



Podcast Episode 203
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“How Fear Shapes Your Life, and How to Take Control”

David Loy: Hi and welcome to *In the Loop* with Andy Andrews, I’m your host David Loy. Andy, are you there?

Andy Andrews: I am here David. How are you doing?

David: I am terrific. I’m excited. We continue to get some unique and inspiring questions, some great feedback on these conversations. And I really hope that that’s what people are hearing. Surely they know that you’re, you know, that you’re not studying, preparing and outlining the answers to all of this.

Andy: Yeah, I’m pretty sure they got that David. I’m pretty sure they figured that out.

David: Well and we’ve talked about it several times but it’s not like you’re, I mean, you see these questions pretty much right when I ask them to you.

Andy: I really enjoy this, this is, we’ve said this before, it’s the only thing that I do that doesn’t have, this has a lifetime of preparation but not an hour of it. Does that make sense?

David: Absolutely. And...

Andy: So it's something that, this podcast causes me to think very hard, very deeply and very intently. And so, I think that, it's a neat thing that we all kind of get to think together. You know, when we initially started doing this, almost four years ago, the idea was that we would kind of take a topic and do something and maybe people could send in questions. But it has really evolved into, we're kind of taking the topics that everybody else wants to hear and it kind of sense. It's great for me because it creates a great learning point for me as well. Well I'm stretching and learning and working as hard as I can too.

David: Absolutely. Well and for those of you who have been with us for a long time, maybe you've been listening for several years, just know that we repeat and kind of recover some of these items because there has been a large influx of new people that have started listening to this podcast. So we're just trying to make sure that everybody's up to speed on everything and on why we do what we do and exactly what Andy's purpose is. As everybody knows this is the most direct access that is available in the most conversational access that's available. And Andy loves taking his time to do this, to engage in conversation, to hear people's questions and give perspective. That's a part of your mission Andy and I know that you really are enjoying doing this on a regular basis.

Andy: Yeah, I really am. Really am. So have we gotten anything today?

David: We do.

Andy: Did anybody write in?

David: Oh did anybody. We've got so many that we're going to try to cover two of them today. The first one comes from Brenda, let me read you Brenda's email. She says, hi Andy, I need some assistance. I just finished listening to the podcast regarding the things on your desk. Now you quoted a Bible verse, that helps to remind you that if it makes you fearful, it's not from God. I get it and I believe it, I really do. We should trust him. He gives us strength and courage to carry out what he's called us to do. Yet there are also so many fearful people that God uses. Andy how do you reconcile the fact that you should not be fearful because he is on the throne with the fact that you're human, you're scared and God sometimes uses our fear to motivate and shape us? That would indicate that fear does come from him. I need a discussion about this, I'm very curious to get your thoughts? It's making my head spin.

Andy: Well I'm with you Brenda. It makes my head spin too. You know I have been believe, like obviously you believe that it's all from God, if God's the creator, but that said, we're flawed people, fallen people, and I still maintain, you know, that there's nowhere, and if you believe that Bible is God's word and I do, I can't find anywhere that it says, that fear is from him. And but I find many instances indicating that God can use even bad things to fulfill his purposes. That there's even, that even tragedies, even bad choices that we make, even the messes we get into, all on our own, God can still use those things and make something wonderful out of it. You know, I don't really think, it's just like, I think there are things that God allows and I suppose there are things that God moves certain mountains or certain chess pieces so to speak, but I don't find any evidence that God will say, ok, I'm going to make you scared here. I think that there are times, the times that I have been scared, I'm trying to make sure I'm right about this or make sure

I'm telling the truth about my own life. The times that I have been scared, everything I can remember, David now help me with this, everything I can remember, these have been instances that I've kind of brought on myself. Now I would, I mean, situations or places that I put myself in, now I guess the one thing that would not be true there would be when somebody is sick, it's something that we can't control and we are fearful there. But even there, you know, God says, fear not, that he's in control. And so I can't and you think your head's spinning here, let me give you this. I can't imagine that God would say, fear not, so many times and don't fear so many times, I can't imagine that he would say that if he was going to give fear, right. Because you say that it would indicate that fear does come from him. I can't imagine God saying, ok, hey, I'm going to make you scared. Ok, you scared? Alright, don't be scared. Don't be scared. I mean, right. That would be kind of crazy right? And so does that make sense?

David: Well it does. And I think that this kind of to me at least, ties back to your, what you've talked about so many times, the thinking and how thinking determines your choices. But that paradox that you talk about.

Andy: Yeah, because our thinking determines our choices, we can choose how we think.

David: And fear is a choice, essentially is what I'm getting. You can choose to be fearful.

Andy: It really is. I think about talking to Adam not too long ago about something that he, he went to a new school this year. And so, he was fearful. The first couple of days, before going to the school. And when he came back, and I talk to him about purpose and God's purpose. And why he might be

going to that school. And was he going to lose the friends that he had? No. Would he make new friends? Yes. Would he be able to introduce new friends to old friends? And all of a sudden everybody would have more friends? Yeah, yeah. Has he ever been in a situation where somebody like, didn't, that they didn't want to have anything to do with them and they didn't know? No, no. You know, I went over all the things that he might have to be fearful of. And you know, I was really praying, allowing God to use me to steer this little boy who was nervous about it but choosing how we think. And none of us want to do anything different. We're all very, even if something's bad, it's like, what's that old statement, the hell you know is better than the hell you don't know. And so people even in bad places will just stay there because they just don't want, they're just scared it might get worse. It's funny to me, you know, I talk and work with a lot of college football teams and so I was working with one not too long ago, and the coach is new there, at the school. And it was funny that I heard kind of rumors of people being nervous about him and gosh, that they were nervous about the new coach. And I'm like, really, they're nervous about the new coach? I mean, all you heard about was they hated the old guy, they just hated him, hated him. But then when he got fired, everybody was, all of a sudden, oh no, what's this new guy gonna be like? Right? I mean, it's like, let's just keep the old guy. We hate him but we know why we hate him.

David: Fear of the unknown is worse.

Andy: And so I guess, even with Adam, we're choosing what we're thinking because when he came home from school, that day, I said, hey how was it? He said, well it was different. I said, was it good different? He said, it was. I said, ok. Ok, well it was good different so that's good. That's good. So good different, if it's different and it's good, that means better, right? Right. And

so we're choosing how we think and over and over again, I can't find the wisdom or the results in going against what God directs. And so when God says, fear not and I continue to be afraid, nothing good ever happens there.

David: That's good. That's great perspective. And I think a great question Brenda. This is hopefully a place where people feel like they can ask the questions that are making their head spin.

Andy: Yeah, that was a good question. I'm glad I was able to think through that a little bit. I'll continue to Brenda.

David: Yes, and we're not looking for softballs here so I think this is the type of question that excites you Andy. You love thinking through this along with people.

Andy: I do. That's how I really grow and I think that's how I get a lot of what I want to teach. Because to think through something is how I learn and thinking through it out loud and so I appreciate so much you guys, Brenda, I appreciate your patience with me while I stumble around talking, thinking through this. Anyway, awesome question.

David: Alright, well I'm glad you said that because we've got another one for you. This one comes from a pastor in Pennsylvania. His name is pastor Rick and he writes. Andy, I'll get right to the point. I've heard from others that you have to believe in yourself. But it's something that I can't seem to get a grasp on. Which probably stems from my childhood. I am now a pastor at age 60 and very concerned about my own thinking. I don't want my flaws passed on to those that I minister to. I definitely believe in God, he can do anything, but what about belief in myself? Is this really important and if so, how do I do it

and balance this against pride, which can lead to arrogance? I've never heard you address this issue and I would love to hear your thoughts. Love your podcasts, please don't quit them. And again, that's from pastor Rick in Pennsylvania. Andy, that's

Andy: That one makes my head spin.

David: But again I love that people are sending some real life difficult questions. This is from a pastor, I think a lot of us frequently and inaccurately assume that pastors have it all together and that they don't ever face any difficult issues like this.

Andy: Well I know exactly what he's talking about. I may not be great at explaining this but let me take a shot at it. But Rick I got you here. And I think maybe, you know, the thing we say, you have to believe in yourself often, and that's true to a degree. But really I think the foundation of that statement and let me tell you, the foundation is the key. To find the foundation in your thinking or to find the foundation in what you are digging into, finding the foundation is to find the truth. You know, something can be true but not be the truth. The truth connotes a foundational truth, the truth, something that's the bottom line, that's the whole story, the truth. Something can be true and yet there can be more to it. And so, when we say, you have to believe in yourself, I think the foundation there is that, especially for you Rick and me, is, you are, you have a belief in the God who made you. And as the old saying goes, that God doesn't make junk, and that God made you for a purpose, with a purpose. And because he made you that way, then it is obvious, if he made you for a purpose, then he believes in you. And so foundationally, if you believe in God as your creator, then you have to believe in his creation. And so I understand how you struggle with this. And you say,

that it probably stems from your childhood, I think a lot of stuff stems from our childhood. And Rick, as a pastor, you're out there, speaking, and you're putting words and thoughts and truths out there, that you've spend time praying over and really struggling with. So you put those out there and as a pastor, I know, after the sermon, you have people say, oh that was great and then you might get a note from that little old lady that says, well I don't think you should've said that or whatever. And you're hearing the good and the bad. And I know what you're doing because when I write the books that I write, today more than any time in societal history, anybody who writes anything, you are just wide open to criticism. It still amazes me, that on Amazon, that they allow people to write bad reviews or really kind of anything, I suppose. And I'm not saying they shouldn't, I just think it's kind of funny because this is a bookseller. I mean, it's an online book store and you don't go into a book store down at the mall and they don't allow people to put stick it notes up next to a book saying, this is crap, don't read this, this is the stupidest thing I ever heard. And yet they do on Amazon. I'm always very aware that the authors are probably reading that because for a long time I did. And it did not do me any good. And I had, you know, I knew I was writing what I was supposed to write, I know that I'm writing what I'm supposed to write. But believe it or not pastor, that my biggest critics have amazingly been, I guess maybe Christians, you know. Because like in the Jones book, in The Noticer book, the first one came out and there were people writing, well I notice, you didn't notice Jesus. I notice you didn't notice him. And you know, it's like, good grief, just really rude and vicious. And there was a reason, there was a reason I don't put that in the book. I am writing books to bring about conversations between people. You know, I love Billy Graham too, but people who don't believe, people who are non-Christians do not read those books. They just won't read them, ok. And so if

we want to bring people into a knowledge and saving grace of Christ, you know we want, let's put it this way. If we're supposed to be the light of the world, that's what Jesus said, right, you're the light of the world. If we're the light of the world, well light is illuminating, it's attracting, it's warm. And so if we're the light of the world, we should be attracting, we should be illuminating, we should light the way, we should be warm, friendly. And so, I would read this stuff and it would just like put me in a funk. I mean, it was just awful. And I tried to talk myself out of it and frankly I just don't read them any more. But because, you know, there can be a hundred great ones and then one will just send me in a reeling.

And I always remembered a story, I had dinner one night with Jim Palmer, who was The Baltimore Orioles pitcher and he told me the story about how he was going in, he was being voted onto going to a Hall of Fame one night. And this was before cell phones or anything. But he and his family, close friends had gone to this really nice restaurant. They were waiting on the call from the Hall, to say whether he had gotten in or not. And everybody thought that he would be in, you know the first ballot. But as the night wore on, they didn't get a call, didn't get a call. And they kind of finally said, well maybe I didn't get in this time. I'll just wait on a next year. But finally later that night, the..came over with the phone and the cord trailing behind him, and the telephone was on the silver tray, and he said, Mr. Palmer, we have a phone call for you. And everybody went oh, oh. So Jim picked up the phone and he said, yes. And the guy said, Jim Palmer. He said, yes. He said, this is so and so from Cooperstown, the Baseball Hall of Fame, and I would like to congratulate you, you have been elected to The Hall of Fame. And Jim gave a thumbs up to the table and everybody cheered, everybody so excited. And he said, hey Jim, I just wanted to tell you, congratulations personally and

also just to let you know, that you were elected with 91% of the vote, which is the highest percentage that a pitcher has ever been elected on the first ballot into The Hall of Fame. And so that's just awesome and I wanted to tell you how excited we are for you. And Jim said, at that moment, he said, I didn't hear anything but, he said, all I could think of was 9% didn't vote for me? 9% thought I wasn't good enough? Did I do something to them? He said it was crazy. But I understand that. And so this is what you're talking about Rick, this is what you and I and Jim Palmer do. And so here is what a very important person in my life told me about that. He said, Andy do you believe that, in God as your leader, as your heavenly father, as your savior? And I said, yes. And so he said, do you believe that you are doing what God wants you to do? And I said, yes. He said, do you believe that the words in those books, that you're writing, do you believe that those words are the words that God's directing you to write, to help people, to change their lives, to help people who are hurting? You believe that God is directing those words? And I said, yes. He said, so, I want you to be aware that when you read what these other people write, and you listen to them and you allow them to affect your feelings, then you are basically saying, that what they think about you, is more important than what God thinks about you. And so you're allowing yourself to be led by them and not by God.

And so at that point I said, I'm not reading this stuff any more. And so again Rick, I believe that you can strongly believe in yourself because you believe in the God who made you and gave you a purpose. And pointed you in a direction. I think that you can balance this against pride, not only publicly but privately. I know that as a pastor you have the same kind of things that I do. I have people come up to me and say, you changed my life, you changed my life. And so, I will say, hey I'm glad you enjoyed the book, I'm just writing

it down and I've got the same connections you do. And so I'm glad we're kind of teaming up on this together and I'm learning just as hard as you are. And if I don't have the opportunity to say that and I only have the opportunity to say, thank you, then I make sure that I say to God, hey, you know I don't believe that. You did that God. And a lot of times I'll just say, thank you Lord, the critic's yours, it's not mine. And so you, I think you're fine Rick, because you already know that you have to balance against pride which can lead to arrogance. And so if you know it, you can deal with it, you can work with it. And I think you're good buddy.

David: And seeking wisdom, asking the questions, obviously eager to hear the answers. So absolutely. Rick thank you so much for that great question. Andy thanks for your answers. And Brenda, your question as well. Again we'd love to have you jump in on this conversation. Give us a call 1800 726 2639, that's 1800 726 Andy. Leave us your name, where are you calling from and your question and hopefully we'll get to that on a future episode of this podcast. You can also email those questions to intheloop@andyandrews.com. And Andy I'm sure we'll have a couple of additional great questions for you next week.

Andy: Awesome. Looking forward to it.

David: Thanks.

Would you like to run something by Andy? Contact us and your question might be featured on the show!

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