



# Overcoming ANXIETY & WORRY

HOW TO LIVE IN A WORLD FALLING APART

## Ice Breaker

- What is your religious background? How is it different or similar to your current experience?

Knowing what to look for and what to expect helps us to be prepared so we can engage more effectively. It also can help remove anxiety and worry when we sense things changing around us. In 2 Timothy, Paul is writing to his protégé, Timothy, from a Roman prison to try to prepare him for what is next.

### 2 Timothy 3:1-5 (NIV)

<sup>1</sup> But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. <sup>2</sup> **People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money**, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, <sup>3</sup> without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, <sup>4</sup> treacherous, rash, conceited, **lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God**— <sup>5</sup> having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.

1. Before Jesus comes back, there will be a season of intensity. What does Scripture tell us about how human character will change?

### Matthew 24:8-13 (NIV)

<sup>8</sup> All these are the beginning of birth pains. <sup>9</sup> **Then** you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. <sup>10</sup> At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, <sup>11</sup> and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. <sup>12</sup> Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, <sup>13</sup> but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. <sup>14</sup> And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

This sobering passage tells us the events to come will be like “birth pains.”

2. When we see these changes, we can take heart because a victory is coming! Discuss how knowing this can defuse worry and create a sense of excitement and anticipation—especially when you are investing in the Kingdom of God.
  3. What does this passage warn us about, regarding the coming days?
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4. Who will be secure?
5. Discuss the anticipation of a healthy birth and delivery. How does this relate to the above scripture?
6. What is the ultimate sign before Jesus' return?

Matthew 13:24-30 (NKJV)

The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares

<sup>24</sup> Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; <sup>25</sup> but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. <sup>26</sup> But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. <sup>27</sup> So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' <sup>28</sup> He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' <sup>29</sup> But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. <sup>30</sup> Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn." ' "

7. What will the climatic conditions allow in the days ahead?
8. Can we agree that God placed us here, at this time in history, to make a difference for His Kingdom? What is one thing you can do next week to bring momentum to your faith and bring light to the people around you?

Prayer

Heavenly Father, You are the Author of Life and the Sustainer of All Things. Your light illumines our path and dispels the darkness before us. Awaken Your people in this generation. Confirm Your Word in our midst with great demonstrations of Your power. May our hearts be turned to You in humility and great reverence. Open doors of opportunity before us, and grant us the wisdom, boldness, and courage to move through them. Comfort Your people. Strengthen the weary, deliver the oppressed, and lead us forward. May the name of Jesus be exalted through the whole earth, amen.

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