

Outgrowing Anxiety, Part 3

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Welcome, welcome, welcome to the Providence Podcast. My name is Chris Oswald. I'm the senior pastor at Providence Community Church. So glad that you're listening today. This is part three of a series I've been plodding along in personally called Outgrowing Anxiety.

Now, one of the key pieces of my approach to counseling and with counseling anxiety, dealing with my own anxiety, is to remember sort of teleological things that are important to remember.

This is pretty much true of all suffering. You have to figure out what you are for, what suffering is for, so on and so forth, in order to sort out anxieties, fears, disappointments, and so forth.

[1 : 3 2] A lot of times it just comes down to you thinking that something's for one thing when it's for another thing. And this is really the root of what I was talking about from 2 Corinthians 4, where Paul calls himself a jar of clay containing the glory of Christ.

And it is important that he be a jar of clay. That is to be a fragile thing because all of the cracks and breaks expose the glory of Christ.

Even his own endurance, Paul's endurance, the fact that he's still all in one piece to some degree, proclaims the glories of Christ. So in that particular case, the resolution to a lot of social anxiety is to think, okay, what am I for?

And the answer is I'm to make Jesus look good. I'm not to make myself look good. That's not my aim. I'm to make Jesus look good. And one of the ways I do that is by being so evidently not Jesus.

And not in a sinful way exactly, although that, of course, brings glory to Jesus as well. But in this sense of just being imperfect, just being flawed, just making mistakes, not knowing things, having a lot more to learn and so forth.

[2 : 4 8] If the light of Christ is inside of you, I need you to trust me to understand that what will happen when that becomes a part of your life, when you are more vulnerable, when you don't know everything, when you do get confused, when you do make mistakes, when you do sin, all of that is just opportunity for Christ to shine through you.

And that's what you are for. You exist to bring glory to Christ. And this idea of teleology, I was thinking the other day, you know, when I was just like every other kid, learning algebra, thinking, am I ever going to use this?

And the answer is no. I almost never use algebra, but I use Aristotle pretty much every day. I do wish there had been more philosophy, more logic in education.

And I wish that was true to this day, which is one of the reasons why I'm so grateful for classical education is, you know, we are going to give them the tools that they'll actually use.

And you say, well, Chris, how do you use Aristotle every day? Well, everything I just talked about, it's just being trained to learn to think about things from a perspective of ends and means, of what are we trying to achieve and how do we get there?

[4 : 01] I'm thinking through ultimate ends and subordinate ends, which I'll talk about here in a minute. But anyway, to be clear, you're used to hearing, I mean, I don't mean to trash all of it, but absolutely pathetic, unhelpful discussions on anxiety that don't deal with basic things.

But the reality is, is that one of the basic things is your reputation, your appearance, the way people see you. That's all meant to make Jesus look good, not you look good.

And that can happen in so many ways, in so many circumstances, whether you're rich or poor or sick or healthy, smart or dumb, busy or, you know, have tons of free time.

Like there's ways where you can glorify Jesus no matter what's going on in your life. That's because Jesus is working in all of those things to willing to work his good purpose.

And he's going to turn all those things out for not only your good, but for his glory is what Romans 8.28 says. And so just remembering that you're not, you don't exist for some other means.

[5 : 05] You exist for Christ is key. Today I'm going to talk a lot about, well, I'm going to start talking about Ephesians because I'm supposed to preach this week on Ephesians chapter 1, verses 1 through 14, which I will do.

But that is way too beefy and rich a passage to just talk about it a little bit. So I'm going to go back through that later on.

But one of the things that Ephesians 1 says in verse 4 is that he chose us in him before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and blameless before him.

And what the word holy just means there is conformed to his standards. And so I want you to understand like that a lot of social anxiety is an effort to be holy and blameless before others. It's an inversion or a confusion of where you're supposed to be aiming your aspirations.

If I am to be holy in, this word holy might have you confused, but if I am to be holy in the eyes of my next door neighbor, I have to conform to his standards.

[6 : 19] Then I'm holy and blameless. If I deviate from his standards, then I am no longer holy and blameless in his eyes. Well, a lot of social anxiety is just trying to be holy and blameless in the eyes of people who made us or who we're supposed to live for or so forth.

So anyway, all that to say, we have so much that we could talk about on this subject of outgrowing anxiety, but a lot of it is actually not therapeutic as much as it is theological, truth-oriented.

And the reason why it doesn't lock in right away isn't because the truth doesn't work, because the truth doesn't correct or fix. It's just we're just that leaky.

We just have to hear this stuff so much. So don't get frustrated as if I'm talking about purely abstract things here. This is really the pathway. But, you know, it takes a long time for this stuff to settle in and start making a difference in our lives.

All right. So that's kind of an introduction to the series itself, Outgrowing Anxiety, which I believe needs to take more of a philosophical, logical, scriptural, teleological, and ontological perspective.

[7 : 24] So that's kind of why I'm doing the way I'm doing it. Now, prepare yourself because we're going to go for a while. Now, there's a number of pieces of this particular episode.

But I want to start off by talking about George Bailey from It's a Wonderful Life. We all watch it. We quote it. We cry at the end. We say it's one of the greatest stories ever told.

The question that we really are supposed to be asking is, are you ready to become George Bailey? That's the basic question. Are you ready to become George Bailey? If you watch the movie closely, Bailey is a man of almost uninterrupted suffering.

His hearing loss isn't random. It's the cost of saving his brother's life. His dreams of travel, adventure, success are repeatedly deferred, not because he's lazy or foolish, but because he keeps choosing responsibility over escape.

Every time he's on the verge of leaving Bedford Falls, something breaks, someone needs help, or the community he's holding together would collapse without him. George basically just doesn't get the life that he wants. But he does get the life that God wants for him.

[8 : 31] And by the time we meet him on the bridge, his anxieties and despair have reached a breaking point. He's exhausted and ashamed, convinced that his life has amounted to nothing. He's feeling existentially like a failure.

And he believes that his life has just been so marked with all this loss, and it's been so constrained away from adventure and, you know, sort of the more obvious forms of glory.

You know, he's just weary and despairing. But, of course, you know, Clarence shows him the truth. George's suffering wasn't a detour from significance.

It was the path of significance. You know, his sufferings didn't make his life smaller like he thought they did. They made it foundational. You know, there's entire lives, entire futures that existed because George stayed when he wanted to leave.

And he bore loss so that others could flourish. His life was a jar of clay. He was cracked, but the light of God's faithfulness and kindness to Bedford Falls shone through his cracks.

[9 : 45] And, you know, the insufficiencies of Bedford Falls made a lot of those cracks. So one of the questions that we should start thinking about with anxiety is what if a part of our anxiety comes from treating comfort and autonomy and personal fulfillment as ultimate ends when Scripture tells us they're subordinate ends?

What if we're constantly bracing ourselves against the very kinds of suffering that God uses to form his family, to bless others, and to actually redeem the whole world?

What if a big part of our suffering has to do with a big part of our anxiety has to do with a resistance to lean properly, masculinely, face-first into suffering?

And so the consequence of that is a constant suffering of anxiety. It's essentially we could live a bold life where we get punched in the face and nearly die and lose one ear's worth of hearing and, you know, have our heart broken six times.

Like we could live that kind of life full of these big punches of hard, life-devastating, nearly suicidal, life is so hard.

[11 : 00] Or maybe, like, that's just the way life is. You have to have some of that. And instead, we're creating these comfortable lives where we just microdose the suffering of anxiety every single day.

I mean, I don't know. Not all of this has been to be polemical. I'm thinking about some of this. I do think that our relationship with suffering is not what it needs to be if we are struggling with anxiety.

And that's kind of the main scope of this conversation today is to reframe that. You know, like I said, you've got to almost every pain point in our lives has some teleology to it.

It's like, what is this thing for? I was thinking about some of my church members who are suffering physically and how ultimately you just have to keep reminding yourself, what is this body for?

And, of course, there's a whole doctrine, the teleology of the Bible, the body is, or the teleology of the body. The body is for the Lord. That's where our entire doctrinal understanding of the body starts is the body is for the Lord.

[12 : 10] Everything flows from that sentence. So that's what I'm going to be trying to do today. I'm going to try to weave a bunch of this through. And also, I want to share some stuff from Ephesians with you that I won't get to on Sunday.

You know, that last episode, we talked about Paul's jars of clay. And today, I want to go one deeper layer and suggest that there's an inversion happening somewhere along the way in our anxious hearts that needs to get straightened out.

And to do that, I have to talk about ends and means, which, you know, is Aristotelian. There are other ways of talking about it. I'm just going to use those two phrases, ends and means.

And then the other idea is the ultimate ends and subordinate ends. So let me start there. An ultimate end is something you pursue for its own sake.

Okay, it's the final reason. It's the final goal. A subordinate end is something genuinely good that exists to serve something higher.

[13 : 20] So a subordinate end, and I will talk about this enough where I think you'll get those categories clear as we work through this. An ultimate end is like the final reason for something.

Subordinate ends are lesser reasons that are still good and good accomplishments, but they are leading to something else. So my ultimate end is to glorify God, and I would prefer to do that by having an intact family, a holy personal life.

There's a lot of secondary or subordinate ends that I would love to hope are the main way I will glorify God. But again, those things are not my ultimate end.

My ultimate end is to glorify God. I think that anxiety often shows up when we take a subordinate end like comfort or safety or control or success or approval, and we treat it like an ultimate end.

And once that happens, you know, failure becomes terrifying. Uncertainty itself feels like a threat, you know, all the time, which is just untenable.

[14 : 27] You just can't live a productive life where uncertainty feels like a threat. You just can't do it. You will not be able to love. You will not be able to lead.

You will not be able to learn. You will not be able to live the way you're supposed to live if uncertainty itself feels like a constant threat. And then, of course, on top of that, we've got a bunch of misunderstandings related to suffering and what suffering is for.

And then, you know, there's just this idea that God hardwires us to avoid danger and prevent harm, and that's a good thing. But anxiety happens when that instinct is asked to do more than it was designed to do.

You know, there's a level which God says, hey, do what you can to avoid hardship. But the anxious heart forgets to hear that one part there, the do what you can.

And then after that, there's just a lot you can't do. So there's a lot of layers to this. Let me kind of ground all this in the first 14 verses of Ephesians 1.

[15 : 35] Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus, grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.

In love, he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the beloved.

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight, making known to us the mystery of his will according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

[16 : 57] In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, believed in him and were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. Who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory?

Now, on Sunday I will talk a little bit about some of this, and one of the things I will discuss is the concept of divine decree. God having his will be done and having his will accomplished, no matter what, simply because he's determined that that will be the case.

And so the passage is full of language of God's intention. By the will of God, he chose us before the foundation of the world. He predestined us according to the purpose of his will, in all wisdom and insight, the mystery of his will, according to the purpose, as a plan for the fullness of time, predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things, according to the counsel of his will.

So one of the things is just this God, and this is a big theme that's coming up on Sunday, is this God is not only in charge of everything, but he does all things for very clear reasons.

I'll get to that in a moment. And those reasons are always kind. Those reasons are always loving in some respect or another.

[18 : 22] So one just like big takeaway, and this is ontology, which I think gets covered more on this subject. But to deal with any kind of suffering, you kind of need to ask what you are and what you're for.

And that's ontology and teleology. Ontology is like, what are you? And then what are you for? That's theology. Well, what am I when I'm suffering?

I need to know, what am I? And the answer is, I'm God's. I'm God's. That's what I am. I'm God's. Well, who is God? He's the one who, according to the counsel of his will, has worked out all things in advance to be done as they will be done.

Whose am I? I'm God's. Who is God? He is the one who's in charge. So, you know, there's an ontological glory there. We'll talk about that a little bit more on Sunday.

Okay. But also, there's just a ton of teleology and kind of aims that God is revealing in this passage. Again, I know this sounds academic, but please, if you have to write some of this down, write it down.

[19 : 31] Or if you want the notes, just ask me. But there are subordinate ends and ultimate ends. An ultimate end is what is designed for its own sake. A subordinate end is something genuinely good that is desired for the sake of something higher.

Ultimate ends are goals that don't go beyond themselves. That's it. You've reached your destination. There's nowhere else to go. Subordinate ends are real goods that serve and support something greater.

God's ultimate end, as revealed in this passage and in throughout the whole scripture, is the praise of his own glory. God's main goal, his ultimate goal, where there's nothing else going beyond it, is the praise of his own glory.

God's subordinate ends are the many good things he accomplishes to bring that glory about. So, his ultimate end is to bring himself glory.

And this shows up three times in that passage I just read. Three times you'll read, to the praise of his glory. Verse 6, to the praise of his glorious grace.

[20 : 36] Verse 12, to the praise of his glory. Verse 14, to the praise of his glory. What is God aiming for with all of his sovereign capacity, all of his wisdom, all of his love, all of his ability to do whatever he sets out to do?

What is it that he's chosen to do? He's chosen to do the only thing that would be morally fitting for a supremely good, divine, ultimate good, divine being to do, and that is to praise himself.

Because that's what you would have to do. If you were the ultimate being, the ultimate being would say, what is the thing that I can praise?

And that's a moral imperative of being. And he would have to line up and say, well, that's me. I don't mean to suggest that God is constrained to praise himself, but just that it is fitting for him to praise himself.

And so, his main aim throughout all the Bible is clear to bring glory to his name. You're going to find that all over the Bible. There are so many passages that talk about that.

[21 : 45] What you won't see, this is pretty cool. Once you won't see anywhere else as far as I know, and I would love to be proven wrong on this, is I don't think you'll ever see another place in the Bible where all three members of the Trinity are set apart to be praised.

So, I mentioned a moment ago, there are three instances in Ephesians 1 through 14, Ephesians 1, 1 through 14, that say to God's praise, to his glory, to his glory.

Well, listen to this. This is crazy. All right, verse 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.

In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the beloved.

Here, the person that fits the pronoun in verse 6, to the praise of his glorious grace, that's God as Father.

[22 : 54] That's who is there. Christ in this section is the instrument that brings that praise about, but the pronoun actually goes all the way back to the beginning of verse 3.

God the Father is the one who gets praised. Well, now if you look at verse 11, you've got, Now whose glory are we praising here?

Well, it's Christ's. So that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. And then in verse 13, In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Well, who's the glory there? Who gets the glory there? The Spirit. So, yeah, I think this is, I don't know of another passage that does it this way. This is pretty remarkable. Here you have the Trinity all working for the praise, glory of the Godhead, each in their own economic roles.

Praise to the Father. Praise to the Son. Praise to the Spirit. Three in one. I mean, guys, the Bible's just amazing. Anyway, all that to say that that's the ultimate end.

[24 : 17] That's the final terminus of all possible ends that are worthy is that God will be glorified forever and ever. Now, this passage mentions that three times, but then it also mentions a ton of other really wonderful things that are secondary or subordinate ends.

That we would be holy and blameless before him, verse 5. That we would be adopted as his sons, verse 5. We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, verse 7.

We have been made known. We have been told the mystery of his will, verse 9. He is uniting all things in him, verse 10.

We have obtained an inheritance, verse 11. So these are all really good things that serve this greater thing. These are subordinate ends that serve the ultimate end.

The subordinate ends are conversion, the reconciliation of the world unto Christ, forgiveness of our trespasses, the sealing of the Holy Spirit. There are all these secondary things that God has purposed to do that don't distract him from accomplishing his end result, but actually support the accomplishment of that end result.

[25 : 41] And by the way, just as an aside, these secondary or subordinate ends in this section of Scripture are basically the table of contents for the whole letter. Paul's really just telling us in advance, in concentrated form, the major themes he will return to throughout the letter.

Our identity in Christ, God's cosmic purpose, the role of the Spirit, the life of the Church. The rest of Ephesians from verse 15 on doesn't change the subject.

It just slows down and fills in what Paul has said in this long opening sentence in Ephesians 1. But that's, you know, I mean, that's a minor point.

The real thing I wanted you to see is that there's structure all the way down. God's ultimate ends, to the praise of his glory, stands over his subordinate ends to unite all things in himself, to forgive us, to make us holy and blameless.

Those things just lead to and support the ultimate aim, which is to have God's name be glorified and praised. And so even when those, and then we can look at the subordinate ends themselves and see that they are even ordered to some degree.

[26 : 56] They're all equal, or they're all wonderful, but they aren't all equally, you know, ordered, I guess you could say. Amongst all the benefits listed, there's one benefit that stands head and shoulders above everything else.

And listen, I'm just going to read the passage again, because why not? So Paul and Apostle, which I want you to do here, is I just want you to listen for all the subordinate ends, like all the good things God is doing.

And I want you to decide which one is the ultimate of all the subordinates, which one stands at the top of that second category. All right. Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus, by the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus, grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.

In love, he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the beloved.

[28 : 07] In him, we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight, making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

In him, we've obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be the praise of his glory.

In him, you also, when you heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it to the praise of his glory.

Okay, I just read all of those. Which one stands out as the most important? Is it that we are forgiven? Is it that his blood has redeemed us and forgiven us of our trespasses?

Is it that we were predestined? Is it that we will be holy? Is holiness the main point? The best of the subordinate ends, the most important of them? Is it that we have an inheritance or that God has shown us the mystery of his will?

[29 : 20] Is knowing the truth about God, is that the ultimate aim? Is it that we, you know, which one is it? Well, the one that is the ultimate in this list of subordinates is that we are adopted, that we're made his children.

Amongst all the benefits listed, one stands head and shoulders above them all. It's not forgiveness. It's not holiness. It isn't even God's plan to unite all things in Christ. It's adoption.

The building of a filial family, as the theologians describe, the household of God. That's the main way God gets his glory. And I'll show you in a minute that that's always been stated explicitly in Scripture, that the main way God gets his glory is by securing a people for himself.

But that's the main glory. Adoption is the main glory. All these other things are subordinate to that ultimate end or either flow to it or from it.

So one of the best books I've read in the last five years or so is a book by David Garner on adoption. He goes through. It's going to be more technical than the average person will want to read. But it is actually readable if you wanted to just, you know, try and you'd have to look up some words and things.

[30 : 36] But there's really no other book that I know of that does what it does. And it just provides a thorough theology of adoption, of spiritual adoption. And shows that it is the high point of all the subordinate ends.

It's the chief way that God glorifies his name. Let me just read some quotes from Garner on this. Adoption is the very goal of Christ's coming, he writes elsewhere.

The sending of God's Son and his redemption of those who are under the law, important as they are in their own right, are here a means to an end. The end being huyethesia of the believers.

That's the word for adoption. One more. The final purpose of redemption on the stage of history is the glory of the triune God. So there he's talking about ultimate ends.

The final purpose of redemption on the stage of history is the glory of the triune God. Yet, adoption as filial declaration and filial transformation, that just means familial, as filial declaration and filial transformation, accomplishes the prevailing doxological purpose of God by securing holy sons, by adoption through the dead and resurrected Son, delivering the loftiest expression of his glory.

[31 : 58] The summary, the Chris summary of that, is God does all sorts of things. They're all really cool. All things are ultimately for the ultimate thing, which is the glory of his name. But making a people for himself has always been transparently, if you're just paying attention, the Bible's central means that God has in mind to bring himself glory.

You know, in 2 Samuel 7, God makes a covenant with David and David understands this piece of it. He understands his role. He feels entirely flattered and undeserving to play the role he's playing, but he understands what God's doing.

And in 2 Samuel 7, verse 22, he starts, he's talking to God. He says, Therefore you are great, O Lord God, for there is none like you, and there is no God beside you, according to all that we have heard with our ears.

And who is like your people Israel, the one nation on earth, whom God went to redeem to be his people, making himself a name and doing for them great and awesome things by driving out people before, driving out before your people, whom you redeemed for yourself from Egypt, a nation, and its gods.

The whole lesson of the Exodus is God's doing all these things for his own glory, and that is in large part facilitated by him making a people for himself.

[33 : 23] In Isaiah 43, you have this really explicitly spelled out. God says, Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth, everyone who was called by my name, who I created for my glory.

Why did God make a family? Why has he adopted us as sons and daughters? For his glory. Later on in Isaiah 43, verse 21, The people whom I formed for myself, that they might declare my praise.

And then, you know, it doesn't get any clearer than when Jesus, in the high priestly prayer, just talks about this explicitly. He talks about a people who were given to him by the Father, and they exist to be glorified.

Jesus is glorifying himself in their existence. Acts 15, God first visited the Gentiles to take from them a people for his name, unless we think that this is a purely Jewish thing.

Point being, throughout Scripture, God repeatedly states that he acts for the sake of his name, glory and praise, by forming a group of people, a family, a household of faith, and that that's the primary subordinate means.

[34 : 36] And it's spelled out pretty clearly, I think, in Ephesians 1, 4 through 6, in love. He predestined us for adoption to himself through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace.

All the other subordinate ends mentioned in our passage are connected to this grand purpose. I think of it this way. There are some of the things mentioned in our passage lead upstream to adoption, and then some of the things in our passage flow out of adoption.

So there's upstream ends and downstream ends. So the upstream ends, predestination, we're told he chose us, he predestined us. That's leading toward adoption.

Justification and the forgiveness of sins, that's in that passage too, in verse 7. That's leading toward adoption. Being made holy and blameless, that's the necessary fitness that the sons and daughters must possess to dwell before a holy father.

And we have been chosen to be made holy and blameless before him. So there's all these things that God is doing to support his glory, to give himself glory.

[35 : 45] The main one is to call out and keep a people for himself. And there are things that he does to lead up to that, which is he predestines, he justifies, he sanctifies.

And then there are things that flow out of that adoption. The sealing of the Holy Spirit referred to in verses 13 and 14. The inheritance mentioned in verses 11 and 14.

There's a bunch of inheritance language in Ephesians. I think there's four different references to it. And then even, this is crazy to me, even the reconciliation of all things.

You know, the text says that God has a plan for the fullness of time to cause all things to be reconciled or to be dwelling in Christ, to lead to Christ, or to be held by Christ.

I think it's kind of the linguistic intent there. And you can see that progress through the rest of Ephesians 1, the fullness of him who fills all in all. Well, this is just classic Pauline cosmology, post-resurrection and ascension.

[36 : 48] He just talks about the world getting reconciled a lot. In Colossians 1, he says that Christ is going to reconcile, or has reconciled all things to himself, whether on earth or in heaven.

It's really just this idea that he's going to pull all the world together under his authority and make it new. Right? That's the big part of it. Well, you know, if you know your Bible well, you'll know that what are we waiting on for God to make all things new?

What are we waiting on for the creation to be lifted out of its curse of futility and be renewed? Well, Romans 8 tells us explicitly Paul says that in Romans 8 that creation is waiting with an eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God and that it will be set free from its bondage to corruption in the moment when all of God's children become God's children.

When all those he's predestined to be his are his, creation will be renewed. The idea is creation's not renewed instead of the sons or independently of them.

It's renewed because of them. When God's family is formed, fully formed, the liberation of the world will happen. It's tied to the public unveiling of those whom God has adopted.

[38 : 08] Adoption, therefore, stands upstream of cosmic renewal. God restores the world as the fitting inheritance for all the sons and daughters he's gathered in to his family through Christ.

And the book of Revelation brings this trajectory to its kind of consummation. The redeemed are described in chapter 5 of Revelation, verse 10, as a kingdom of priests who will reign on the earth with Christ.

The final vision declares in Revelation 22, they will reign forever and ever in God's immediate presence. So the renewed creation even is not merely a backdrop for salvation, but an arena for, or, you know, a kingdom for the sons and daughters to rule.

That's why, that's why you have to conclude that the Narnia series was semi-miraculous. He even figured that part out. You know, it's just stunning.

Anyway, the world is reconciled, the world is brought together and made new, not just because God wants to, but because God wants to give it to His children, to rule with Him, to dwell in it, to inherit it, to reign with Christ, together with Christ over it.

[39 : 30] And so, yeah, it's just crazy because when you go through Ephesians 1, you've got ultimate end, which is stated three times in a triune form. All the praise goes to the Father, all the praise goes to the Son, all the praise goes to the Spirit, and then you have like all these other amazing things He's doing.

He's forgiving us. He's making us holy. He's giving us an inheritance. He's sealing us with the Holy Spirit, and so forth. And you realize, well, you know, all that's wonderful, and all of that actually just supports this penalty, this secondary goal, which is to bring in His whole family, to adopt children, to convert those who were once His enemies, not only into His friends, but into His sons and daughters.

That's why people like, you know, Watson and Calvin and, you know, these newer guys like Garner, they rightly identify adoption as, humanly speaking, in terms of the stuff that directly affects us.

You know, we're still, we're creatures, we're subordinate, so we can only be subordinate ends in that respect. But what's the goal? Well, the goal is to make us His. And everything else that's happening is just supporting that or flowing out of that.

Now, how does that help anxiety? Well, it answers so many questions that are so important. Like, what am I for? Am I to, do I exist to impress others?

[40 : 54] Do I exist to be safe? Do I exist to be comfortable? No, I exist to be God's son. I exist to be God's daughter. That's why I exist.

That's what I am. And no, and then it's like, okay, well, what is God's, what do God's sons and daughters do? This is not, see, this is the infantilization of nominalism would make you cuddle up on your daddy's lap and just abide.

But that's not at all what the Bible talks about this. It's not at all how the Bible talks about this. The Bible talks about sons and daughters as co-laborers with their father.

Well, that's going to require you to get hurt. That's going to require you to take risks. That's going to require you to go out with a sense of confidence as a royal child of God and just pay the price, do the work, knowing that your labor is not in vain.

And so, a lot of anxiety, I think, comes in around the edges of questions about vocation and provision and will I have enough and is my boss going to like me?

[42 : 09] Am I going to get fired? You know, like there's just so many layers of stuff that surround that as well. And so, I'm not done yet. I've got a lot more to talk about here. I want to pause here and say that what we now need to do is say, how can we be people who instead of being afraid of risk, embrace it?

Okay? How can we be people who are instead of being afraid of risk, embrace it? So, we'll conclude this and I'm actually not even going to get up from my chair.

I'm just going to stop this recording and start another one because I want to, I've got it already, but I do know that I probably shouldn't ask you to sit through like 90 minutes of a podcast.

So, we'll end this. You can go live your life, go think about this stuff for a few days, go read through the notes if you want them, ask me, I'll give them to you. Read, get your, get your categories figured out, understand that almost all of your fears have to do with the loss of subordinate things.

Anyway, there's a lot to unpack there, but now we can turn into work, which, and, and supply, and pain, and so on and so forth. So, we'll wrap this one up and then we'll, we'll go back into this topic for part four of outgrowing anxiety.

[43 : 34] Thank you. The Army Blues!

The Army Blues! Woo! Thank you! Thank you.