'm glad you asked that, because listen to me tonight. This is so important. It's so profound. As I studied this, I thought, Lord, just teach us tonight this great truth.

Jesus wants us to get our minds around this truth. Here it is on the screen. Anxiety happens when we forget we have God as our Father.

Anxiety and worry takes captive in our life when we forget something. Namely, we belong to a family.

We have a Father. And Jesus wants us to understand here in Luke 12 that the fears of this world and the worries of life overwhelm us when we forget what family we belong.

That is exactly what Jesus wants us to see. In fact, the whole context of Luke 12 is Jesus addressing anxiety and worry and fear.

[13 : 52] In fact, let me just set it up for you, our passage. One of the ways that you interpret the Bible is understand what's going on around it. We don't just parachute into one verse, but what's the overall context?

Well, look here on the screen at Luke 12, verse 4. Luke 12, verse 4. I tell you, my friends, do not say it. Fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do.

But I will warn you to whom to fear. Fear him who, after he is killed, has the authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him. I don't have time to unpack that.

The point is to say, what's being addressed is the fear of death. Don't be afraid of the one that can kill the body. Don't be all worried and anxious about who can take your life.

That's the first passage. Look down at verse 11, same chapter, chapter 12. Here it is. And when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, say it. Do not be anxious.

[14 : 51] About what? About how you should defend yourself or what you should say. Why should you not worry about that? Because the Holy Spirit's going to teach you in that very hour what you ought to say. So Jesus is addressing the anxiety and worry of persecution.

When they attack you and come after you, don't be worried about the persecution that you're experiencing. Listen, the Holy Spirit's going to take care of you.

Do you see? Look now at verse 19 of chapter 12. Jesus is telling a parable about a man who thinks he can find security in building bigger barns and storing up all of his stuff.

And he won't have to worry about it all because he's got so much. And look at what Jesus says. And I will say to my soul, soul, you've got ample goods laid up for many years. Relax.

Relax. That is, don't be worried. Don't be anxious. Chill out, man. Eat, drink, and be merry. But God said to him, fool, this night your soul is required of you and the things that you have prepared, whose will they be?

[15:58] So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich towards God. So Jesus repeatedly in passage after passage of Luke 12 is addressing what?

Anxiety and fear and worry. And what we're going to focus on is where we pick up now in verse 22. Look at it. And he said to his disciples, so he's talking again to his very own followers, and he's talking to you tonight if you're a disciple and a follower of Jesus.

And here's what he says. I tell you, say it with me, do not be anxious about your life. Say what? Don't be anxious about my life, like what you're going to eat or about your body or what you're going to put on.

Jesus is saying all those things that accompany your every day, every week life, don't be anxious about any of that. Sounds a lot like the Apostle Paul, right?

Do not be anxious about anything, about the things of this life. Jesus here is addressing the problem of anxiety, the problem of worry.

[17:04] In fact, I went back and counted. Listen, in the first 34 verses of Luke chapter 12, Jesus mentions fear or worry or anxiety at least 10 times.

That means a third of the emphasis of the first 34 verses is all on the issue of worry. In fact, notice this on the screen. Jesus is worried about your worry.

Now, I don't mean Jesus is actually worried in the unhealthy or unbiblical sense. I just mean that Jesus is concerned about your anxious life.

Jesus is concerned about you being in a prison of fear. And isn't that good news to you? Because are you hearing what I'm saying?

What I'm saying is that Jesus actually cares about you. Jesus actually cares about your struggle. Listen, he doesn't want you to live like Scrat from Ice Age.

[18:07] I don't know.

Some of you are like, how did you get a video of my Monday morning? Right? I mean, that's what my life looks like. I'm constantly stressed out and I'm constantly worried about the things of my life. How am I going to pay the bills? And is he ever going to ask to marry me? And who's my 16-year-old going to bring home this time? And what is my boss going to say? And what could this lump possibly be?

Listen to me. Jesus doesn't want you to live that way. Jesus cares about your life and he doesn't want you living the anxious life. He doesn't want you to be afraid and all tied up in knots.

So how does Jesus address this topic of anxiety and worry? Listen, he doesn't. This is so important. This is so important. Somebody just say preach, preacher. Because listen, the point that I'm going to make, it's so simple and yet it's so profound.

[19:30] But first I'm going to tell you what Jesus doesn't do. Jesus doesn't tell his disciples, here, the way you battle worry and anxiety is you just need to look on the bright side of life. That's going to be in your head the rest of the night and you're welcome, all right?

Jesus also doesn't break down the low statistical probability that their worries probably won't happen anyway. There's a 26% chance of failure. How much further? I don't know.

I'm not sure. I didn't really come this way. We're close. We're close. I know that. Well, now there's a 35% chance of failure. I don't want to know. Thank you. I understand. Jesus doesn't rebuke them and just say, you know, I really wish you would just grow up and stop it.

I mean, you know, this is not Yiddish, Catherine. This is English. Stop it. So I should just stop it. There you go. I mean, you don't want to go through life being scared of being buried alive in a box, do you?

I mean, that sounds frightening. Nor does Jesus tell them to stick their head in the sand and just ignore their problems. You can't triple stamp a double stamp.

[20:46] You can't triple stamp a double stamp, Lord. You can't triple stamp a double stamp. Lord, Lord. Guys. And those are all ways people will tell you to approach worry and anxiety.

Hey, just look on the bright side. Don't worry. Be happy. You know, just be a positive thinker. But that doesn't work. You know, it's unlikely that what you're worried about is even going to happen anyways.

Or, you know what? You should just grow up and be more spiritual. If you were a real man of God or a woman of God, you wouldn't have this trouble at all. Or just ignore it and focus on something else.

Jesus doesn't give any of that advice. Jesus doesn't approach that way towards anxiety and worry at all. What does Jesus remind them of?

I love this. Look at verse 29. Look at verse 29. And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried.

[21 : 47] Why? For, so here's the ground of the argument. For all the nations of the world seek after these things. And your, say it, Father knows that you need them.

Now look at verse 32. Fear not, little flock, for, say it, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Look at it here. Jesus, I love this, Jesus addresses their anxiety by reminding them of their family. He doesn't say, ignore it.

He doesn't say, look on the bright side. He reminds them of what? He reminds them of their family. Listen, it goes like this. Look at the world.

Everybody looks like Scrat from Ice Age. They're anxious. Everybody's anxious. In fact, they're worried about what they're going to eat. And remember that this is written, this is spoken during a time they don't have Walmart.

[22 : 56] We're like, you could throw a rock from here, the parking lot, and hit Walmart. There's all kinds of food here. But in the ancient Near East, they're living what? Give us this day, our daily bread.

They're not certain that they're going to eat tomorrow. So they're worried about food. And they're worried about clothing for their bodies. And they're worried about their kids. And they're worried about their health. Again, they don't have hospitals.

They don't have medicine like we have medicine. Like, they are literally worried about the fact that I could get sick today with a disease or with some type of sickness where I'm dead tomorrow.

So they're freaking out. What? What am I going to eat? And how am I going to have clothes? And how will I clothe my kids? And what if I get sick?

And Jesus is saying, that is how the world works. That is how the world thinks. But listen to me. In fact, notice this on the screen.

[23 : 54] When it comes to the world, anxiety runs in the family. It is natural for the world to stress out about these things.

But what do you have that they don't have? They have or you have a father. The one thing you have they don't have is a heavenly father.

That is, you belong to the family of God. I hope you're listening to me tonight, Faith Family, because I think this is so incredibly important when it comes to our battle with anxiety. Family shapes your identity.

Amen? And if you have put your faith in Jesus, do you know what you are? You are a child of God. That is the family to which you belong.

And that is the very identity you have received. And that identity helps relieve your anxiety. How? Because as a child of God, you have a father who promises to take care of you.

[25 : 04] As a child of God, you have a father. And he promises he will take care of you.

And when you begin to realize that, only then will you begin to breathe and experience peace. It's not ignoring it. It's not breaking down the statistical probability that it probably won't happen anyways.

It's not having a more positive approach to life. It's remembering you have a dad. And it is our father's world. And he controls the fields.

And he controls the weather patterns. And he will provide for his kids. Remember your family. In fact, by remembering the fact that you have God as your father and you belong to the family of God, it reminds us of a few very important things.

Number one is this. You are God's prized creation. You are God's prized creation. Jesus addresses this in verse 24. Look at it.

[26 : 11] Consider the ravens. Not the NFL team. The birds. Consider the ravens. They neither sow nor reap. They neither have a storehouse nor barn. And yet God feeds them.

And watch. Of how much more value are you than the birds? Now look at verse 28. But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow it's thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith?

Listen. Start with ravens. Ravens are rats with wings. Okay? I've never seen anybody. I'm going to go bird watching. And I'm going to go watch the ravens.

Right? No. You watch like bluebirds and cardinals and all. Nobody goes watching ravens. Right? And Jesus is actually intentionally addressing the kind of the lowest form of bird.

And what he's saying is this. Listen. If you look at the birds, if you look at the ravens, they're not stressing out over their 401k. I mean, you've never heard two ravens. I don't know if they sit on a wire, but for this illustration, they're sitting on a wire.

[27 : 23] Turn to each other and just say, you know, I don't really think I've invested enough for my portfolio. I'm really, really concerned about inflation. And, you know, the elections coming up.

No. They're not stressing out about their 401k and how they're going to eat. Why? Because God provides for them. And then he shifts to the flowers or the lilies, which are really like poppies in the ancient Near East.

That is, these were flowers that would spring up after a rain. And then they would last for a day or two. And then they would die off. And so, again, the lowest form of bird, the lowest form of flower, and yet they're taken care of.

And what is Jesus' point? Are you listening? If God takes care of the lesser parts of creation, will he not take care of his image bearers?

There ain't no raven ever bore the image of God. There ain't no lily ever bore the image of God. But you, as a human being, bear the image of God.

[28 : 27] And listen, it doesn't stop there. Then how much more that you're not just a human, but you're a child of the king.

If he takes care of the ravens, will he not take care of humans? If he takes care of humans, how much more will he not take care of his kids? What are you worried about?

What are you stressed about? What are you anxious about? Don't you know what family you belong to? You have a father. You have a heavenly father.

And you are his prized creation. Number two, by thinking about this reality that God is our father and he is our father in heaven, we're also reminded that we are not in control.

We're not in control. Jesus addresses this in verse 25. Verse 25. Hey, which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?

[29 : 30] Right? If then you're not able to do a small thing as that, why are you anxious about the rest? In other words, here's the point. This is our father's world.

He rules it, not us. We don't run it. We don't control it. We're not sovereign over it. And you know how I know we're not in control? Because you can't add a single hour to your life.

You're not even sovereign over your own life. God is sovereign over your life. Look at Psalm 139 verse 16. In your book were written every one of them, the days formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

In other words, God has numbered your days. God knows exactly how long you're going to live.

And so break that down. You're worried about food. Why are you worried about food?

Because if you don't eat, you're going to... Do you know what happens if you don't eat? You die. But you're all stressed out that if you don't eat, you're going to die. But who has your days numbered?

[30 : 37] Your father does. Your father is sovereign over your life. Now listen, that is not an excuse for laziness or irresponsibility. I wrote this in my notes.

His sovereignty is no excuse for your stupidity. And all God's people said, amen. It doesn't mean, hey, God has my days numbered. I'm going to go stand in Cedar Avenue and just see how it works out.

No, that's called stupid. Right? Don't do that. That's irresponsible and not wise. So God's sovereignty is never an excuse for our stupidity.

Right? But here's the real point we're making. Notice it on the screen. Worry is just the result of wanting to be sovereign instead of letting God be sovereign.

It's you want to run the universe, particularly the universe of your own life, rather than trusting your father. No wonder you're stressed out.

[31 : 32] You're trying to play the role of God. And your life isn't your life. Your life is a gift that your father has given you. He will take care of it.

And number three, you've already been shown enormous care. Right? You're his prized creation. You're not in control. He is. And he's already shown you enormous care.

Look at verse 29. Verse 29. And do not seek what you're to eat or what you're to drink or be worried. For all the nations of the world seek after these things as your father knows that you need them.

Instead, seek his kingdom and these things will be added to you. Look at verse 32. Fear not, little flock, for it is your father's good pleasure to do what?

Say it with me. To give you the kingdom. Listen, here's why being anxious and worried and living in that prison is short-sighted.

[32 : 31] Are you with me? This is so brilliant. I mean, of course, it's Jesus. Of course, it's brilliant. It's divine. Here's what he's saying. Listen, think about this. If God gives you the kingdom, is he not going to give you clothes?

I mean, if God is willing to give you eternal salvation, is he not going to take care of you now? Like, disciples, stop and just think about whose family you belong to.

It is your father's joy. It's his pleasure to give you his kingdom.

You don't think he'll give you a meal? You don't think he'll get you to tomorrow? And by the way, if you don't get to tomorrow, guess what you're going to get? The kingdom!

The kingdom! You're taken care of. No matter what happens in the stock market, no matter what happens with your bank account, no matter what's going on relationally, no matter if you open the refrigerator and all you got is spoiled milk, no matter what's going on in your worried life, you're taken care of.

[33 : 51] Because you have a father and you belong to his family. Amen? How can you trust God with your salvation and not trust him with a meal?

So, the problem with our anxiety is we forget that we're a part of God's family. In that moment of worry, we forget we have a father. Now, how does Jesus tell us to overcome this worry?

A few very quick things and then we'll wrap it up. What's the plan? What's the action that you and I are to cultivate in our life? Two things that if we'll do daily, it will help us be set free from the prison of anxiety and worry.

Verse 28. Verse 28. But if God so clothes the grass, which is alive in the field today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you?

Say this, Oh, you of little faith. So there's the point Jesus is making is that this is a faith issue. In other words, what you have to learn to do.

[34 : 52] I know this is really simple. I know this is talked about a lot, but it should be said over and over and over again. And maybe you go read the list in Hebrews. You're going to have to learn to trust him.

You're going to have to learn to trust your father. You're going to have to trust that he knows what you need. In fact, if you go back to Luke chapter 11, before we get to what Jesus says here in Luke 12, look at what he says in Luke 11, verse 11.

What father among you, if his son asked for a fish, would instead of a fish give him a serpent? And if he asked for an egg, would give him a scorpion?

If you then, who are evil, Jesus is pulling no punches here, right? Even the best of earthly parents is an evil parent, a fallen and sinful parent.

But even if you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, hey, how much more will your heavenly father give you the Holy Spirit to those who ask?

[35 : 59] What is Jesus saying here? Real quickly, if you're going to win the battle over worry and anxiety, if I'm going to win that battle, if we're going to break free from that prison, we're going to have to learn to trust our dad.

We're going to have to learn to trust our dad. And for those of you with bad earthly father experiences, you have a perfect heavenly father who can make up for and will make up for every falling short of an earthly dad.

He's a perfectly heavenly father. And you're going to have to trust him. What are you going to have to trust him about? Based on chapter 11, number one, is trust your father to provide for you physically.

Jesus says about an egg and a fish. These were the basic things in the ancient Near East to eat.

And so if a father is willing to provide that, how much more your heavenly father, listen, he's going to take care of the basic necessities of life.

How is he going to do that? He's going to do that through work. He's going to do that through using your gifts. Okay. This isn't go home, sit on the couch and wait for a sandwich to fall from the sky. Okay. It's get out there, keep working, keep doing what you need to do, keep trying, trusting that as you do those things, the Lord will use those means to accomplish the ends of taking care of your basic needs.

[37 : 19] Number two is trust your father to provide beneficially. That is to your benefit. Notice that in that story, it says if a son asks for a fish, his father is not going to give him a snake.

In other words, what's the point? Your father has your good in mind. He's going to give you what you need. He's going to give you what's best for you. Are you listening tonight?

If you've zoned out, zoned back in. The issue is not whether or not your father will give you what's best for you. It's the fact that you think you know what's best for you. Your father will give you what's best for you.

The problem is you disagree with God on what's best for you. I have never met a kid that didn't think ice cream for three meals a day wasn't exactly what they needed.

Amen. Some of you as adults think ice cream would be the perfect meal three times a day. I've never met a kid that didn't think that every toy in the aisle isn't what they needed in that moment.

[38 : 27] But what do all of us know? A parent provides what's best for their children even if they don't understand it.

We assume nicer clothes, better health is what's best for me. Just say preach preacher.

Faith says father knows best. Faith says father knows best.

I don't understand why I'm going through this cancer right now. But I know God's going to take care of me one way or the other. My father knows best.

I don't understand why I got laid off from my job. Didn't make any sense at all. And for reasons that didn't make any sense at all. And at the worst possible time in my life.

[39 : 26] But here's what I know. I have a father and I belong to his family. And he knows best. He will provide for me physically.

He will provide in a way that is to my benefit even if I don't understand it. He's not going to give me a serpent when I ask for a fish. And thirdly, we have to trust our father that he will provide relationally.

He will provide relationally. You say, where are you getting relationally at? Well, it's interesting.

Jesus actually says the father will give us not a fish. Not bread.

He'll do those things. But he will give us the Holy Spirit. Spirit. What does that mean? Look, for instance, at Romans 8, verse 15.

For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again. But you've received a spirit of adoption as sons. That is, you're a part of God's family.

[40 : 30] Which we cry out, Abba, Father. The Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are what? Children of God.

It's the spirit that's the guarantee we're in the family. Notice Galatians 4, verse 4. When the fullness of time came, God sent forth his son, born of a woman, under the law, so that he might redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

Family language. Because you are sons, God has sent forth the spirit of his son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

Here's the point, faith family, and I hope you're listening to me. You may not get the job. And you may not retire at the level you want to.

And the medical report may come back with an answer you didn't want to hear. But no matter what, in every situation you face, God has given you himself.

[41 : 42] And listen to me. Listen to me. If there is anybody here that says, I'd rather have the good report of health, you're not a Christian. I'm going to say that again.

If you're here tonight and you would say, I would rather have a good medical report than I would rather have God, you are not a child of God. Because a child of God realizes that God is the treasure in the field and they'd sell everything they have just to have the treasure.

I want God better than good health. I want God better than food on the table. Listen, God, as my Father, will provide those things. I trust Him. But more than physically providing for me and more than beneficially providing for me, He has relationally provided for me by giving me His Spirit and adopting me into His family.

That's enough. Everything else is icing. Everything else is temporary. But I've been promised by my Father that He will give me Himself no matter what.

Hey, moth cannot destroy that. Rust cannot take that away. That is eternal. What do you do?

[43 : 02] Trust Him. You trust Him. J.I. Packer said, What is a Christian? The question can be answered in many ways, but the richest answer I know is a Christian is one that has God as Father.

If you want to know how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he thinks of the thought of being God's child and having God as his or her Father.

If this is not the thought that prompts and controls his worship and prayers and his whole outlook on life, it means he does not understand Christianity at all.

The core of what it means to be a Christian is to understand you have a Father and He promises to take care of you. Martin Lloyd-Jones said, If you asked me to state in one phrase what I regard as the greatest defect in most Christian lives, I would say that it is our failure to know God as our Father.

Ye of little faith. You have a Father who is worthy to be trusted, no matter what you're worried about.

[44 : 18] Faith. Trust. That's one response. Here's the second, and I'm done, in terms of how we fight the worried and anxious life. Verse 31. Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you.

I'm not going to say much on this other than to say this. I wonder how less anxious we would be if we daily sought the kingdom more than the cares of the world.

What's really going down here is this. This thing in you, this heart, this mind treasures things. And anxiety, listen to me.

I'm not going to say this long. Anxiety, just like it's a warning light, is also a warning light telling you what you're treasuring. What you love more than anything.

In fact, if you follow the thread, follow the rope, follow the string of your worry, it will find the treasure of your life. And what Jesus is saying is, one of the reasons why you're so anxious and worried is you're seeking the wrong things.

[45 : 32] Of course, eating and clothing and health, these are all important things, but they are all temporary. And if you spend your life every day seeking temporary things, you will live the worried life.

Instead, seek first the kingdom of God. And all these other things will be added to you.

God will take care of those other things as you continue to live your life. But you wake up in the morning not saying, I'm going to seek a paycheck. Oh my goodness, I got laid off.

What am I going to do? What am I going to do? Don't wake up seeking a paycheck. Wake up seeking the kingdom of God. And then if you do get laid off, that's a bad thing.

And you'll need to get another job. And God's going to work all that out. But you won't freak out. Why? Because you don't treasure a paycheck. You treasure the kingdom of God.

[46 : 41] Listen, faithfully. I hope this is like landing on you like it's landing on me. This is real Christian life.

It's the one thing that's different than everybody else you're going to pass in Walmart. The difference is you have a father who's promised to take care of you.

Here's the summary and we're out. When we trust our father's provision and we make his kingdom our priority, that's when we'll start experiencing the life of peace.

Let me say it again. When we trust our father's provision, I have a dad, a heavenly dad. He's in control, not me. I'm his prized creation. I'm not only an image bearer.

I'm his very child. He's going to take care of me. So I'm going to seek his kingdom more than a paycheck, more than a relationship, more than anything else. And when that's my priority, then I don't have to be worried.

[47 : 41] I don't have to be anxious. I can live a peaceful life. Faith family, it's easy to get caught up in the cares of this world.

It really is. It's easy to get caught up in the worries of life to the point that you forget your identity. We forget that we are a part of a family story.

Listen to me. We forget that we are a part of a family tree. We forget that we are a part of a family bloodline.

And what is in the DNA of this faith family to which we belong? It's this. A father who always provides for his children.

So fear not, little flock. It is your father's pleasure to give you the kingdom.

[49 : 01] Let's pray. Let's pray. God, you know what these last few weeks have meant for us as we've addressed head on this topic of worry and anxiety from a biblical perspective.

And I don't know how more practical tonight could be because at the very core of our struggle with anxiety and worry is we forget you.

We forget who we belong to. We let anxiety that runs in the family of the world capture us because we forget we belong to the family of God.

And what runs in this family is faith, not fear. And so help us because we can't do this on our own.

There's not a person in this room tonight that would say, oh, I can go do this by myself. Yes, pep talk. Thank you, Jesus. Now I'm going to go try hard. God, we need you to buy your grace.

[50 : 21] Give us the strength to trust you when everything says don't. And to be reminded that you are our heavenly father and you will take care of us.

We are your child. And if we need any more reminder that you in the very DNA of this family take care of your children, all we need to look to is an empty tomb.

You do not leave your kids for dead. You provide for them and you will provide for us.

So let it not be said of us, oh, ye of little faith, remember who you belong to. Remember whose you are.

And let that breath breathe peace in our anxious lives. We love you, Jesus.

[51 : 23] Thank you for this great news that is the gospel. In Jesus' name we pray. And God's people said, amen. Amen. Amen.

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