

Session 4: Peace From Heaven

SESSION GOALS

Every session has a point—what each participant should walk away from the discussion knowing, feeling, and doing.

Main Idea: A battle with anxiety should not be a lonely fight, but a fight we can trust we will one day overcome through the power of Jesus and the hope of his return.

Head Change: To know that God can heal the anxiety you feel in this life and that Jesus will one day return and make anxiety a memory.

Heart Change: To feel peace that permeates our hearts and increases our trust in God.

Life Change: To be honest about our anxieties with God and others and pursue peace in our lives today.

OPEN

When was the last time you planned an event or outing that was cancelled or ruined by something completely out of your control?

Anxiety is frequently brought about by things out of our control. However, God is with us and wants us to grow in the confidence that anxiousness will not prevail over us in the end.

In this session, Jonathan points towards the second coming of Christ as our definitive hope in overcoming anxiety and encourages us to participate in our church community.

VIEW

Before viewing the session, here are a few important things to look for in Jonathan Pokluda's teaching. As you watch, pay attention to how he answers the following questions.

How does Jesus's return relate to our struggles with anxiety?

In what ways can church community help us overcome anxiety?

Watch Session 4: *Peace from Heaven* (14 minutes).

REVIEW

During moments of anxiety, it can be hard to see anything beyond the stress and pressure of the present. However, Jonathan pointed us to Jesus's words in John 6:33—Jesus said we should take heart, even amid our anxiousness, because he has overcome the world. All anxiety has an expiration date. **How does Jesus's proclamation that he has overcome the world in John 6:33 relate to overcoming issues with anxiety?**

If you have struggled with anxiety in the past or present, what have been some helpful tactics you have used to make it through the stress caused by anxiety?

In the session we heard Jennifer's tragic story and how anxiety had a grip on her following the death of her son. Like Jonathan said in an earlier session, anxiety is not something people wish on themselves and can often be caused by factors completely out of their control.

What truth about God from his Word would you use to comfort someone dealing with anxiety issues due to a situation similar to Jennifer's?

The importance of Christian community cannot be understated because it is not only a biblical admonition, but it also assures that no follower of Jesus goes through their struggles with anxiety alone.

In the session Jonathan used Hebrews 10:24–25 to encourage us to include people in our local church to help us confront our anxiety. **Why is the message from Hebrews 10:24–25 a good reminder for someone dealing with their anxiety on their own?**

Why do you think community is an important part of being able to overcome anxiety? When have you experienced the benefit of community in your own struggles with anxiety?

Noah went from job to job and from one vice to another trying to find peace for his anxiety. Once Noah realized no amount of guilty pleasures would satisfy his soul or cure his anxiety, he began to turn to the gospel as his only hope. **In what ways does Noah's story resonate with you and your battle with anxiety?**

When Noah realized he could not deal with his anxiety on his own, how did the church and his relationships help him overcome?

What are some reasons a strong group for accountability and support is essential for us to overcome anxiety?

Some people have experienced the power of community in battling anxiety, but there are many who have not.

What can your church community or small group do to be a support system to each other concerning anxiety and mental health?

Jonathan directed our attention to the promises of God as the antidote to our anxiety, and particularly to the promise that Jesus will return one day and all reasons for anxiety will recede. **Although no one knows the day or the hour of Jesus's return, in what ways can the return of Jesus help you persevere through your struggles with anxiety?**

BIBLE EXPLORATION

Read Psalm 16.

In this Psalm, God's strength is compared to a refuge, a strong tower, and a mighty fortress. The imagery makes it clear that God is capable and willing to be there for his children in times of distress no matter the size of the problem.

What about God's strength, as described in Psalm 16, relates to his ability to comfort those battling anxiety?

Out the three primary images used to refer to God in this Psalm (refuge, strong tower, mighty fortress), which one helps you to remember God's presence and power to help you overcome anxiety? Why?

What are some practices you can add into your daily routine to help remind yourself of God's presence and power in your life?

LAST WORD

Jonathan ended this series by referencing the Book of Revelation. He reminded us of the eternal hope we all have: one day all things will be made new and Jesus will put an end to all our anxiety. The last chapter in the Bible isn't just a hopeful dream—it's a yet-to-be-materialized reality. For the Christian, no present struggle will last for eternity and no eternal joy will ever fail to satisfy our present longings.

We need God's people around us to remind us that we can face our fears and live a faithful life despite our struggles. Do you believe that everlasting rest and peace is available to you now? Do you believe the Holy Spirit has made a home in God's people to keep us until Jesus returns?

Jesus's return is a necessary part of any Christian counsel we can receive about how to navigate an anxious world. Even when anxiety gets the best of us, we know that in Christ, we have the final victory. We can be confident in Christ as we struggle with anxiety—even when need help from our church community or mental health professionals—because we have an eternal hope that will not fail.

DEEPER WALK

Read: Read Psalm 16 and Revelation 21. Take the time to reflect on God's power to help you in the present and God's future plan to make all things new, including ridding the world of anxiety and all of our trials in this life.

Pray: Pray for your faith in God's ability to comfort you will grow and outweigh the doubts and concerns that cause your anxiety.

Evaluate: Evaluate the support systems—your church, friends, family, etc.—that can help you identify what makes you anxious. Invest in that community to avoid isolation. Take intentional time to remind yourself about the beauty of Revelation 21 and the fact that if God has brought you through anxiety before, he will be faithful again.