

Are You Anxious or Worried?



Worry can debilitate us. The scriptures admonish us to “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Phil. 4:6-7 Sometimes easier said than done. This month’s reading and lesson for our book club addresses this very topic. The book is The Good and Beautiful Life by James Bryan Smith (we hope to have him as our keynote speaker for our 2020 Evening of Stories)

Elaine Watts, one of Genesis’ great spiritual formation teachers, has been conducting a book club on a monthly basis for the last several years.

Fellowshipping with others and sharing insights into kingdom living is a great way to grow in your personal relationship with Christ as well as create bonds in friendships. I would encourage anyone who has an opportunity to

engage in this kind of spiritual discipline.

Back to that question of being worried or anxious. I personally need things clearly spelled out for me. Here are a few quotes from James Bryan Smith’s lesson. “Worry is a disproportionate level of concern based on an inappropriate measure of fear.” And, “worry leads to anxiety.” “Anxiety is foolish and accomplishes nothing except to put God out of the picture.” “Worry harms our relationship with God, causes physical discomfort and destroys joy.” Yes, it does!

The antidote? Seek first the Kingdom of God. “What does it mean to seek the kingdom of God first? It means making the reality and principles of God’s kingdom our first and primary concern. Seeking the kingdom first means facing our trials and troubles not with anxiety but with trust that **God can and will work in them**. As long as we are worrying, we can’t seek first the kingdom of God. As long as we are seeking first the kingdom of God, we can’t worry.” I don’t know about you but I needed some direction in this area. I am encouraged to be specific in naming the things I worry about, praying specifically about them and ‘casting those cares’ on the Lord who can handle them infinitely better than I can. We do indeed have a Good and Beautiful God, another great book by James Bryan Smith.

April VanDyke
Board member