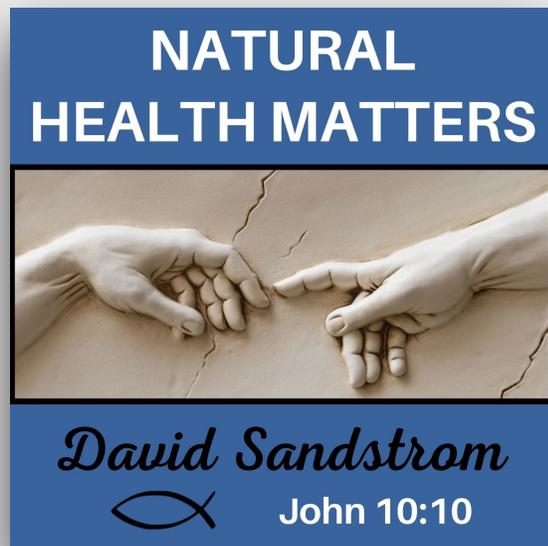


## NHM - 66 Spiritual Health part 12: Overcoming Fear, Anxiety, and Worry

David Sandstrom 0:00

Here's a sample of what you'll hear on this episode of Natural Health Matters. As with most spiritual battles, God offers us real peace and Satan offers us cheap counterfeits. fear, anxiety, worry and control are poor substitutes for the

peace of God available to us through faith. Welcome to the Natural Health Matters podcast where it's all about maximizing your health potential, so that you can pursue the abundant life more effectively. I'm your host, David Sandstrom, Naturopathic Doctor, and Biblical Health Coach, and this is episode number 66.



David Sandstrom 0:44

This episode is part 12. In our series on the spiritual component of health, this episode is not for the faint of heart. This is going to be challenging for some people, but I think there's someone in the Natural Nation, someone in the listening audience that

really needs to hear this message. Today we're going to be talking about fear, anxiety, and worry. The Bible says in Proverbs chapter 14, verse 30, A tranquil heart is life to the body. But passion or strong emotions, like fear, are rotteness to the bones. When it comes to embracing righteousness, for health sake, fear, anxiety and worry are among the most destructive sins we can engage in. Nothing will elevate our stress hormones and neurotransmitters more quickly than fear, anxiety and worry you're not far behind. When we engage in chronic worry, that leads to anxiety. We're experiencing a constant elevation in our stress hormones, primarily cortisol. Elevated cortisol can create all kinds of health challenges, including digestive difficulty, heart problems, sleep disorders, weight gain, and a whole lot more. Again, when God tells us to do something, it's for our benefit. And when he tells us to avoid something, it's for our protection. The command Do not fear occurs 78 times in the New American Standard Bible. Be strong and courageous is used 13 times. So we don't have to wonder if fear that controls us is sin.

David Sandstrom 2:18

Sin is not just a matter of the actual act or our outward behavior. Jesus said in Matthew chapter five, verses 27 to 28, "You have heard that it was said You shall not commit adultery. But I say to you, that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. According to Jesus teaching, sin is an inside job. The reason why that teaching is true is that all of our behavior, all the things that we do, begin with an idea, or a thought in our hearts and minds. It's not just the act that's wrong. But the thoughts and beliefs that we entertain, that can bring us harm. Therefore, Jesus tells us that we must consider our thought lives, and the emotions that go along with those thoughts. Emotions can really control us, they not only control our thinking, but our physiology as well. This is one of those areas where we see a lot of overlap between the spirit, mind and body. Remember, our minds send instructions to our brains in our brains run our bodies. When we have stress producing thoughts, that puts our bodies in fight or flight or sympathetic dominance. We talked about that in the last episode. But just remember this, this stress response is a very good thing if our car's engine just quit, and we're on top of the railroad tracks, and there's a train coming. Or if we have to run away from a wild animal, it's a good thing then. But chronic activation of the stress response, even at a low level over time, is detrimental to our health. If our bodies are constantly preparing to run away from a lion, then they won't be devoting resources or metabolic energy toward non urgent tasks such as digestion, immune function, or detoxification for example. When stress becomes chronic, we can compromise our health. Which brings us to the topic of this episode.

David Sandstrom 4:26

One of the most efficient ways to trigger our stress response is with fearful thoughts. When we're caught in the grip of fear, anxiety and worry, it may seem as though there's no way out. We feel powerless against these intense emotions. However, God's word says otherwise. "For this command, which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach." That's Deuteronomy 30, verse 11. We shouldn't engage in emotional reasoning. This is a form of distorted thinking. Just because we feel something doesn't make it true; just because something feels overwhelming and impossible to conquer, that doesn't mean that it is. victory over fear is really no different than saying no to any other form of temptation. When we're tempted to indulge in fear, we must remember that God will not allow more than we can bear. No temptation has overtaken you, but such as is common to man, and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you're able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it." That's First Corinthians 10:13.

David Sandstrom 5:44

Some fear is useful. Just as some stress is beneficial, some fears appropriate fear that keeps us from real danger is useful. If we're standing on top of a tall building, or the edge of a cliff, it's a good thing to be afraid of falling off the edge. In that fashion, our fear is serving us. However, when we start letting fear control us, we become its servants. Then we've crossed the line into disobedience to the Word of God. And that can bring us harm. Fear brings stress, again, our bodies are designed to move in and out of stress, it should be temporary. When fear is in control, we experience chronic activation of our stress response. Unhealthy fear is being afraid of something that's not likely to bring harm. The truth is, most of the things we worry about never come to pass. No one knows the future. And when making plans, we should take appropriate precautions. We engage in unhealthy fear when we look to the future and blow things out of proportion. Some level of planning or anticipation is a good thing. But we need to be careful because predicting the future is by its very nature uncertain. Just look at the weather forecast from yesterday and see how close it is to the actual weather we're experiencing today. We all know that the weatherman is wrong much of the time because forecasting the weather is not an exact science. When we're trying to forecast future events, if we bring a sense of pessimism, or even dread into our imaginations, that's harmful. That's another type of distorted thinking called fortune telling. I'm going to have to do an episode on distorted thinking patterns in the future. But we'll have to put that on the shelf for now because today we're talking about fear, anxiety, and worry. When we indulge in this type of thinking, we forfeit our peace and exchange it for stress. For many of us, this type of thinking is our go to thinking pattern. These thinking patterns may have been in place for years, even decades. So they sound and feel very familiar. That doesn't mean they're not harmful. It may be difficult even to realize when we're doing it.

David Sandstrom 8:17

Here's a few tips. If our self talk is dominated by the phrase, what if we likely have a problem with fear, anxiety and worry. If we feel an excessive need to control our surroundings and even other people, we may have a problem. If we avoid certain harmless behaviors, such as going to a party or riding on an elevator, we've definitely got a problem. Fear is a spiritual issue because the enemy wants to use fear, to steal our peace, kill our joy, and destroy our health, which ultimately leads us to be ineffective for Kingdom work. Warfare is the backdrop to everything we do spiritually. "For a struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places." That's Ephesians 6:12. As with most spiritual battles, God offers us real peace. And Satan offers us cheap counterfeits, fear, anxiety, worry and control. Our poor substitutes for the peace of God available to us through faith. Fear also becomes a spiritual issue because God's word clearly admonishes us to avoid

it. When we allow fear to control us, it's a form of unrighteousness or sin. We're being disobedient to our Heavenly Father's instructions. we're demonstrating a lack of faith. It's as if we're saying to God, I know you said you'd protect me, but I'm not quite sure that you will.

David Sandstrom 10:04

God's primary antidote for fear is faith. Fear and faith are similar, in that they both look to the future. "Now, Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." That's found in Hebrews 11:1. Faith says, I'm not alone. God's got me covered. Fear says, I'm on my own. I need to take matters into my own hands. To be the masters of fear, we need to believe God and take him at his word. God is all knowing and in control, and he's never fearful. Here's a few verses that support that notion: "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are His judgments in unfathomable his ways, for who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became his counselor?" That's Romans 11:33 and 34." He placed his right hand on me saying, Do not be afraid. I am the first and the last." Revelation 1:17. "The Lord is the one who goes ahead of you. He will be with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. Do not fear or be dismayed." That's Deuteronomy 31:8. "Have I not commanded you, Be strong and courageous. Do not tremble or be dismayed. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." That's Joshua 1:9. "For I in the Lord your God, who uphold your right hand who says to you Do not fear I will help you." Isaiah 41:13. "Cast your burden upon the Lord, and He will sustain you. He will never allow the righteous to be shaken." That's Psalm 55:22. "And lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." That's Matthew 28:20. Isn't it comforting to know that God is in control and we're not. I need to be reminded of God's promises like this now and then, just hearing those verses right now brings me a sense of peace.

David Sandstrom 12:22

We must recognize that when we're serving fear, we're not following after God. There is no neutral when it comes to this battle. We're either serving God or serving Satan. God wants truth and freedom for us. Satan uses lies and deception to keep us bound. Satan wants to use fear to disempower us, block love in our lives, and robs us of our peace. God has a different opinion on the matter, "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and a sound mind." That's 2 Timothy 1:7. When fear is in control, it's paralyzing it disempowers us, we stop doing the things we want enjoyed, and failed to take risks that are out of our small comfort zones. Also, when we're focused on the object of our fear, we're distracted from the objects of our love. When angst or fear is in control, we're worried about what's going to happen to us. Remember, God's agape love is others-centered. If we're going to model God's got a love, we've got to get the focus off of ourselves in on to others. Fear prevents us from

doing this. Not only that, it takes courage to give our hearts away entirely in love with abandon. Therefore, we cannot give and receive love effectively when we're in fear. All the while our minds are attacked with a lack of peace, that chaos can destroy our health.

David Sandstrom 14:05

Fear is not just a feeling. What I'm about to share may sound a little aggressive for some Christians. But Jesus never backed down from taking on demonic forces or foul spirits, and neither should we. Spiritual Warfare is not radical Christianity. It's basic Christianity. In Mark chapter one, the second gospel verse 34, it says this, "and he Jesus healed many who were ill with various diseases, and cast out many demons. And he was not permitting the demons to speak because they knew who he was." If we're gonna win the battle over fear with God, identify the real enemy and deal with him appropriately. Another thing we can learn from the passage I just quoted from second Timothy that says, God has not given us a spirit of fear is that fear is not merely a thought or an emotion. It's an evil spirit. There is an intelligent being called the spirit of fear. That evil spirit wants to train us to think, feel, speak, and act. According to his evil nature. He wants to live vicariously through us. This way, he can rob us of our peace and cripple our relationships. And this makes us ineffective for Kingdom work. Another way of looking at this is it blocks our ability to live in the abundant life. I start every one of these episodes off with Welcome to the Natural Health Matters podcast where it's all about maximizing your health potential, so that you can pursue the abundant life more effectively. The enemy as opposed to us walking in the abundant life, and he'll rob us of our health in order to do it. Make no mistake about it. overcoming fear is a spiritual battle. God doesn't send controlling harmful fear our way Satan does. It's our job to intercept those fearful thoughts and take them captive to the obedience of Christ. Second Corinthians 10:5. We're told not to believe every suggestion that the spirits toss our way. John 4:1 says "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, to see whether they are from God." When the spirit of fear is happy, we're in torment. He wants to disempower us, block love in our lives, and steal our peace. We don't have to put up with this. We've been given all the power and authority we need in Jesus name, to tell the spirit of fear to stop harassing us, his assignment against us has been canceled and command him to flee from our presence in Jesus name.

David Sandstrom 16:55

When we're gripped with fear, it's difficult to see things clearly. Satan wants us to believe that our fear, anxiety and worry are quite reasonable and actually helped to protect us. Once again, God has a different opinion. God says that fear keeps us in bondage. First, john 4:18. Jesus came to break those bonds and set the prisoners free. God has given us His power and authority, and he

wants us to use it. Remember, God partners with us in life, and sometimes he says to us, you do it, I've got your back. It's kind of like deciding to take on the bully in the schoolyard. All the while we've got the toughest kid in school on our side, standing behind us, ready to help us out if we need it. We need to assert our God given power and authority. The Word of God says there is no fear in love. But perfect love casts out fear. That's first john 4:18 we need to claim our spiritual authority and cast that demon or spirit out of our lives. We should pray a prayer that sounds something like this. You spirit of fear. I remind you that I am a son or daughter of the Most High God, and I have authority over you. In Jesus name, your assignment over me has been canceled, and I command you to stop harassing me and to flee from my presence and go to your dry place. Okay, after we've taken authority over the spirit of fear and decided that we're not going to have any part of his suggestions, then it's time to renew our minds, Romans 12:2. Our minds are renewed by the washing of the water the word Ephesians 5:23. The evil spirit may not be there to harass us anymore. But we've been trained in certain ways of thinking. Changing those unhealthy thinking patterns takes time and practice.

David Sandstrom 18:57

An excellent example of unhealthy fear is the most dreaded fear of all public speaking. When we get up in front of an audience, there's little to no danger. Nevertheless, most of us experience a great deal of terror in this situation. Why? Because we're preoccupied with what people may be thinking about us. I'm not sure where I heard this quote, but it really applies here. Most of us spend the first third of our lives wondering what other people think about us. We spend the next third, not caring what people think, only to discover in the last third of our lives, that people weren't thinking about us in the first place. They weren't thinking about themselves. Herein lies the secret to overcoming fear. Get the focus off of ourselves. Faith is God's first antidote to fear. Getting the focus off of ourselves is God's second antidote to fear. God's got a love is always others said When making a speech if we focus on the audience and what they want need, there's little space to worry about things such as, I hope they like my outfit, or what if they think I'm stupid or foolish. This is part of what the Bible is talking about when it says perfect love casts out fear. Perfect love is never selfish, and helps us focus on others. In context, first john, chapter four is all about relationships and loving others. When we practice God's agape, sacrificial, othersc-entered love. We take the focus off of ourselves and put it on others. We see virtually the same admonishment in the book of Philippians. "Do nothing from selfish or empty conceit. But with humility of mind, regard one another as more important than yourselves." That's Philippians 2:3. Here we see humility and selflessness working together. That's the kind of love that dispels fear. When we elevate the needs of others above our own, were the ones that will ultimately be blessed. We don't have to pursue those blessings. They arrive

by default, when we do the right thing. "All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the Lord your God. That's Deuteronomy 28:2. Blessings are what God has in mind whenever he gives us a command. We're commanded to love one another. This I command you, that you love one another, John 15:17. This command is not merely for the benefit of others, it's for our own benefit as well. When we get the focus off of ourselves, we reduce fear; a reduction in fear brings peace, and peace is what we're after in our pursuit of health. "A tranquil heart is life to the body. But anxiety is rotteness to the bones." That's Proverbs 14:30. Numerous studies in the published medical literature point to the fact that acts of philanthropy and service to others have a positive effect on those who participate in the giving. We should elevate the needs of others and love them, because it's the right thing to do. When we do, it benefits them. And in God's wisdom and God's economy, he affords us a benefit as well. We experience supernatural peace through a reduction in fear. The opposite of fear is peace. And when it comes to our health, peace is what we're after. "So do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." That's Matthew 6:34. "Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear, you are more valuable than many sparrows." Luke 12:7. The world offers us Prozac and Xanax. Jesus offers real peace. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you, not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful." That's John 14:27. "The steadfast of mind you will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in you." That's Isaiah 26:3. We are not powerless in the face of fear. God provides the way of escape. The method of escape is knowing and acting on his word. "Therefore, let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." That's Hebrews 4:16. Remember, the definition of grace is God's divine influence on our hearts. His omniscient influence on our hearts will help us overcome fear. If fear is an issue for you, it's not going to be easy. You've got your work cut out for you. You may need the assistance of a godly counselor that is knowledgeable and well acquainted with fear and anxiety. I want you to know that overcoming fear is possible. I suggest listening to this episode over again, and looking up each scripture passage for yourself and read them in context. If you do, I believe the Spirit of God will speak to your heart and mind and bring you peace.

David Sandstrom 24:38

So let's summarize. We're often commanded in God's word, do not fear. Fear will trigger stress hormone release faster than anything else. Some fear is useful, but when dread is controlling us, we've crossed the line into sin. Identifying fearful thinking patterns can be deadly. Fear is not just a feeling. It's an evil spirit. We have the power and authority to overcome the spirit of fear. Faith and perfect love are antidotes for fear. Okay, I hope you enjoyed this episode. I know

this was a little bit tough, this is a little bit heavy for some, but it's a subject that needs to be addressed. I don't want to back away from it, because this has powerful implications for our health and well being. If you're enjoying this series on the spiritual component of health, I think you're really going to enjoy my book, the Christians guide to holistic health. In my book, I talk about the spiritual component, of course, but I also talked about the mental emotional component, the physical component, as well as the proper mindset that sets us up for success. So if you're enjoying this series, I recommend you pick up a copy of my book, "The Christians Guide to Holistic Health." It's available on Amazon and paperback, Kindle, and Audible. One more thing, if you know someone that you think might benefit from this information, would you tell them about the podcast? I sure could use your help in spreading the word. The best information in the world can't do anybody any good if they don't know about it. So would you please join me in getting this information in other people's hands, I would appreciate it more go to [DavidSandstrom.com](http://DavidSandstrom.com). In the show notes for each episode, you'll find links to all the resources that were mentioned, as well as a full transcript with timestamps that you can download for free. In addition, I always include a content upgrade with each show, which is a free download that is designed to help you go deeper with that subject. Once again, thank you for listening, and I'll talk with you next week. Be blessed