

WEEK 1 - What Now?

Our Relationship with Anxiety

Spring Emphasis 25 // Canopy Guide

“WHAT NOW?” SERIES INTRO VIDEO: [Click Here](#)

Watch this video with your group when you’re ready to preview this series (5-7 minutes)

CONVERSATION STARTERS

These questions are great for breaking the ice and getting your group talking. Pick a question or two that fits your group for an all play conversation.

- What favorite movie, tv show, or book character do you perceive as being anxious? (Ex. Barney Fife - Andy Griffith Show; Chris Traeger- Parks & Recreation)
- All of us have things that make us just a little (or a lot) anxious. What is one thing that makes you anxious and why?

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH ANXIETY - Grandview’s Deep Dive Podcast with Dr. Jack Holland, Ashton Boyer, Gerett Benjamin & Kristen Mudrack (12 minutes)

Listen Here: <https://open.spotify.com/episode/35sHw75lRQ9GgFjcLqBOKj> (You can also find our Deep Dive Podcast on all the regular podcast platforms with a simple search, or if you’ve saved our youtube playlist for the semester, we’ve included the video version of those podcasts there as well)

This podcast link is designed for use in your canopy space for communal listening. If time allows, listen to this together before you continue on in your conversation.

In this podcast, we discuss managing anxiety with experts Dr. Jack Holland, Ashton Boyer, and Gerett Benjamin. Ashton shares her experience with anxiety in church and youth settings, emphasizing its role in self-reflection. Jack highlights the importance of recognizing anxiety as a signal of value and suggests spiritual resources like Sabbath rest.

Gerett, a Gen Z student and ECS resident, discusses the impact of technology on anxiety and the need for boundaries. They stress the importance of honest conversations, mentorship, and professional help. Key scriptures mentioned include Psalm 23 and Matthew 6:28, underscoring God's care and the need for community support.

To listen to the full 36 minute conversation, click the link in the resources.

A transcript of the conversation is available here:

https://otter.ai/u/5b0_5jrzzxV-MwoUQWjxCgG7fEo?view=transcript

SCRIPTURE TO READ

- Psalm 23
- Matthew 6:25-34

DISCUSSION GUIDE

All of us experience anxiousness at some level and have a relationship with anxiety. As Jack mentioned in the podcast, when we pay attention to it, the existence of anxiety helps us identify something that is of value to us. It can be beneficial and motivating or it can be a barrier that feels debilitating. Either way, it is a prevalent undercurrent within our culture that we interact with daily. For our conversation purposes, we want to allow your group to create space to talk about it. Perhaps one of the biggest things to get in the way of our communal response to anxiety are our own assumptions. For this discussion, we want to leave all these assumptions at the door and give us space to bring meaningful questions and discussions to light. With that being said, we have given several questions to help foster discussion about our relationships with anxiety without assumptions. We do not expect you to get through all of them, so only use the questions you find most helpful for your group.

- Have you ever considered your relationship with anxiety? In what ways have you seen it be helpful? In what ways does it become a barrier?
- What phrases from Psalm 23 are helpful guides as you navigate your relationship with anxiety? Which phrases could be beneficial in our culture where anxiety streams as an undercurrent?
- As you sit with Psalm 23, do you find comfort in the idea that the Psalmist declares that he's walking through the darkest valley? When people walk through dark

valleys, how can the Church better reflect the Light of the world?

- As you consider the words from Matthew 6, does it feel like an encouragement or a hurdle for where you're at in life currently?
- How can we have conversations about anxiety within the Church and be more open, honest, and helpful?
- How can mentorship and open dialogue help people, especially younger generations, navigate the unique challenges of anxiety in a technology-driven world?
- What are some practical ways that individuals and churches can build healthy boundaries and Sabbath rest to manage anxiety?

RESOURCES

These resources are great for leader prep and for group member follow up if you're interested in learning more on the topic today.

- Full Podcast Episode Link:
<https://open.spotify.com/episode/4mQL5DFxgl5TqgIL5VmQ8n> This full podcast is 36 minutes long, but is well worth the listen to hear the full conversation between Dr. Jack Holland, Ashton Boyer, Gerett Benjamin & Kristen Mudrack.
- [*Lunchroom Theology: Pushing Tables Together in a Fractured World*](#), Heather Gorman & Mark Nelson, 2024. Here's the premise: "In a world fraught with polarization and division—where we form separate tables based on political beliefs, skin color, economic status, theological ideas, and personal preferences—can we find a way to live differently, more aligned with the ways of Jesus?"
- Bible Project Passage Insight: Do Not Worry, Matthew 6:25-34
<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/passage-insight-do-not-worry/>
- ["How to Redefine Your Relationship With Anxiety"](#):
This short article gives perspective on how to conceptualize anxiety as a relationship and how we can change and manage that relationship in healthy ways.