

SERMON GUIDES

Talking through the message during the week helps you and your group turn what God is saying to you into action steps. Begin with the key questions, add in any optional scriptures and questions if needed, then wrap up by deciding on your next steps.

Visit woodlakeumc.org/sermonessentials for weekly sermon guides, devotionals, and more or if you have questions, contact [Jill Perrin at jperrin@woodlakeumc.org](mailto:jperrin@woodlakeumc.org).

Valleys | Week 3: Valley of Anxiety Scripture: 2Chronicles 20:1 -30

01.

INTRODUCTION

We continue our series on the valleys in life. Life isn't all mountain top experiences, sometimes we are walking in the valley. The good news is that we are not alone. God is with us and God helps us walk the valleys. This week's valley is the valley of anxiety. Everyone gets anxious sometimes but we don't have to stay anxious. Pastor Gordon used the story of King Jehoshaphat from Chronicles to outline ways we can navigate our anxiety. Anxiety is not a sin but it is a signal for us to do three things.

02.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What makes you anxious?
- Share a time when anxiety impacted your life.
- Pastor Gordon shared that anxiety is a signal not a sin.
- Why is it hard to remember this in the moment of being anxious?
- Do you ever feel discouraged because you can't seem to conquer anxiety?

Read 2 Chronicles 20:1-30.

- What is happening here?

Three armies were attacking Jehoshaphat – he was probably more than a little anxious. Gordon pointed out that Jehoshaphat's reaction to his anxiety can help us overcome our own anxiety.

SERMON GUIDES

Talking through the message during the week helps you and your group turn what God is saying to you into action steps. Begin with the key questions, add in any optional scriptures and questions if needed, then wrap up by deciding on your next steps.

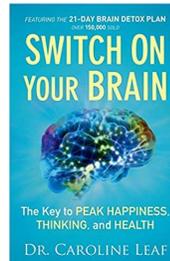
Visit woodlakeumc.org/sermonessentials for weekly sermon guides, devotionals, and more or if you have questions, contact Jill Perrin at jperrin@woodlakeumc.org.

- What did Jehoshaphat do first?

Anxiety is a signal to pray first.

- How good are you at starting with prayer?
- Is it hard for you to stop and pray when life gets anxious?

So often prayer is our last resort but when we pray it changes things. Gordon cited a book called **Switch on Your Brain** by Caroline Leaf.



In this book this Dr. Leaf says that prayer changes our brains. When we pray it change the chemical make-up in our brains. Let that sink in for a minute. God knows that if we pray it will do something. Prayer helps transform negative thoughts into positive ones.

- Can you share a time when you experienced a change when you prayed?

Read Philippians 4:6-9 in the Message version.

- How does this passage confirm Dr. Leaf's research?
- Do you make time to intentionally pray for at least 12 minutes?
- What gets in the way?
- If you knew that your brain was changing when you spent time with God, would you pray more often?
- What habits do you need to start to help carve time for prayer?



SERMON GUIDES

Talking through the message during the week helps you and your group turn what God is saying to you into action steps. Begin with the key questions, add in any optional scriptures and questions if needed, then wrap up by deciding on your next steps.

Visit woodlakeumc.org/sermonessentials for weekly sermon guides, devotionals, and more or if you have questions, contact [Jill Perrin at jperrin@woodlakeumc.org](mailto:jperrin@woodlakeumc.org).

- What habits do you need to stop?

Read 2Chronicles 2:15.

- What did the people do?

Anxiety is a signal to BE STILL.

The people stood before the Lord and waiting for God to move.

- How hard is it for you to wait?

Sometimes God moves in an instant and we want to be rescued immediately. Sometimes it's a process. When we stop and wait, we are more likely to hear what next step God wants us to take.

- Looking back, can you remember a time when you wanted a quick answer but instead you got a long, slow answer to your prayer?

Read 2Chronicles 20:14-17

- What happened when the people waited?
- What message did they hear?

Read 2 Chronicle 20:18-29.

- What did the people of God do next?

Anxiety is a signal to Worship.

- What is your favorite way to worship?

In the tv series Stranger Things, there is something called a Vecna song. It's a song that a girl uses to think about happy times, the song saves her from the evil.



SERMON GUIDES

Talking through the message during the week helps you and your group turn what God is saying to you into action steps. Begin with the key questions, add in any optional scriptures and questions if needed, then wrap up by deciding on your next steps.

Visit woodlakeumc.org/sermonessentials for weekly sermon guides, devotionals, and more or if you have questions, contact [Jill Perrin at jperrin@woodlakeumc.org](mailto:jperrin@woodlakeumc.org).

- Share your favorite worship song.

Worship helps us focus on God.

- Take a moment to worship. Write down all the characteristics of God that come to mind.
- God is my _____ and fill in the blank.
 - Share with your group.
- How does focusing on God's character ease our anxiety?

In 2 Chronicles God saved Jehoshaphat and his people. God is working for you too. Anxiety doesn't have to be your focus or steal your energy or joy. God is with you and is for you. Stop and pray, be still and listen, Worship. Things will change.



SERMON GUIDES

Talking through the message during the week helps you and your group turn what God is saying to you into action steps. Begin with the key questions, add in any optional scriptures and questions if needed, then wrap up by deciding on your next steps.

Visit woodlakeumc.org/sermonessentials for weekly sermon guides, devotionals, and more or if you have questions, contact **Jill Perrin** at jperrin@woodlakeumc.org.



NEXT STEPS:

- **Pray** - Take time to intentionally pray this week. Try to pray for 12 minutes. To learn more about this go here: www.woodlakeumc.org/howtopray
- **Be Still** – Take time to pause and listen God. God is not far away, God is speaking to you. Make prayer a two-way communication and hear what God is saying to you.
- **Worship** – Find a worship song that helps your brain re-focus on God, re-focus on gratitude and positivity.