



Small group study:

Mature and authentic Christianity – Realizing the armor God during two situations: a. The attack that you saw coming and b. the ambush that you did not see coming.

For today's study, here is what we will do:

- a. Group 1: Read the notes from Pastor Steven's sermon "When Anxiety Attacks" and answer the study questions
- b. Group 2: Read the sermon notes from Dr. Timothy Keller – Message to his church (Redeemer Church in NYC) just after the 9/11 attack in NYC and answer the study questions.



10/24/2016 Kev's eGroup Study Notes The armor of God during the attack or the ambush

Elevation Ballantyne Campus – Sermon notes Saturday, Oct. 15, 2016

Pastor Steven Furtick

Sermon title: “When Anxiety Attacks”

Scripture:

- 1 Peter 5: 5 to 11: New International Version (NIV) *“To the Elders and the Flock: 5 In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.” 6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. 7 Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. 8 Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 9 Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings. 10 And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. 11 To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen”.*
- 1 Peter 5: 5 to 11: English Standard Version (ESV) *“Shepherd the Flock of God: 5 Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” 6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, 7 casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. 8 Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 9 Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world. 10 And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. 11 To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.”*



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“When Anxiety Attacks” by Pastor Steven Furtick

- See 1 Peter 5: 5 to 11:
- Back in Monks Corner-SC, Mrs. Jackie pulled me aside when I was a teenager to tell me *“Steven, God has a plan for you. But know that the devil has a bullseye on you and wants to use you for target practice and I will be praying for you to have the strength to defend what he has planned for you. Because there is something special that God want to do through you.”* As a 70 year old women, Mrs. Jackie had earned the right to say this. . . . Over the years, many people have come to me and said, “I am praying for you because the devil is gunning for you.” My response now is I am praying for you as well since the devil will try to crush anyone of us – and the devil is not just gunning for folks like me that stand behind a pulpit.
- **Pastor Steven Classic: “The birth mark of a Christian is a bullseye.” When you are born into the mysterious kingdom of God, you now have a bullseye on you.**
- When the chief of staff had to tell president Bush about the 9/11 attacks in NYC in 2001, he said “America is under attack.” Now that we are so sophisticated and intellectually capable, we talk ourselves out of the “under attack” references. And we convince ourselves that we don’t need to provide preaching airtime for the devil. For those without faith, under attack = I am having a bad day. Under attack is not the same thing as forgetting to charge your phone or being late for work – that means that you are careless and or under-performing. However, the older version of Peter (in his outstanding epistle) reminds us that we are under attack and we know it is coming – not like an ambush. In Peter’s case, he is referring to the persecution by the Roman Emperor Nero A.D. 67 (see: <http://www.biblestudytools.com/history/foxs-book-of-martyrs/the-first-persecution-under-nero-a-d-67.html>).
- **The hand of God represents at least three things in scripture: Provision, purpose, and protection.**
- It is a hand that we can’t see with physical eyes but it is this mighty hand that we are dependent on in order for us to make it through this life. We can’t do this by ourselves. We are not strong enough. Recall the Exodus account when God spoke to Moses telling him that the provision was coming from the mighty hand of God. Recall in Mathew where loaves and fishes were expanded to feed 4000 and 5000.
- All things done in history have been done by his hand and the hand of God is active in our lives. Are you grateful for this mighty hand of God that provides provision, purpose, and protection?
- In 1 Peter 5, Peter talks about the mighty hand of protection. He says to all that are broken, depressed, and despondent – stay under that mighty hand of Godly protection.
- Recall that Peter has matured since his first encounter with God and has earned the right to give us seasoned wisdom. Peter is not guessing about what he is saying and is an eye witness to the hand of God. Recall Peter was lifted up put back into the boat.



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- Important difference between an ambush and an attack. 9-11 2001 was an ambush. Peter tells us to wake up and stop sleep walking and understand the reality of the situation – you are under attack.
- Peter says “I as asleep at Gethsemane” and don’t get caught sleeping during a time like this. And we are under attack - and we know this.
- Peter now uses an example of what the devil is (a roaring lion). A pastor Steven classic: Peter obviously did not have middle school children or perhaps he would have used another analogy.
- **A roaring lion lets you know when they are coming.**
- The manifestation of the enemy in your life is anxiety. This is the primary manifestation in your life where the enemy is actively destroying the life of a believer. We are not talking about clinical anxiety and the kind of anxiety that requires a prescription. The type of anxiety we are discussing today is that which we carry around all of our days and we do not speak of it a lot of the time – and eats us alive from the inside.
- After 10 days of code orange revival and over one week of celebrating, the post revival exhaustion can manufacture its own anxiety. How does this happen in a place where the evidence of His faithfulness is so apparent?
- Yet the roar of the lion can jump up onto you when you are not expecting it. This fuels a sort of restlessness.
- 1 Peter 5 provides excellent instruction here.
- We should be surprised that Peter (at his current station in life as a wise elder) is talking about anxiety in the way that he is.
- **God says, put all anxiety on me. Then we feel the sensation of the anxiety being returned to us.**
- **A Pastor Steven classic: The bible is not meant to be read like fortune cooking with small independent pearls of wisdom. Look at first 1 Peter 5:6: Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. We need to connect vs. 6 with vs. 7.**
- **The ESV version is bit better: ” 6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, 7 casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.”**
- **Note the comma after exalt and casting.**
- **Humble yourself under the mighty hand of purpose, provision and protection – here we learn that vs. 7 is not a command, it is a result.**
- **We are trying to get rid of anxiety and we ask God to take it away – and God says, I am not going to take the anxiety way until you put away the pride that carries it. Important point: The anxiety in your life is a direct manifestation of the pride that you have in your heart and if you can live without pride, the anxiety will go with it.**



- **A Pastor Steven Classic: I hate onions. When I go out to eat, I ask for the onions to be removed. However, sometimes the onions are in the pre-made sauce. If you want the sauce it is going to come with the onions. Peter says this: You need to understand that if you have pride in your heart and you try to do things your way - and you start to control things that are beyond your pay scale – when you start trying to do God’s job – and manipulate people – put yourself out into the future, anxiety is in the sauce called pride. And if you want to get rid of the onions, you have to throw the whole sauce out.**
- Your anxiety is tied to your pride. In some ways, you are trying to control something that is not yours to control.
- Let examine the word anx-i-ety. Right in the middle of anxiety is I. When you get the heart of the matter, I is the center of all anxiety. I look _____. What I am I _____ going to do?
- “Well Pastor, we have been fishing all night and you don’t know much about fishing. Well Pastor, I will never deny you three times.”
- But Peter is not 25 anymore and had already hit rock bottom –after hearing the rooster crow.
- Peter found out the failure of having the lens of “I”. But I . . .
- The Lord says: If you listen to everything that you are telling yourself and creating anxious thoughts in your heart – it is because you have “you” at the center. What will I do _____. What will I _____
- Yes, we have personal responsibility and ownership – yet we are part of it - but not the center of it.
- Peter says, humble yourself. It is in the sauce.
- God says: Be humble and go where I tell you to go, preach what I tell you to preach, and say what I tell you to say. We can only be obedient right now and forget what others are thinking.
- For that Lion that is roaring at you, here is some important advice: Run but resist him staying firm in your faith. See vs. 10 “And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.”
- It is just a little while.
- One country preacher said, I know he is roaring but he ain’t got no teeth. However, we know this not to be true. The devil certainly has teeth. Consider for moment those that have taken their lives or ruined their families by making dumb decisions. The devil certainly has teeth.
- When anxiety attacks like a roaring lion, whatever you are going through on the outside – with people, with yourself, with your emotions, with your failures, with the sensations of sinking beneath the waves, with sleeping in the garden (like Peter), with hearing of a rooster crow – Peter reminds us that in a little while, God is going to step in where you learn the following: yes you are suffering inside, yes you will get through this season, yes the devil is a lion, yes this lion in on the prowl, but, the **lion is on a leash and can only go so far and can only do so much.**



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- Key point: The devil can only do so much. You will not cry forever, you will not hurt forever, it will not be like this forever. God himself is going to step in and make you strong.
- It is only a lion on a leash. **The devil cannot gain ground that you cannot give him.**
- Say this: My anxiety stops here. I can't carry this any longer. I no longer need to stay up all night worrying about stuff that God is already working on.
- You might have to deal with things for a little while.
- With Peter, he did not understand this until he hit rock bottom.
- **Important point: The devil's roar is greater than his reach.**
- Through your struggles, God is trying to build a foundation that is free of your ego, free of your pride, and free of your boasting.
- For those that are under attack and feel this anxiety first hand: *"I pray that the God of all grace and His mighty hand that is over our life and which has been guiding our life at every moment – that same hand that restored Peter, that same hand of God that has been active in all of history – that same hand of God that is moving in this place – and we want to pray for people who have been under attack in this area of anxiety – and we want to extend a personal prayer: I know that there are things in your life that have been eating us alive – both emotionally and spiritually – and we need the strength of God to endure the suffering that we are going through - we understand that you need us to go down in order to build us up – where the only way we can feel your strength is to feel our own weakness. Humble ourselves to the mighty hand of God. That in due time, God will lift us up. Lay all of our anxiety on Him. The first thing we need to do is get the "I" out of anxiety – my effort, my stuff, my ____, my _____. It is not about me and what I have done. It is about the purpose of God being fulfilled in my life. His purpose, His hand, and His Power. We extend ourselves toward you Lord and we stretch our hand to you Lord. It has got to go right now in the name of Jesus."*



Study questions from Pastor Steven's sermon "When Anxiety Attacks":

Why is it so hard for us to accept that the hand comes in three forms: Provision, purpose, and protection?

IN The ESV version, Peter writes: " 6 Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, 7 casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you."

Does this help you when anxiety and tension overwhelm you? How do you build of a defense mechanism to prevent the onset of anxiety and tension?

How has this played out in your life? Share an example.



Dr. Timothy Keller – Message to his church (Redeemer Church in NYC) just after the 9/11 attacked in NYC:

- Opening prayer: “Almighty and merciful God, you are the consolation for the sorrowful. You are the support of the weary. Look down on us with tender love and pity – who’s joy has been turned to mourning - so that while we mourn and grieve, we may not have our hearts darkened and that might learn wisdom and grow strong in hope – and might resign ourselves into your hands to be taught and comforted – remembering all of your mercies, promises, and love in Jesus Christ – who brings life out of death – and turns all grief into eternal joy. Please pray for the people in our church – for in our midst today we have many whose hearts are broken, whose arms are broken, whose bodies are broken, whose buildings are broken – only you can heal the broken souls, the fears, the grief, the rage, the despondency, and the death. Bind us up Lord. Father bind us up as individuals and make us who we need to be – for this city. Oh Father, to a great degree we have been participating in a self-absorption of the great cities of our world – where people come to these cities to take, to get, and to build themselves up – to build up their resumes – to consume – but Father we ask that you direct us to stop that – to humble us – we ask that you get ourselves out of that state of mind. We ask that you purify us – wake us up and make us useful to our neighbors. Make us who we need to be to show that we are the love of Jesus. Help us to be what the city needs us to be right now.”
- John 14:27: “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”
- Permit me for you to come today and worship in a quiet and appropriate way.
- **In 1 Thessalonians 4, Paul tells us to grieve but to do so with hope. Here Paul says that there are two opposite mistakes that we can make during a time of tragedy: a. We can try to avoid grief and weeping and this makes you hard and inhuman and might even erupt later on. or b. We grieve without hope. The bible states that the love and hope of God has to be rubbed into our grief – the way one has to rub salt into meat in warm climates – or it will go bad.**
- Our grief is either going to make us weaker or bleaker. Our grief can make us far more wise and tender depending on what you rub into it – what you put into it.
- And that is what we are here to do today.
- We are not here merely to weep – but also to rub into our grief.
- See Matthew 14 where John the Baptist Beheaded. John was cut down in an unjust attack. Once Jesus is told that John was killed and buried by his disciples, Jesus withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place and then feeds five thousand. This is a great study for us.
- See John 11: The Death of Lazarus, Jesus Comforts the Sisters of Lazarus, Jesus Raises Lazarus From the Dead
- **In John 11, Mary and Martha have the same problem that we do. They are looking at a tragedy and asking the same questions that we would ask. What is all of this about and where are you Lord? How do we make sense of this?**
- **Yet Jesus moves through the ruins and welds four things: truth, tears, anger, and finally grace.**
- **Jesus welds truth to Mary, tears for Martha, anger at the tomb, and grace (as we shall see) for everybody.**
- Let’s examine these four because we need these four and we need to know how they all hang together.
- The Tears of Jesus: Mary asks this question: Lord, you could have stopped this – where were you? Jesus responds by weeping.
- Why is this? When Jesus arrived to see Mary, he knows both why it happened (and how he is going to turn the situation into a wonderful manifestation into the glory of God) and he has power to change the situation.
- When you and I go into these tragic situations, we have no idea.
- We say: Boy if we had this kind of knowledge and power, why would we weep?



Dr. Timothy Keller – Message to his church (Redeemer Church in NYC) just after the 9/11 attacks in NYC – continued

- The reason is that Jesus represents perfect love – where Jesus will not close his heart even for 10 minutes.
- He will not refuse to enter into all of this grief with the potential of minimizing the grief of Mary and Martha.
- What do we learn from this passage:
 - Nothing wrong with weeping during a time of crisis. This is not a sign of weakness or immaturity. Because the better people are those that can't avoid grief and allow themselves to be pulled into grief that others are feeling. There is something very right about this.
 - We think that we need to fix it. The human tendency is to fix things. Jesus does not consider the ministry of fixing things to be sufficient. Jesus says, let's enter into a relationship with ourselves and our city. Let us weep for those that weep.
- The anger of Jesus: Yes this is a very hard day. In vs. 33, modern and ancient translators are very concerned with what the text says. When Jesus saw Mary and others weeping, he was deeply troubled. The Greek word in the translation equates to rage. Yes, Jesus was filled with rage and was “deeply moved” (Greek translation = to snort and shout in rage like a lion) when we went to the grave site of Lazarus. The best translation is that Jesus came to the tomb bellowing with anger.
- Why is this so relevant to us: First there is shock, followed by weeping. Now fear, anger, and rage take hold.
- What does Jesus do with this range and anger? Now this is important: Here are two things that Jesus does not do: a. He is not a false friend of Job – useless friends during Job's trials. See book of Job. Jesus does not demonize. b. Jesus is not mad at himself
- Common practice is to take a horrific event and then create a narrative and story line. Politicians are great at this. For example: comments are like: “*America asked for it due to chronic social injustice or America is being punishing because God is punishing us.*” This is not the correct narrative and story line.
- In Rm 1, Paul says that the worst thing that you can do is to have a good life. This is how one remains independent and selfish – where we do not need God.
- In Luke 13: After two tragic events (a massacre and a tower falling down on people), Jesus takes on the question: Were there people judged? Jesus answer: No of course not. In fact, Jesus appears to be irritated by the question. So how do we know if God is mad at us or pleased with us? The bible says to love God and love your neighbor. If we are doing this, God is pleased with us.
- **Jesus suffered not so that we might never suffer. The goal is when we do suffer, we turn to him and be more like him.**
- **Demonizing another groups is not the answer because this can cause over-reach in the application of justice.**
- Quote from a Croatian General speaking at the United Nations prayer breakfast: **“Enormous poison comes into my heart and the heart of the world if I forget this: when I exclude my enemy from the community of humans and when I excluded myself from the community of sinners. When I forget that my enemy is not a sub-human monster but a human being and I forget that I am not the perfect good. From this standing, I can now seek a position of justice.”**
- What is Jesus doing with his rage? He is proclaiming that he is mad at death and at the tomb of Lazarus.
- Jesus then says: I am going to turn this death into a resurrection.
- Jesus says: I am going to bring out of this something that is greater than what was before.
- **This is the story of the gospel. Out of the cross comes resurrection. Out of weakness comes real strength. Out of repentance and admitting that you are weak comes real power. Out of giving and serving others comes real strength. Out of generosity comes real wealth.**
- This is the story line of the gospel.



Dr. Timothy Keller – Message to his church (Redeemer Church in NYC) just after the 9/11 attacked in NYC – continued

- Effective leaders say: out of this death, we can bring something much better.
- Do you now want to be part of NYC – now that we have all of this death and destruction? Typically NYC is something you take for yourself.
- What if we now were focused recognizing the need for change, humbling yourself, and doing justice vs. what is in it for me?
- **Here is the point: Unless you know how to handle your anger and place your anger into the correct story line - so that it circulates inside of you, you will be railing with anger against God, America, and fictitious demons.**
- Or are you looking for an opportunity for resurrection?
- **The only thing we should rage against is the dying of a light and press forward to make the light brighter.**
- So during a cycle of grief, we are to open our hearts and enter into the community and weep for those that weep – but also do not use rage to short circuit this process. Hu? This is very hard.
- But Jesus gives you the ministry of truth.
- Jesus says: I am the resurrection and the life. Hear me.
- If you want a great resources and ultimate power, Jesus says, you have to believe. You have to have truth.
- Without understanding this truth, you will lack this incredible access to power.
- Here is what Jesus offers: Not a conciliation. A resurrection. This means Jesus has come to raise you up to heaven and to bring the power of heaven down to earth and make everything new. Jesus says that I am going to restore all that was lost.
- Jesus says this: I am going to make everything that has happened to you seem like a bad dream – where you wake up and bad things never really happened. Recall that there is a positive side of a bad dream. When you wake up, you come to the realization that it never a happened.
- Resurrection means you wake up from a bad dream and feel better and greater – from once been broken
- **Quote from Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky in Brothers Camerousu (written in 1880): “I believe like a child that suffering will be healed and made up for. That all of the humiliating absurdity of human contradictions will be vanish like a pitiful mirage. That in the world’s finality in a world of total harmony, something so precious will come to pass, that it will suffice – and comfort all resentments – it will atone for all of the crimes and blood that has been shed – that it will make it not only possible to forgive, but also justify everything that happened.”**
- **What Dostoyevsky is saying is that eventually everything we become untrue. Is this true? Jesus says yes. There will be a great morning. If you believe in the gospel, then you believe this to be true.**
- **Quote from C.S. Lewis: If we let him, he will make the feeblest and filthy among us into the most dazzling radiant immortal creatures pulsating with such energy and joy and wisdom and love as we cannot now imagine. He will make us into bright stainless mirrors that we reflect back to God – on a smaller scale his boundless power and goodness. That is what we are in for – nothing less.**
- Do you believe that? If yes, you can face anything.
- What we have now will be merely a dim echo what we will have in the future.
- Jesus knew that the only way to interrupt Lazarus’ funeral was to create his own. This is why the Pharisees had to now plot to kill Jesus.
- Here is the what gospel is: We have a God that is so committed to ending suffering and death that he was willing to come into the world and be involved in that suffering and death himself. God lost his son in an unjust attack.
- This is proof that God cares and Jesus is the perfect counselor. And he will always give his grace in the correct proportions.



Study questions from Dr. Timothy Keller – Message to his church (Redeemer Church in NYC) just after the 9/11 attack in NYC :

Where were you when the 911 attacks happened?

Dr. Keller says this: “Common practice is to take a horrific event and then create a narrative and story line. Politicians are great at this. For example: comments are like: “America asked for it due to chronic social injustice or America is being punishing because God is punishing us.” Why is this so wrong on so many fronts?

Dr. Keller says this: What if we now were focused recognizing the need for change, humbling yourself, and doing justice vs. what is in it for me? Here is the point: Unless you know how to handle your anger and place your anger into the correct story line - so that it circulates inside of you, you will be railing with anger against God, America, and fictitious demons. Has this advise played out in your life? How?

Does these passages help explain the nature of heaven? If so, how:

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