

## Reasons not to worry...

When you face difficulties your crisis moment demands an answer to the age-old query: To Worry or Not to Worry?

One individual spoke of the preventative power of worry.

“Nearly 100% of the things I worry about never happen...” “See worry works!”

25 “For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, *as to* what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, *as to* what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?

32 “For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

33 “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. (Matt. 6:25, 32, 33)

These verses, found in the middle of Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount give reasons not to worry.

### Jesus begins with the Connection between Worry and the Love of Money

**Therefore** – Lit. “*For this reason...*” What Reason?

In the previous verse Jesus says:

“No one can serve two masters;  
     for either he will hate the one and love the other,  
     or he will be devoted to one and despise the other.  
 You cannot serve God and wealth!”

The word for wealth is mammon;  
 – the idea of material wealth personified as an object of worship.

Loving money is harmful because we can’t serve God and money at the same time. Jesus connects worry with one who serves material goods.

Paul refers to a ‘covetous man,’ as ‘an idolater.’ (Eph.5:5)

Therefore, Jesus says to ‘Stop showing all the signs of being a materialist.’

### **I. Worry is Wrong**

In this scripture Jesus says not to worry.

“...do not be worried about your life ...eat...drink... put on. v 25

“Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ ...drink?’ or wear for clothing?’ v 32

... do not worry about tomorrow; v 34

the Westminster Shorter Catechism says in it’s first question:

“What is the chief end of man?”

“Man’s chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.”

If this is what our Christian life is all about, we cannot serve God and bring glory to Him if we doubt that He’ll take care of us.

Old cliché, “If you’re worrying, you’re not trusting;  
and if you’re trusting, you’re not worrying.”

Kenneth Wuest’s in his “Word Studies in the Greek New Testament” writes,  
“God commands us to ‘stop perpetually worrying about even one thing.’  
We commit sin when we worry. We do not trust God when we worry. We do not receive answers to prayer when we worry, because we are not trusting.”<sup>1</sup>

Worry/Anxiety – Gk. merimnos – can mean a genuine concern for someone, or obsessions that originate from a distorted perspective of life.

**Worry** is an old English term - from an old German word- “to strangle or choke”  
Worry is a kind of mental and emotional strangulation, which probably causes more mental and physical afflictions than any other single cause.<sup>2</sup>

Psychology today labels **anxiety** as-  
a feeling of worry, nervousness, or unease, typically about an imminent event or something with an uncertain outcome.

Someone has called anxiety “fear in search of a cause.”

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<sup>1</sup> Kenneth S. Wuest, Wuest’s Word Studies, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1966), Vol. IV. P. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

George Sweeting writes,

Our English word worry is equivalent to the Greek word merimnao. It is a combination of two words: merizo, meaning “to divide,” and nous, meaning “mind.” Worry really means “to divide the mind.” It means we are double-minded rather than single minded.

The apostle James warned, “A double-minded man [is] unstable in all his ways” (James 1:8)

When we are double-minded, we resemble a monster with two heads facing in opposite directions, or we are like rudderless boats, unable to steer straight, “driven and tossed by the wind” (James 1:6)

**Worry is** a sin of distrusting the promise and providence of God.

**Christ’s Command:** *Stop worrying and never start it again.*

**Paul wrote,**

“Be anxious for nothing (not a single thing), but in everything by prayer,”  
(Phil. 4:6)

**MacArthur writes,**

“For Christians, worry and anxiety are forbidden, foolish, and sinful.... Absolutely nothing in any aspect of our lives, internal or external, justifies our being anxious when we have the Master we do”<sup>3</sup>

Worry is wrong because it violates the command of Christ, ‘not to worry’, and puts doubt on God’s character and ability.

## **II. Worry is Unreasonable**

<sup>26</sup>Look at the birds of the air,  
that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns,  
and yet your heavenly Father feeds them.

Are you not worth much more than they?

<sup>27</sup>And who of you by being worried  
can add a single hour to his life?

<sup>28</sup>And why are you worried about clothing?

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<sup>3</sup> John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Matthew 1-7*, (The Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, 1985), p. 419.

Observe how the lilies of the field grow;  
 they do not toil nor do they spin,  
<sup>29</sup>yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory  
 clothed himself like one of these.

<sup>30</sup>But if God so clothes the grass of the field,  
 which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace,  
 will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith!

It is unreasonable to worry because God cares so much for us.

Since He cares for little birds and feeds them, He will care for us as well.

As we look at the beauty of flowers and grasses of the field, that they are clothed  
 in beauty that surpasses the clothing of Solomon,  
 it's only logical to assume that God will clothe us as well.

God is able to care for all of our needs.

Peter wrote,

“Casting all your care upon Him; for He cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7).

The last part of the verse literally means,

“He is mindful of you and your interests.”

He thinks about you.

What we send His way He receives.

**Paul writes to the Roman Christians,**

“He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how  
 will He not also with Him freely give us all things?” (Rom. 8:32)

Worry is wrong, unreasonable, and unnecessary.

### **III. Worry is Unnecessary**

33 “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness,  
 and all these things will be added to you.

If we seek God's interests and follow His way

He has promised to take care of all our needs.

Worry is rooted in a false view of material things – a temporal value system.

*Concern over the things that only last for time instead of eternity.*

Looking to money for our security instead of God results in worry. In the language of slavery this section speaks of the preposterous idea of a slave having two masters, since he is owned by only one.

Sinclair Ferguson writes,

“Instead of being the servants of the Lord, whose service is perfect freedom, we become slaves to what God has made, and even to what man has made – possessions.”<sup>4</sup>

- **God owns everything, controls everything, and provides everything.**

David wrote,

“The earth is the Lord’s, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it.”  
(Psalm 24:1)

The root cause of worry is owning anything.

100% of worriers never worry about things belonging to others.

When we dedicate our lives to the Lord, it’s vital that we relinquish our rights to ownership of our possessions. The writer to the Hebrew believers recalled an earlier persecution:

“But remember the former days, when, after being enlightened, you endured a great conflict of sufferings, partly by being made a public spectacle through reproaches and tribulations, and partly by becoming sharers with those who were so treated. For you showed sympathy to the prisoners and accepted joyfully the seizure of your property, knowing that you have for yourselves a better possession and a lasting one.” (Heb. 10:32-34).

John Wesley was away from his home one day when someone came running up to him saying, “Your house has burned down! Your house has burned down!” To which Wesley replied, “No it hasn’t, because I don’t own a house. The one I have been living in belongs to the Lord, and if it has burned down, that is one less responsibility for me to worry about.”

- **The solution to worry is found in contentment.**

Contentment is believing that God has provided everything I need for my present and future happiness.

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<sup>4</sup> Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Sermon on the Mount*, (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust), p. 140.

Contentment comes as we realize that God is all we really need.

Hebrews 13:5

“Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, ‘I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you,’”

Worry-Free Living is the result of trusting God for today.

“Give us this day our daily bread...” (Matt. 6:11)

“So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. V 34

Don't use up today's grace worrying about tomorrow's trials.

William MacDonald says,

“This is God's ‘social security’ program. The believer's responsibility is to live for the Lord, trusting God for the future with unshakable confidence that He will provide. One's job is simply a means of providing for current needs; everything above this is invested in the work of the Lord. We are called to live one day at a time: tomorrow can worry about its own things.”<sup>5</sup>

- **Wisdom: Make God's priorities our priorities**

And Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer

Prayer

Father, I yield my worries to You; I give you my fears, insecurities, and desires. Help me to be content in my relationship with You, as I trust you to lead and provide for my needs. I purpose to walk by faith for today's needs and leave tomorrow's challenges in Your Almighty hands. Grant grace to face today's evil and faith to see beyond to trials that will come my way. Thank you for proven promises, and for being today's joy and tomorrow's hope. Amen.

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<sup>5</sup> William MacDonald, *Believer's Bible Commentary*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995), p. 1227.