

God at the Movies

Inside Out 2: Peace Over Anxiety (Philippians 4:4-7)

Inside Out 2 Teaser Trailer

Open and Hook

There's something that happens in this movie that I want to talk about – PUBERTY

You've all either experienced puberty yourselves, or you will eventually.

There's no way to grow up without it.

To show you that we've all gone through it, I'd like to highlight a few pictures.

*Staff Puberty Pictures

We've got:

Serena

Jack

Jill

Brent

Myself (3 Pictures)

There are a few things I remember from this age – the smell of the locker room after P.E., the taste of the slice of pizza and can of orange soda that I waited 20 minutes in line for at lunch, and the “game” that my friends and I used to play that will refer to as The Breakfast Club.

Every morning in 7th grade a group of us would gather in the library before school to sit around a table and just call each other names. Pizza Face, 4 Eyes, Weirdo, plus some much meaner names. We wanted to toughen each other up in case we ever got teased by bullies. Middle School was a brutal season.

We'll be spending each week talking a little bit about the movie and the themes we see in it. Then we'll take those themes and see what Biblical principles we can apply.

We're kicking off with the movie *Inside Out 2*.

We saw this movie at the theater together as a church last week, but if you haven't seen it yet, don't worry, there won't be any spoilers.

First, let me give you a few facts about this movie.

***Movie Facts:**

- *Inside Out 2* is a sequel to *Inside Out*, which follows the emotions of a young girl named Riley. In this movie she is 13 and is just beginning puberty, which brings on a slew of new emotions to navigate.
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- During the making of the movie the filmmakers enlisted a group of teenagers to provide feedback to ensure it accurately portrayed modern teenage life.
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- When the first trailer for this movie came out, it was viewed 157 million times in 24 hours, making it the most watched trailer of any Disney animated film.

There are few different themes that we can see and hear in this movie.

***Movie Themes:**

- Perfectionism
- Temptation
- People Pleasing
- Peer Pressure
- And an overall message of "Don't let your emotions control you."

Of course the emotion in the movie that wants to take control is very true and relevant to our own lives – ANXIETY.

Anxiety is an intense, excessive, and persistent worry and fear about everyday situations.

It might cause you to sweat, to have a rapid heartbeat, and to feel restless and tense.

It can be a normal reaction to stress in situations like facing a difficult problem at work, taking a test, or public speaking.

Anxiety can become an indicator of an underlying disease though when feelings become excessive, all-consuming, and interfere with your daily living.

In fact anxiety disorders are the most common mental illness in the U.S., affecting 40 million adults every year.

And sadly 31.9% (almost 32%) of adolescents between the ages of 13 and 18 are affected as well.

As a society, we are all too familiar with the overwhelming feelings of anxiety –

But I have good news for you -- God has a better plan in mind for us.

He wants us to experience His peace – a peace beyond our understanding.

We're going to dive into scripture today to find out how to receive this peace,

but before we do that, let's pray.

PRAY

Turn to Philippians 4:4-7

Philippians is a letter that the Apostle Paul wrote to the church he had planted in Philippi. It's a letter that is full of encouragement and joy.

This is an especially good reminder because Paul wrote this letter while he was in prison in Rome. He would have had many reasons to be anxious and worried,

but he chose to see the joy in his situation and not only experience God's peace, but to share it with others.

In . .

***Philippians 4:4-5**

4Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! 5Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon.

Always be full of joy – does this mean we shouldn't experience other emotions?

How can I be full of joy when I lose my job? Or my dog dies? Or I receive a cancer diagnosis?

This doesn't mean to be happy all the time – bottling up any other emotions and putting on a fake smile and saying "I'm fine, I'm good, It's great."

We can still be angry and sad and hurt,

It's knowing that even though we're experiencing this pain now, we still look forward with hope to a better future with God.

***We are full of joy in the LORD**

– in being secure in knowing that one day we will be freed from this pain, and so we can experience his joy even now.

Around 12 years ago I was experiencing some difficult emotions. I was already unhappy at my place of work and then my grandma passed away. My sweet grandma who used to give me graham crackers that were shaped like dinosaurs. And she used to measure me and my brothers and cousins on the wall in her laundry room. Except she didn't call it a laundry room, she called it a "warsh room". She was the only person I knew who said it like that, "Go to the warsh room so we can see how big you are." My favorite thing was when she used to have me and my brothers all sit on her lap in her rocking chair while she read us stories. She had a whole cupboard full of books.

I had known that it was her time to go, but it was still sad. At this time I had 2 young kids and a few months later found out I was pregnant with twins. I was nervous but also super excited too (I have twin brothers and also worked in an infant center for 8 years, so I was prepared) but then I was completely devastated when I found out that they didn't make it about 3 months into my pregnancy. As I was laying in my bed recovering, God reminded me that I still had reason to be joyful. He gifted me with a vision of my twin boys. I knew they were safe in Heaven, because I could see them, sitting on my grandma's lap in her rocking chair while she read them stories.

*Psalm 30:5 says "Weeping may last through the night, but joy comes with the morning."

Joy and Peace. We can look forward to this joy and peace, but we can also experience it now while we are still here on earth.

We're going to skip ahead to Philippians 4:7 Paul says

*Philippians 4:7

7Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

The key word here is **THEN**.

In our home we use what are called If/Then statements. If you do this, then that will happen.

- If you clean your room, then you can go out with your friends.
- If you finish your homework, then you can play video games.
- If you eat your vegetables, then you can have dessert.

I promise, it's not bribery. I learned it from my daughter's teacher.

This verse is one of those statements – **Then** you will experience God's peace.

So what is the the **if**?

What do we need to do?

Let's go back to verse 6.

*Philippians 4:6-7

6Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done.

So **if** we don't worry about anything.

And **if** we pray about everything.

And **if** we tell God what we need.

And **if** we thank him for all he has done.

Then we will experience God's peace which exceeds anything we can understand.

Don't worry – that brings us back to anxiety. I know what anxiety feels like for me.

It's when I look at my calendar for the week and see that I've got an appointment to get the results of my sleep test, and my daughter is getting braces on, and my other daughter has a doctor appointment, and I have to take my cat to the vet, and pick up my son from camp, and I need to write my sermon, and my palms are getting sweaty.

And now I need a CPAP machine, and can I afford my daughter's braces, and my other daughter needs to see a cardiologist because she has heart murmur and my son came home from camp with a stomachache and my cat needs to have his teeth pulled and I still need to write my sermon and my heart is beating fast and I'm feeling overwhelmed.

And then I stop and remind myself that this is ANXIETY – this is me taking on all of these things that I have no control over.

I know that it's GOD who is in control of my life. And He has the best plans for me.

So why am I not going to Him first?

These verses remind me that I should be going to God first.

To God in prayer first.

To Him in prayer for everything.

***Go to God and get His Peace.**

And so I am reminding you all about this just as much as I'm reminding myself.

There are many different ways to pray, and I want to share a few of my favorites with you.

***PRAYERS:**

- Journaling –
 - Oftentimes I find it easier to write out my prayers. I don't worry about grammar and punctuation. I just write everything I'm thinking and feeling. Sometimes I cry and the pen smudges, but I know God still hears my prayers.
 - These are a great way to pray too because I can look back at what I've written and see all of the ways that He has answered my prayers.
- Walking –
 - I love getting outside to be with God. When I'm inside I can get distracted by my phone, or chores, or work to get done, but when I go for a walk I can get my heart pumping in a healthy way.
 - When I'm at work here during the week, I'll just walk around the building a few times. I pray to God while I'm walking and it's always such a blessing when I can feel the sun shining down on me during my prayers.
 - It feels like He is giving a warm hug – reminding me that he's always with me.
- Breathing –
 - Taking deep breaths is healthy for your mind and body. It helps calm you down when you are feeling anxious. What I like even more than deep breathing is practicing breath prayers.
 - This is repeating scripture while you are taking deep breaths.
 - I would like us all to take a moment to practice right now.
 - I'm going give you a verse to say in your head, you'll breath in while you say the first part, hold your breath for a few seconds, and then breath out while you say the second part.

Breath Prayer Practice:

***Psalm 23:1 The Lord is my shepherd. I have all that I need.**

- Breath in. "The Lord is my shepherd."
- Hold your breath.
- Breath out. "I have all that I need."

And when we practice these prayers we are filled with His peace.

We receive a gift of his peace that sustains us and it helps us to look forward to an eternity of peace with Him – beyond anything we can imagine or understand.

These are just few different types of prayers you can try adding into your life.

To help you let you go of anxiety and experience God's peace.

I don't want to neglect the fact that anxiety can be a disorder. Something that you need extra help with.

I want you to know that it's okay to get this help.

We have resources to help you:

*Refer to Care & Crisis Resources

- pick up at the Resource table or find myself or another pastor

You are not alone and you don't have to do this on your own.

PRAY

***QUESTION:**

How can you ensure you are going to God first when you have anxious thoughts? What ways can you add prayer to experience His peace in your life?

Benediction – [John 14:27](#)

I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid.