



introduction

This week Pastor John wraps up our *Losing Sleep* series, focusing on the unknown and how fear of the future can cause sleep to elude us. Unfortunately, worry of the future isn't restricted to nighttime hours; rather, if unchecked, it becomes a constant, rumbling undercurrent in our day, with the ability to morph into a polarizing standstill.

discussion

1. Hebrews 11:1 encourages "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." Our faith is not in the future but in the One who holds the future. How can what we know about God – His character, sacrificial love and faithfulness – transpose our greatest fears of the unknown tomorrow into peace based on hope and certainty?
2. Hebrews 12:1-3 is our focus passage this weekend. In Hebrews 12:1 we are directed, "...let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles..." Let's delve into the dichotomy between entangling sin and faith which leads to faithful perseverance. Habakkuk 2:4b reads "...but the righteous will live by his faith." Additionally, look up Romans 1:17, Romans 4:5, Galatians 3:11 and Hebrews 10:38. Why and how are righteousness and faith so intertwined?
3. Read Philippians 4:6-7. "Do not be anxious...**but**...by prayer and petition..." [emphasis ours]. In this passage, prayer is the mitigation for anxiousness – the anecdote to or other side of it. How could praying about the unknown things we are worrying about help us "realign our vision" as Pastor John encouraged us to do?

do something

1. Write down your greatest fears of the unknown future. Are there any themes? Bring these to the Lord in prayer. Next, share them with your group or a trusted, godly friend or mentor and check in regularly with one another on this topic.
2. If you're waiting on the Lord to change your circumstances for the future, take a deeper look at a Bible character who was waiting on God in undesirable circumstances such as Hannah [1 Samuel 1 & 2] or Daniel [Daniel 6]. Although life stories vary, in what ways can you be encouraged by their situation and God's faithfulness in their lives? Journal your discoveries or discuss them in your small group, mentor, spouse or godly friend.
3. Walk on a winding trail with your family, a friend or small group. Discuss how when the trail twists and turns, you can't see what's ahead and how life is like that. We can only see this moment, but God sees every future occurrence, bend and twist in our lives. In the armor of God passage in Ephesians, the shield of faith [Ephesians 6:16], along with the admonishment to pray and be alert [Ephesians 6:18], shows us we can trust God in the unknown and un-seeable.

resources

Access #1 & #2 on RightNow Media. Sign up for your free account under Quick Links at the bottom of prairielakeschurch.org.

1. *Fear and Faith* by Trillia Newbell. Session 2 "Fear of the Future" (15 minutes)
2. "How to Overcome your Fears" featuring Erwin McManus
3. *Unexpected* by Christine Cain, available on Kindle, paperback or hardcover on Amazon.