



Day 3 – Dangerous Prayers for Dangerous Times

Devotion

Sometimes we feel like being anxious, frightened or fearful is a bad thing, like we've failed in our walk with Jesus in some way. This may be true. Our fears may be due to some area of our life where we are not walking closely with Jesus. But it is just as likely to be more complex than that.

Sometimes fear and anxiety just turn up, unannounced and unwanted. Sometimes we feel distress, nervousness and discomfort in the core of who we are because of what is happening around us, and it all seems like it's beyond our control. Emotions well up inside of us. Feelings overtake and overwhelm us, and there is nothing we can do to stop them.

I've been that person who has beat up on myself in those moments. "Stop being anxious. Stop worrying. You're got nothing to be worried about."

But the writer of Psalm 139 invites us into something new. In verse 23 He writes, "*Know my anxious thoughts.*"

The Psalmist is inviting us to be **known** by our Creator. Not to hide away and suppress our anxiety and insecurities, but to bring them out into the open and be known - utterly and completely. In fact, this is what the Psalmist is describing throughout the whole Psalm. Our Creator knows us inside and out. Before our anxious words are even on our tongue, they are known by Him.

The times which we find ourselves in right now, amidst a coronavirus pandemic, mean we probably have every right to feel anxiety and stress. Economic downturns, job losses, physical distancing, self-isolation, and a virus without a vaccine - not to mention the many stresses and anxieties that existed before all this took place.

I think, the writer is giving us permission to sit with our anxiety for a while, to feel the burden and pain of the world, and perhaps even of our own situation. Don't feel ashamed of your anxiety and fear. Be brave enough to sit with it. Sit and acknowledge it for what it is in the presence of your Loving Creator who knows you intimately.

When we know and are known by the everlasting love of God in Christ, we will find the anxiety and stress relieved, if only for a time. The All Knowing, All Powerful Creator loves us exactly as we are - anxiety and all. And the experience of truly knowing this Love, drives out all fear.

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