

The background is a dark blue gradient with abstract white and light blue circular patterns. On the left side, there is a large circular scale with tick marks and numbers ranging from 140 to 260. Other smaller circles and arcs are scattered across the background, some with arrows indicating direction.

CHRIST AND THE MIND

Slides from Dave Burke's talk
at the evening service,
Sunday 29th January 2023



CHRIST AND THE MIND

- Paul's anxieties
- What is anxiety?
- When does worry become an illness?
- How does a Christian manage anxiety?

Paul's anxieties

- Don't be anxious! (Philippians 4:6-7)
- Anxiety for the churches (2 Corinthians 11:28)
- Worrying about Corinth (2 Corinthians 2:12-13)
- Despair! (2 Corinthians 1:1-11)

What is anxiety?

The reason you are reading this is because you had anxious ancestors. They stayed out of trouble, fought well and performed well. They survived, reproduced and... here you are!

Anxiety is not an alien presence, or a bug you catch. Anxiety is you functioning normally. It is – very often - your friend.

What is anxiety?

- The fight, flight, freeze, or submit
- Anxiety is a natural response to threat
- Essential for high performance

“Fearfully and wonderfully made”

Psalm 139:14

We are in a departure lounge at Heathrow airport, about to get into an aluminium tube and hurtle at 500 mph across 3000 miles of ocean at 30,000 feet...

Look around you, what signs of anxiety can you spot?

What is anxiety?

- Emotions – e.g. fear, fragility, hyper-awareness
- Thoughts – e.g. catastrophising, irrational, scrambled
- Behaviour – e.g. avoidance, irritability, tears, sleeplessness
- Physical – e.g. sweating, peeing

When does worry become an illness?

- More severe than normal anxiety & out of all proportion to the cause
- Lasts longer
- Interferes with work and life
- Can't control it

An anxiety disorder needs a medical diagnosis and some therapy: possibly medication, talking therapies and lifestyle change. It is a proper illness.

How does a Christian manage anxiety?

Recognise what is going on
2 Corinthians 1:1-11

God is giving you a superpower – empathy (3-6)

God is growing your faith - like a muscle - (9-10)

God is creating a supportive community (10-11)
you are not alone: connection is key

How does a Christian manage anxiety?

Preach to yourself – like Paul!

“I accept the way I feel, my heart is beating faster and I am nervous, my body and mind are getting ready to perform”

“This is not a threat to my existence or success, it is a challenge. My life is much bigger than this one event.”

“I am not trying to be the best in the world, or even the best in my year. I want to be the best I can be – that’s good enough.”

How does a Christian manage anxiety?

Preach to yourself – like Paul!

Triumphal procession - (2:12-14)

When you are weak, then you are strong (12:10)

So... be weak, and lean hard on the Sovereign Lord

How does a Christian manage anxiety?

- **Get organised**
- **Do the work**
- **Take a sabbath**
- **A happiness hour**
- **Stay connected**
- **Eat properly**
- **Less caffeine & alcohol**
- **Drink more water**
- **Sleep hygiene**
- **Befriend your fear**



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