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The Oppression of Uncertainty—P6

“Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, Surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand” (Isaiah 41:10).

Humans weren't created for change and uncertainty. In Eden, we existed in a timeless state without seasonal changes, financial uncertainty, fear of want, anxiety about the future, fear of abandonment, death, or separation. God created us to be reliant—reliant on Him, and He is unchanging. And with Him, we lived in a changeless state of perfection. But after our rebellion against God, we found ourselves powerless against the harmful changes that violence, disease, loss, and death brought to our lives as a result of our sin. Because God did not create us for this, we experience trauma, anxiety, fear, shock, numbness, and depression in the face of uncertainty and change. Will it harm us? What will tomorrow bring? We can be overwhelmed, for *“anxiety in a man's heart weighs it down”* (Pro. 12:25a).

Yet, even though the uncertainty of life in this fallen world has afflicted mankind for thousands of years with wars, plagues, destruction, etc., people's lives remained fairly consistent, living in primarily one area, farming the land. They might have moments or periods of trauma, anxiety, and fear (such as war or death), but overall, little changed day-to-day. Up until the 20th Century, most people would have recognized the lifestyles described in the Bible, because they still lived it.

But that all began to change with the industrialization of our modern world, which increasingly affects our day-to-day lives. We gradually began to be saturated with more and more change, soaked progressively in uncertainty. As time went on, we were inundated with more and more “news,” and expectations to learn and adapt to new ways of thinking and acting in our personal lives and in our professions. While it can be healthy to be mentally

and physically challenged, it must be done at a pace we can absorb. But what if that pace is accelerating beyond our ability to adequately handle it, when the certainty of what we know is no longer “sure”? What new change will happen tomorrow that will undermine what we know today? How much time and energy will be required to learn how to safely navigate the change that threatens our peace?

We don't do well with sudden, persistent changes to our environment. And in the last couple decades the world has been speeding up with change coming at an alarming pace. Our physical and spiritual natures were not designed for these sorts of constant interruptions to the natural flow of life. The acceleration of change today is too fast and intense for many people to cope with—it is overwhelming and oppressive, causing shock, anxiety, and depression because there is nothing that can be relied on anymore—the “knowns” are always changing on us. People are desperately searching for something to cling to—something that is unmoving and solid to depend on.

It is no mistake that what people are searching for is an exact description of God's nature: *“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change and though the mountains slip into the heart of the sea; though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains quake at its swelling pride”* (Ps. 46:1-3). *“He only is my rock and my salvation, My stronghold; I shall not be greatly shaken”* (Ps. 62:2). We were created to rely on the Rock!

In these rapidly changing times when everything seems to be accelerating and we feel we can barely keep up, let's turn our eyes away from the uncertainty of this fallen life and the “overload” of our days to the certainty of God's unchanging nature. *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever”* (Heb. 13:8)—cast *“all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you”* (1 Pt. 5:7). He has told us, *“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me”* (Jn. 14:1). Amen.

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