

Why are you Worrying?

Luke 12: 22-34 NLT

²² Then, turning to his disciples, Jesus said, "That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food to eat or enough clothes to wear. ²³ For life is more than food, and your body more than clothing. ²⁴ Look at the ravens. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for God feeds them. And you are far more valuable to him than any birds! ²⁵ Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? ²⁶ And if worry can't accomplish a little thing like that, what's the use of worrying over bigger things? ²⁷ "Look at the lilies and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing, yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. ²⁸ And if God cares so wonderfully for flowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you.

Why do you have so little faith?

²⁹ "And don't be concerned about what to eat and what to drink. Don't worry about such things. ³⁰ These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers all over the world, but your Father already knows your needs. ³¹ Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and he will give you everything you need.

³² "So don't be afraid, little flock. For it gives your Father great happiness to give you the Kingdom.

³³ "Sell your possessions and give to those in need. This will store up treasure for you in heaven! And the purses of heaven never get old or develop holes. Your treasure will be safe; no thief can steal it and no moth can destroy it. ³⁴ Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be."

Worry... Who does that? I heard a pastor say one time, **"God is a help in trouble; in worry, you are on your own."**

Illustration:

The stock market was experiencing a great deal of fluctuation. Investors had good cause for concern. One investor went to his stock broker to gain some reassurance. He asked his broker if he was worried. The stock broker told his client that he was sleeping like a baby.

*The investor was amazed at his broker's ability to take all of these fluctuations with so much confidence. **"Really?"** the investor responded, **"Even with all these fluctuations?"** The stock broker answered, **"Yes, just like a baby! I sleep for a couple of hours, then I wake up and cry for a couple of hours, then I sleep for couple of hours..."***

Very few of us are exempt from worrying. I heard another man say once, **"Worry is the darkroom in which "negatives" are developed."** Oh, we do seem to be drawn toward the negatives, don't we?

The Lord speaks to us about worrying several times in His Word, with great compassion and concern. His children tend to worry about things they really shouldn't.

Charles Swindoll once said:

“When was the last time you thanked the Lord for not showing you the future? I'm convinced that one of the best things God does for us, is to keep us from knowing what will happen beyond today. Just think of all the stuff you didn't have to worry about, just because you never knew it was coming your way!”

Worry may bring about good results in some lives, but more often than not, worry slows us down, and at times, can stop our movement all together. Let's look at what God's Word says about worry.

First - Don't worry, life is more than what you eat or wear

“²² Then, turning to his disciples, Jesus said, “That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food to eat or enough clothes to wear. ²³ For life is more than food, and your body more than clothing.”

First, He compares our worry to food for the Raven and then the lilies of the fields. He is trying to help us discover, that our Lord is here, with some needed lessons for His disciples. Lessons which He has share with us, or taught us in the past, yet for some reason, He feels the need to press them upon His disciples once again. I wonder why?

Many a follower of Christ has been destroyed by worry due to covetousness. Which deals with wanting things which God has allowed others to have, and we don't have, even though we are not aware of how they got them, or, what these things may be doing to them. In truth, we are jealous of what others have. That is human, and worldly. Many a person has felt these feelings. And sometimes, we spend far too much time worrying about these things. All of us have some kind of an attraction to the wealth of this world, and, it tends to draw every human being into its lure. Some more than others.

Jesus is telling us not to become perplexed, by worrying about the necessities of life. Starting with what they will eat & what we wear. ***Although, there are times my wife thinks I should be more concerned about what I wear?*** Take notice of what Jesus begins with, ***“do not worry about everyday life...”*** (v.22)

As children of God, we may well get past the wanting of things, the lure of wealth, and find ourselves seeking His presence and growing, once we understand what it means to stop worrying about these things. However, even then, we find ourselves at times worrying about the basics of life, food, clothing, housing, cable T.V. – or now streaming TV, computers, microwaves, cars and the gas to run them. Oh my, the gas to run them...

Our Lord tells us very simply, and plainly, ***“do not worry about life...”*** I'll take care of them for you. That is the Lord's promise. So, stop worrying about them.

If were to read the passage just prior to this, He just got done telling His followers, ***“Don't hold on to tightly to the riches of this world, for when your life is called home, what good will they do you.”***

A dozen times Jesus tells them, ***“Do not worry, Don’t worry, Don’t Worry.”*** Lord, let us have ears to hear and a heart to receive. You are telling us, ***“Don’t worry, I’ve got you.”***

Mark Twain was quoted as saying,

“I have been through some terrible things in my life, some of which actually happened.”

Maybe that might help us keep a proper perspective. Not everything we tend to worry about actually takes place in our lives.

“When things get a bit too stressful and frustration starts to set in, just contemplate the following realities and you might find some level of encouragement during your struggles. This is according to a study done not too long ago...

- 40% of the world's population does not have electrical service.

- 60% do not have simple phone service, and half of those live more than two hours from the nearest telephone.

- One-third (33%) of the people on this planet have never made a phone call. Can you believe that?

Now that probably won't solve our problems, but it does remind us that things might not be as difficult, or as bad, as we first imagined.

Which lead me to the second point...

Second - Worry doesn't add a thing to life...

“²⁵Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?”

Let me add, at least can worrying add anything good to our lives? In the NIV it says, ***“Who of you, by worrying, can add a single hour to his life?”*** (v.25) What was Jesus implying? My opinion, ***“Our cares are fruitless, vain and insignificant, compared to trusting in Him for life.”*** In other words, it is silly, to even indulge in them, yet, most of us will.

Here is a simple fact, ***“Seek all you wish, do all you wish, and yet, there are some circumstances beyond our control, and there is nothing we do can change that.”*** So, ask God for what we need, and then have the faith to believe He will supply, in His time.

(And by the way,) ***“Stop putting God in a box.”*** What do I mean by that? It's simple, we tend to place Him and His power into our human thinking and often tell ourselves and others, ***“whatever took place then, can't happen again!”*** That is simply not true...

Our God is not a God of onetime events, ***“One and done,”*** onetime miracles. He is the God of all Miracles, period! ***And that means whenever and as often, as He decided to perform them.*** He has the power... I am not talking about the power of Grey Skull, some cartoon of the past, for He has real power to perform whatever task is needed. Miracles!

His implication here deals with our doubt. Stop ***“Doubting Him.”*** In most cases, it is my opinion, that worrying brings about thinking like ***“what might be, or may not be?”*** and that is doubting Him, and His promises. Do you remember what Jesus told us about doubt?

MAT 21:21 Jesus replied, ***"I tell you the truth, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and it will be done."***

If you have faith, and do not doubt... Why do you think Jesus said this to them? Because even after seeing the miracles they were doubting...

James said it like this,

"But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts, is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind." JAM 1:6

We should ask God to help remove our doubt. Then, stop telling Him, and ourselves, that He can't do something, anything needed, again. If He has already done it once, He can do it again! Have faith! When we go before our Heavenly Father, we must do so in faith, believing in the fact that he can, and He will answer our prayers. ***If this is not what we are doing, then why are we even praying?*** He has the power to do what is needed. Not if He has the power, He has the Power!

In our Text, using the NLT, it says, ***"³¹ Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and he will give you everything you need for life.*** In the NIV it reads, Matthew 6:33 ***"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be given to you."*** This text is part of what is known as the ***"Sermon on The Mount."***

The call today is for us to ***get our "priorities" in order***, by ***"Putting God first."*** Then as we pray, He will hear and answer us. Worrying about whether or not He can, or, He will do, what He said He would do, is ridiculous. The simple key to this truth concerning worry is: do not doubt Him, act and live in faith.

Illustration:

A linguistics professor was lecturing to her class one day. "In English," she said, "A double negative forms a positive. In some languages, though, such as Russian, a double negative is still a negative. However, there is no language wherein a double positive can form a negative."

A voice from the back of the room piped up, "Yeah, right."

~ Step out in faith, feed your faith, and doubts will starve to death. ~

Third - A Treasure in Heaven...

³² *"So don't be afraid, little flock. For it gives your Father great happiness to give you the Kingdom.* ³³ *"Sell your possessions and give to those in need. This will store up treasure for you in heaven! And the purses of heaven never get old or develop holes. Your treasure will be safe; no thief can steal it and no moth can destroy it.* ³⁴ *Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be."*

Jesus encourages the follower to give generously, to the poor, the needy, and to keep only what they feel they truly need. Why? Because God has given us His kingdom, everything we need to live, what more do we need? What kind of purse do we need? One which will not wear out, right? Nor be exhausted, nor can it be stolen from us. Is there such a purse on earth today?

Illustration:

Opening my email, seeing a notice from American Express... The notice stated that my American Express card was going to be locked and the account closed due to some charges placed on it fraudulently. Now, I could have opened it, and it would have instructed me to put in my password and login, but, I didn't do that, because I track my AE all the time. It automatically comes to my phone when something is charged on it.

*Instead, I went to the source, I opened my AE account to check it, and there was nothing there to worry about. **The world was trying to take our treasure from us, such as it is.***

Living on earth, everything we deal with, deals with what we need, want, or think we should have now. There will always be those who want to take that from us, whatever we have, or have not, no matter how little or great it is. So, my advice, go to our source, our own account, God's Word, and check to see if what the world is asking of you is fraudulent or real?

Turn our minds toward heaven, think about our heavenly treasure. That is not something most humans do very well. Here we are being told, we are to fix our lives, heart, mind and soul upon His Word, THE Truth, and refer back to that whenever and as needed... That way, the world can't steal true life from us. What I want, or have convinced myself I really need right now, is not always what the Lord wants for me.

Can we ever get past this thinking? Perhaps! But I'm going to tell you, it is not going to be easy to accomplish for most people. We are too hooked into the world, and not nearly enough into the Lord.

Illustration:

*A man and his wife were playing golf on the ninth green when she collapsed from what appeared to be a heart attack. **"I need help!"** the woman gasped. Her husband ran off and told her he would get help.*

*A few minutes later, the man returned and began to make his putt into the ninth hole. His wife looked up from the ground and asked the man what he thought he was doing. The man told his wife, **"Don't worry, I found a doctor. I'm just finishing my putt while we wait."** **"But where is the doctor?"** the woman asked with all the strength she could muster.*

*The man walked a short distance to the next tee, teed his ball and drove it toward the tenth hole. He then answered, **"I found a doctor on the sixth hole."** The woman probed, **"You found a doctor on the sixth hole and came back by yourself. Where is that doctor?"** **"He won't be very long,"** the man answered confidently. **"The guys on the seventh and eighth holes agreed to let him play through."***

Setting our priorities on earthly treasures, could cost us our souls.

Seek for the understanding of the Word of God, so that we might focus on the right and best things and release the other things into God's Hands. Use what we have been given for His

glory, not ours. Jesus was teaching them to lay up treasure in heaven, do the kingdom work while you can, while there is time... Since He has given us the kingdom, when we work for the kingdom, we are building our wealth in the right places and ways.

Perhaps that is why we are encouraged to work diligently, work hard every day...

“Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following their example of disobedience.” HEB 4:11 By following the world...

Laying up a treasure in heaven, don't worry so much about here on earth.

- Don't worry, life is more than what you eat or wear – things!
 - Worry doesn't add even one moment to life
 - What kind of treasure are we storing up? - Are they here on earth, or, in heaven?
- Which one do we work harder on?

God is watching what we do, how we live and how we act...

What does He see?