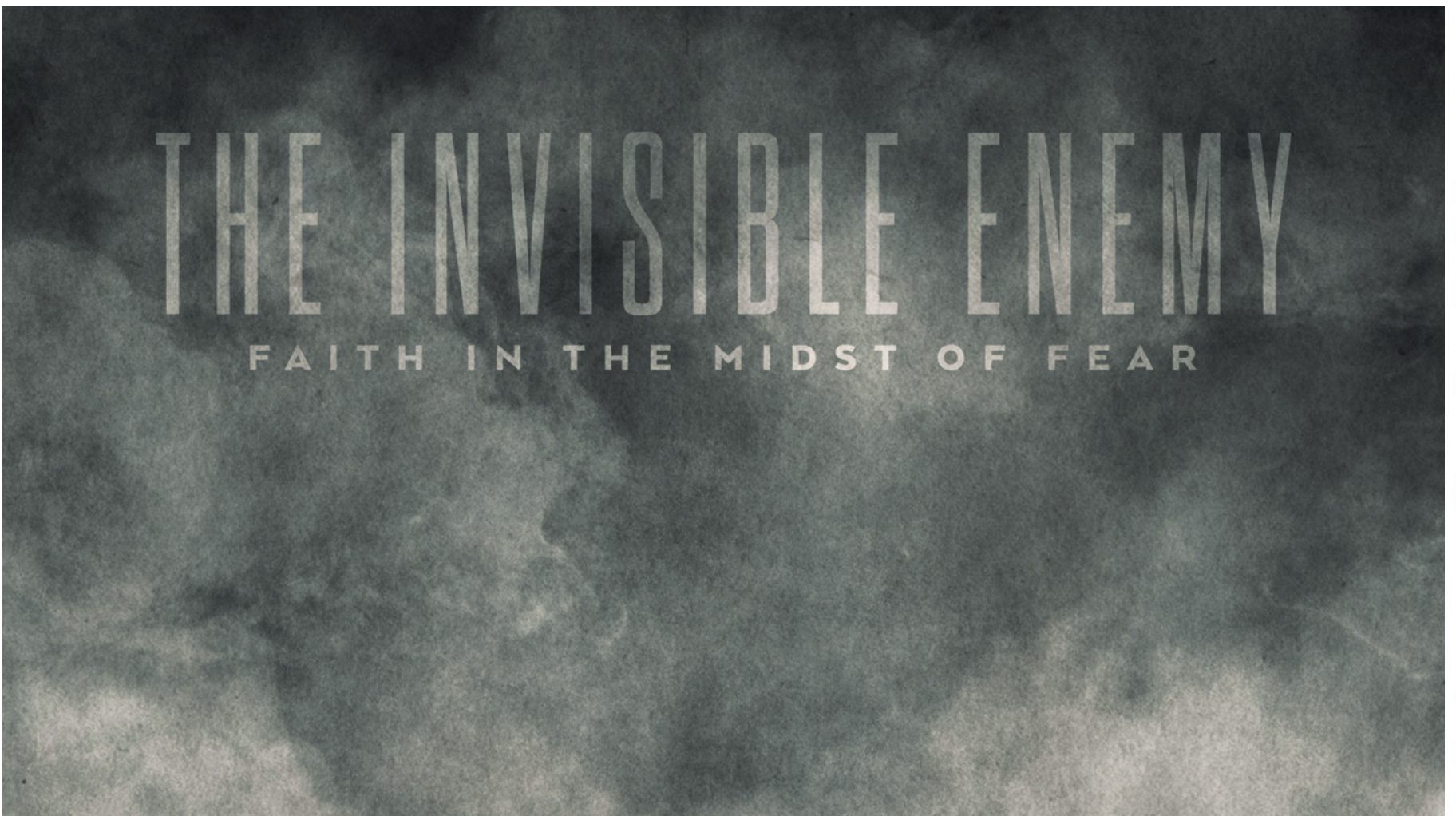


April 19, 2020

NORTH METRO CHURCH

NMC SERMON SERIES CONTENT



Series Overview:

In a world filled with invisible enemies—death, disease, and evil—how are we to face what feels like an unknowable future? What do we do with our anxiety regarding the days ahead? This series is based on Philippians 4:4-8, exploring Paul's encouragement to be anxious for nothing and unpacking what does that mean and how can we take these words to heart, and face the future without fear?

"THE INVISIBLE ENEMY, PART 1"



Icebreaker:

Describe someone in your life who embodies what it means to “rejoice in the Lord always.” What does this person do or say to exude a heart with this attitude toward God?

Discussion Questions:

Rob’s Main Points from week 1:

Anxiety is not so much the onslaught of a storm as the continual threat that one is coming. It’s a big heap of “what ifs.”

The word *anxiety* actually comes from a Latin root that means “to choke” or “to squeeze.” Its strong grip interrupts your sleep, chokes your energy, and harms your overall well-being.

Anxiety is a close cousin to fear, but the two are not twins. Fear *sees* a threat, while anxiety *imagines* one.

We have been taught the Christian life is one of peace. When we don’t have peace, we assume the problem is within us, which leads us to feel guilty. But while the *presence* of anxiety is unavoidable, the *prison* of anxiety is optional.

When Paul writes to “be anxious for nothing,” he is referring to an ongoing state. His words could be translated, “Don’t let anything in life leave you *perpetually* in angst and breathless.”

Paul’s prescription for anxiety is a call to “rejoice in the Lord.” This is not a call to a *feeling* but to a *decision*.

The sovereignty of God refers to his perfect governing over all things. God works in and through every detail of his creation to accomplish his divine purpose. We have the astounding privilege to be a part of this perfect plan.

To rejoice in the Lord, we must have a deep belief in his sovereignty over our lives. The more we believe in *his* control, the more we relinquish *our* control.

As you review Rob's main points, what was really helpful and why?

Read Philippians 4:4–8.

1. Stress-related ailments cost the United States billions of dollars every year. Why do you think the nation leading much of the world in infrastructure, education, democracy, and more is also leading the world in anxiety? Why would Americans suffer from anxiety more than people of lesser developed countries?
2. Scripture includes many verses that can bring comfort and peace to the worried heart. Read Psalm 56:3; Matthew 6:25–34; and 1 Peter 5:6–8. What prescription does each passage give for anxiety?
3. How does the world teach us to cope with anxiety? How does the world's solution for anxiety differ from God's solution?
4. Eugene Peterson says, "[The fact] that God followers don't get preferential treatment in life always comes as a surprise."² Have you ever expected special treatment from God? If so, how did it affect your relationship with him when you experienced hard times?
5. Read 2 Corinthians 11:23–28 aloud. What trials did Paul face?

Now read 2 Corinthians 12:1–10, where Paul talks about a constant trial God would not take away. What is God's response to Paul's prayer in verse 9?

How does God display his strength when we are feeling weak or anxious?

Looking back at this week's teaching and study, is there one thing you'd especially like to remember this week?

What questions do you still have?