

Introduction: Life can be difficult. Getting in a car accident can be painful. The heat going out in your home during the winter can make things difficult. We all go through things in life that are difficult and/or painful. How do you respond to those times of difficulty or pain? This evening we are going to look at our too-often expressed responses to difficulty and pain in our life.

**Main Theme: We need to trust in God's providential will for our life.**

This morning we are going to look at two sins that oppose that very way of living. They are anxiety and frustration. Both of these sins can be summarized by the negative of trusting in God's providential will.

Let's put these sins under the microscope of God's Word and see how you and I may need to change this morning!

- I. The Sin of Anxiety
  - a. The frequency of NT teaching on Christian character traits
    - i. Bridges did a study and found 27.
    - ii. Love was taught the most, 50+ times
    - iii. Humility was close second, 40 times
    - iv. Trust in God in all our circumstances was 3<sup>rd</sup> with 13+ times
    - v. It is when we look at the opposite of trust in God that we find either anxiety or frustration.
  - b. Anxiety defined:
    - i. painful or apprehensive uneasiness of mind usually over an impending or anticipated ill (**Merriam-Webster**)
    - ii. an abnormal and overwhelming sense of apprehension and fear often marked by physiological signs (as sweating, tension, and increased pulse), by doubt concerning the reality and nature of the threat, and by self-doubt about one's capacity to cope with it (**Merriam-Webster**)
  - c. Christ's Teaching on Anxiety
    - i. Matthew 6:25-34; Christ uses the word anxious 6 times. In this passage he tells us not to be anxious about:
      1. What we eat
      2. What we drink
      3. What we wear
      4. Unknown circumstances of tomorrow
    - ii. Expressions Jesus and other NT writers uses regarding anxiety is:
      1. "Fear not" – Matthew 10:31; Luke 12:7
      2. "Do not be afraid" – Philippians 4:6; 1 Peter 5:7

- iii. The force of the expression
  - 1. Common Statement we make “don’t be anxious,” or “don’t be afraid” we are trying to encourage or admonish a person
  - 2. When Jesus or (Peter or Paul) state the same phrase it carries a much stronger meaning. It carries the authority of scripture and the force of a moral command.
  - 3. In short, anxiety is a sin!!
- iv. Anxiety is a sin for two reasons.
  - 1. It is a distrust in God.
    - a. Matthew 6:25-34
    - b. God is in control and he promises to take care of us. Peter in 1 Peter 5:7 is speaking to that very truth. The basis or foundation for casting our anxieties on Christ is that he CARES for US!
    - c. In essence then, at those times where anxiety is ruling in your or my life we are saying that God does not care for me now or in the circumstances that may come up that trigger my anxiety.
    - d. Imagine if someone you love said to you: “I don’t trust you. I do not believe you will care for me.” Would that not hurt you and sadden you to a great degree. Yet, every time anxiety is present in our life we are saying exactly that to God.
  - 2. It is a lack of acceptance of God’s providence in our lives.
    - a. God’s Providence defined: “God’s orchestrating all circumstances and events in His universe for His glory and the good of His people.
    - b. Many times we find it hard to accept this truth of God’s providence.
      - i. God=Director
      - ii. Universe (people, events, actions, thoughts, etc.)=Orchestra
      - iii. Sometimes a member of the orchestra may show up late or play a wrong note, be sharp or flat. Yet God is still directing the musical piece, which is life. The neat thing about this piece of music is the ending will be grand and magnificent according to Revelation!
      - iv. We have to trust God as he directs. He knows the timing better than we do and as we follow His lead God will use us in great ways.

- c. We tend to focus on the immediate causes of our anxiety rather than believing that they are under the sovereign control of God. Nothing happens to the surprise of God. That is what makes it so amazing and awesome to trust Him. He always comes through!!!!
  3. Examples of Anxiety
    - a. Bridges – anxiety tempts when having to travel by air
      - i. Will I miss my connection?
      - ii. Will I get to my speaking engagement on time?
      - iii. What do I do if God’s agenda is different?
      - iv. Do I fume and give in to anxiety or do I trust in God’s sovereignty?
    - b. Bridges states that in his personal life what triggers anxiety most frequently is an unwillingness to submit to and cheerfully accept His agenda for me.
    - c. Read Bridges thoughts in italics on bottom of page 65.
    - d. Letter from John Newton to a friend on accepting the providential will and agenda of God. **Read Handout**
  4. Synonym of Anxiety
    - a. Worry is a synonym
    - b. Worry is the word that is used most often in a daily basis. Worry is everything that anxiety is. It is just as much a sin as anxiety.
    - c. People have difficult situations such as families that have adult children that still live at home because of special needs. Though from a human standpoint it would seem justifiable to worry, God says in Matthew 6:24 do not worry about tomorrow and what it may bring. God wants us to trust Him in every way and everything.
    - d. Use Clint Jackson as an illustration of parents and sisters who put their trust in God.
- II. Sin of Frustration
  - a. Anxiety involves fear, frustration involves being upset or angry whenever, at whatever, or at whoever is blocking our plans.
  - b. It might be a computer that freezes or makes a document or project disappear that you had been working on for multiple hours. It might be that you have been cleaning the house all day and finally had it clean when a child spills Kool-Aid all over the carpet. Maybe you have just finished having family devotions and talking about being kind to one another and no less than 30 minutes later a child or teen has already treated another sibling unkindly.

- c. We face situations and people every day that tempt us or bring us frustration. Have you ever met a frustrating person? Maybe a co-worker, extended family member, friend, or neighbor?
- d. When we get frustrated we are failing to see the larger picture and that is God at work in our lives. He is in control. So again we see the principle of God's sovereignty in our lives.
- e. Discuss the idea of frustration in everyday life
- f. Turn to Psalm 139:16
  - i. Another way of stating it "days that were ordained"; it refers to not just length of life but all the circumstances and events that surround life.
- g. Ask God to help us biblically deal with those things that tend to frustrate us
  - i. Quote this verse and others that speak to God's providential and sovereign control over life.
  - ii. Ask God for wisdom on how to deal with the situation
  - iii. Ask God what I need to learn from this situation
  - iv. All of these show humility and trust before God!

**TRUST IN GOD'S PROVIDENTIAL CARE AND WILL FOR YOUR LIFE.**