

**In the autumn of 1988**, a little song climbed the charts and did something almost no song ever does — it made the whole world stop and smile. No deep lyrics. No heavy beat. Just a man's voice, a whistle, and a simple refrain: "Don't worry, be happy."

- Grandparents sang it at the kitchen table. Kids sang it on the playground. It won a Grammy. It was President Reagan's favorite song of the year. And thirty-eight years later, it's still the unofficial anthem of the human heart — because worry is the one thing every person in every generation knows. Show me a human being, and I'll show you a worry-er.

**The world has always had the same advice for worried people.**

- Shake it off. Smile more. Look on the bright side. The world's "don't worry" is a command with no power behind it — just pull yourself up, think positive, and whatever you do, don't think about the bills. Don't think about the diagnosis.
- Don't think about the silence of that teenage son or daughter. The world says, "Don't worry, be happy" — and leaves you alone with the very things you're trying not to think about.

**And that's where Jesus walks into the room.**

- Because Jesus says something that sounds almost the same — but it is a world apart. Jesus doesn't just say, "Don't worry." He tells you why. And Jesus doesn't tell you to manufacture a mood — He gives you something to set your heart on.

**Look at the setting.**

- Just before our text, Jesus told the story of a man who spent his whole life piling up bigger barns — only to hear God say, "Fool! This night your soul is required of you" (Luke 12:20).
- Then Jesus turns to His disciples — the ones He loves — and says, "Do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on" (Luke 12:22).

**Now listen carefully — Jesus doesn't leave it there.**

- He doesn't leave us with a command and no reason. He points to the sky: "Consider the ravens" (v. 24). He points to the field: "Consider the lilies" (v. 27). Then He says the three words that change everything: "Your Father knows" (v. 30).
- The world says, "Don't worry — just try harder." Jesus says, "Don't worry — your Father knows." The world tells you to change your mood. Jesus changes your life.

So this morning we're going to do three things with this text.

1. We're going to face **the sin we need to avoid — worry.**
2. We're going to **embrace the command we need to obey** — seek the kingdom.
3. We're going to **claim the promise we need to trust** — the Father will provide.

***Because the difference between the song and the Savior is simple: the song tells you to be happy, but Jesus gives you a reason to rest***

**The Sin to Avoid: Worry (vv. 22–30)**

**Luke 12:22–23** – <sup>22</sup> Then He said to His disciples, "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on. <sup>23</sup> Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing.

**The Sin to Avoid: Worry**

**This Is a Command**

This is not a suggestion. Jesus isn't saying, "You probably shouldn't worry." He is giving us a command: Do not worry.

- This is a **direct command** from the King of the **universe**.
- He commands it because He knows what worry does—it steals the peace He gives His children.
- The rich farmer worried because he had too much. The disciples could worry because they had too little.

**Warren Wiersbe in His commentary on Luke gives three reason we should not worry:**

Worry is **Destructive, Deceptive, Deformative**

### **Worry Is Destructive**

The word Jesus uses for "worry" means to be anxious—to have a divided mind.

Worry pulls our hearts in different directions: **to be torn**

- Torn between **today** and **tomorrow**
- Torn between what we **have** and what we **want**
- Torn between **earth** and **heaven**

That is exactly what Jesus diagnosed in Martha. She was "anxious and troubled about many things" and distracted—her heart was being pulled in different directions.

**Jesus gives us the answer:**

- "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." — Lu 12:34
- Worry divides the heart. Seeking God's Kingdom unites the heart.
- You cannot fully pursue God while constantly being pulled apart by worry.
- Corrie ten Boom, "Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow; it empties today of its strength."

### ***Do you remember watching a Lion Tamer – Whip and a Wooden Stool***

- Did you ever wonder why the chair?
  - I get the whip, but the chair
  - Because the lion's eyes can't track all four legs at once. He tries to focus on one, then another, and his brain locks up.
  - He's not defeated by strength — he's paralyzed by division. Focus split four ways, and the king of the jungle becomes a statue."

### ***"That's the Greek picture of worry.***

- The word Jesus uses for anxiety literally means a mind torn into pieces. Worry holds four legs in front of you at once — the bill, the diagnosis, the meeting, the phone call that hasn't come. Your heart lunges at one, then the next, and somewhere in the middle, you freeze.
- You can't move, can't sleep, can't decide, can't trust. You're not defeated by your problems — you're paralyzed by your divided attention."

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### **The Biblical Echoes That Make It Sing:**

**2. Luke 10:41–42** — Martha was "anxious and troubled about *many things*," but "one thing is necessary." The cure for the divided mind is the single focus.

**Psalms 86:11** — "Unite my heart to fear your name." One heart, one focus.

3. The twist that lands it — 1 Peter 5:7–8: "Casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion..."

*Do you hear what Scripture just did? The enemy is the lion — and worry is his stool. He holds the four legs of fear in front of you, and you freeze — and a frozen Christian is easy prey. Cast your anxieties on the Father, and the stool comes down. Then you can see the prowling lion clearly, stand, and fight.*

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**One Preaching Caution (the place where the illustration breaks — and that's the point):**

**For the tamer, the divided lion is *safe* — paralyzed so it can't hurt him. But for you, worry's paralysis protects *nothing*. The bill is still due. The diagnosis doesn't change. All worry paralyzes is you — and leaves the lion of fear free to circle. That's why Jesus doesn't leave us paralyzed; He gives a better focus: *Seek first his kingdom* (Luke 12:31). The world's "don't worry" is a second stool — another distraction. Jesus' "don't worry" is a new center — one focus, one Father, one heart.**

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**One-line landing: "*Worry splits your mind into pieces. The Kingdom gives your heart back. A lion with one focus is dangerous — and a Christian with one focus is unstoppable.*"**

### **Worry is Deceptive: It Lies to You**

Worry gives a **false view of life** – Worry convinces us that life is made up of what we eat/wear.

**Luke 12:23** - Life is more than food, and the body *is more* than clothing.

**Luke 12:24** - <sup>24</sup> Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds? <sup>25</sup> And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? <sup>26</sup> If you then are not able to do *the* least, why are you anxious for the rest? <sup>27</sup> Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. <sup>28</sup> If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more *will He clothe* you, O you of little faith?

<sup>29</sup> "And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind.

**Luke 12:15** - And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."

***It's not about what you have or don't have*** – Your Heavenly Father takes care of all of that.

**It has been said, "Worry is a terrible prophet."**

- Mark Twain said, "I've had a lot of worries in my life, most of which never happened." Worry magnifies the problem and shrinks the Father. It whispers, "You're alone."
- It won't work out. God has forgotten you" — all of which is a lie. Your Father knows (Luke 12:30).
- You may remember the Ten spies came back from Canaan and said, "We're grasshoppers" — they saw the giants and forgot the God who had just parted the Red Sea (Numbers 13:31–33).
- Only Joshua and Caleb remembered who was on their side. Worry always looks at the giants and forgets the Father.

**You may be worried about...**

- The dreaded doctor's visit that came back with good news.
- The layoff that never happened. The phone call that never came.
- The student who was so terrified of the school year she couldn't sleep in August — and by October she loved it.
- And here's worry's craftiest deception: it dresses up as preparedness.
  - o "I'm just being realistic," it says. But Jesus calls it what it is — little faith (v. 28).
  - o The rich fool told himself the same lie: he thought the problem was barns, when the real problem was his soul (vv. 16–21).

Worry is **Destructive, Deceptive**

Worry Is Deformative — It Changes Who You're Becoming

**Deformative** is an adjective that means tending to cause deformation, distortion, or a change in the natural shape and structure of something.

**Luke 12:30** - <sup>30</sup> For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things.

Worry doesn't just hurt you and lie to you — it shapes you.

- Chronic anxiety reshapes character. It deforms the image of God in a person.
- The man who once laughed easily now starts every conversation with what could go wrong. He's not the man his wife married anymore — worry remade him.
- The once outgoing teenager who became a shell of himself, afraid to try anything, afraid of saying the wrong thing. Anxiety shut him down.
- The elderly woman who spent her life fearing and fretting — and you can see it in her face. The joy has been worn away.

**Worry doesn't just feel bad** — it *reshapes* you. Left unchecked, anxiety slowly remakes your character in the wrong image. **Proverbs 23:7** - For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. As a man thinks in his heart, so he is...

- **It deforms your joy. Proverbs 17:22.** The cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones. The man who once laughed easily becomes the man who only sees what could go wrong — and you can see it in his face, his shoulders, his whole life.
- **It deforms your faith. Mark 4:19** - The cares of this world choke out the Word like weeds choking wheat. Worry shrinks God in your imagination — you still say He's sovereign, but you live as if one phone call can undo Him.
- **It deforms your witness.** Your anxiety advertises your God (Luke 12:30). When Christians worry like the world, the world sees a God too small to trust.

**The Turn:** Worry deforms — grace reforms.

- Fixing your eyes on the problem makes you look like the world; beholding Christ makes you look like your Father
- **2 Corinthians 3:18** - But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

## **Worry deforms; grace Transforms.**

Worry slowly shapes us into someone we were never meant to be, while grace steadily conforms us to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29).

Worry divides the mind, damages the body, and distorts the soul. But Jesus gives us a better way: **“Seek first the kingdom”** (Matthew 6:33).

Worry pulls our hearts in different directions. **Trust fixes our hearts on one Father.**

**Luke 12:30** - <sup>30</sup> For all these things the nations of the world seek after, ***and your Father knows that you need these things.*** (The cure starts when we realize God’s Got this!)

Good, Good Father – Not because Chris Tomlin says so – Because He is – Perfect in all his ways

**Remember the passage from last week – Luke 11:9-13**

**Luke 11:9-13** - “So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. <sup>11</sup> If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if *he* asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? <sup>12</sup> Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? <sup>13</sup> If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”

## **The Command to Obey: Seek the Kingdom (vv. 31–34)**

**The World Says: Don’t Worry, be Happy!**

**Jesus says, Don’t Worry, Seek the Kingdom**

**Luke 12:30** - For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things. <sup>31</sup> But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.

**Luke 12:32** - <sup>32</sup> “Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. <sup>33</sup> Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. <sup>34</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

1. **Make God's rule your priority.** "Seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you" (v. 31). Put first things first, and God handles the rest.
2. **Trust the Father's heart.** "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (v. 32). He's not stingy — He delights to give.
3. **Loosen your grip on stuff.** "Sell your possessions, and give to the needy. Provide yourselves with moneybags that do not grow old, treasure in the heavens" (v. 33).
4. **Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also** (v. 34). Seek the Kingdom, and your heart will follow.

God’s priorities and our possessions must go together.

- We need to see the things of earth from the perspective of heaven and make God’s kingdom our first priority in everything.
- The real question is: **“Where is your heart?”**

- When our hearts are focused on the temporary things of this world, worry will always have a foothold. But when our hearts are fixed on what is eternal, God's peace can guard our hearts and minds (Phil. 4:6–9).
- We should hold the things of this world loosely—being willing to give, share, and even sacrifice what we have to help others (Acts 2:44–45; 4:34–35).
- **There is nothing wrong with owning things; the danger is when the things we own begin to own us.**

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### **The Promise to Claim: The Father Will Provide (vv. 30–32)**

1. **He knows your needs.** "Your Father knows that you need them" (v. 30). You're not informing God of anything — you're trusting the One who already knows.
2. **He delights to give.** "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (v. 32). Provision isn't reluctant with God; it's His joy.
3. **He adds what you need when you seek Him first.** "Seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you" (v. 31). The promise: seek first, and provision follows.
4. **He gave the greatest gift already.** If God did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him graciously give us all things? (Romans 8:32). The cross and resurrection of Jesus is the proof of every promise.

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*We opened with a song, and we close with a stool.*

- *Remember the lion tamer: the King of the jungle doesn't get defeated — he gets divided.*
  - o *Four legs in front of his eyes, and he can't focus on any one of them, so he freezes. That's worry.*
  - o *Your mind split four ways — the bill, the diagnosis, the meeting, the phone call that hasn't come — and you're paralyzed, not by your problems, but by your divided heart.*

*But here's the twist you need to hear.*

- *For the tamer, a paralyzed lion is safe. For you, worry's paralysis protects nothing. The bill is still due. The test still comes. The enemy — the real lion — prowls, and a frozen Christian is easy prey (1 Peter 5:8). Worry doesn't tame your fears; it just hands them the whip.*

*So what's the answer?*

- *Not a second stool — more distractions, more entertainment, more stuff. Jesus hands you something better: one focus. "Seek his kingdom" (Luke 12:31).*
- *Fix your heart on one Father, one promise, one treasure that cannot fail. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Luke 12:34).*

### **Your action steps this week:**

1. **Name the four legs.** Write down the worries that have been circling your mind. You can't cast what you won't name. Then do the hardest, simplest thing in the Bible: "Cast all your anxieties on him,

because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7). Say each one out loud, hand it to the Father, and leave it there.

2. **Set your focus daily.** Every morning, before your phone gets your eyes, give God your first minute: *"Father, I seek Your kingdom first today — You handle the rest"* (Matthew 6:33). One decision a day, and the split mind slowly becomes a single heart: *"Unite my heart to fear your name"* (Psalm 86:11).
3. **Remember the stool.** Every time you see a chair this week, let it preach:
  - ***Worry splits, the Kingdom centers. Worry Deforms – Grace Reforms***
  - When you feel the four legs coming — stop, breathe, and tell your soul what you know: *your Father knows, your Father cares, and He has already given you the Kingdom* (Luke 12:32).

*The world's song says,*

- *"Don't worry, be happy" — and leaves you with nothing to hold.*
- *Jesus says, "Don't worry" — and gives you a Father to trust, a Kingdom to seek, and a treasure that never decays.*
- *The world gives you a stool to freeze you. Jesus gives you a focus to free you.*
- *A lion with one focus is dangerous — and a Christian with one focus is unstoppable*