

## **Sunday 04/06/25 – Panama Methodist Church**

**Sermon Title: “The Road to Redemption” Sermon Series: Part 5 of 7 – “Anxiety, Trust, and Hope”** *Philippians 4:6-7, 1 Peter 5:7, Luke 12:22-34*

**(Slides 1-16 will be listed in order throughout this sermon 😊!)**

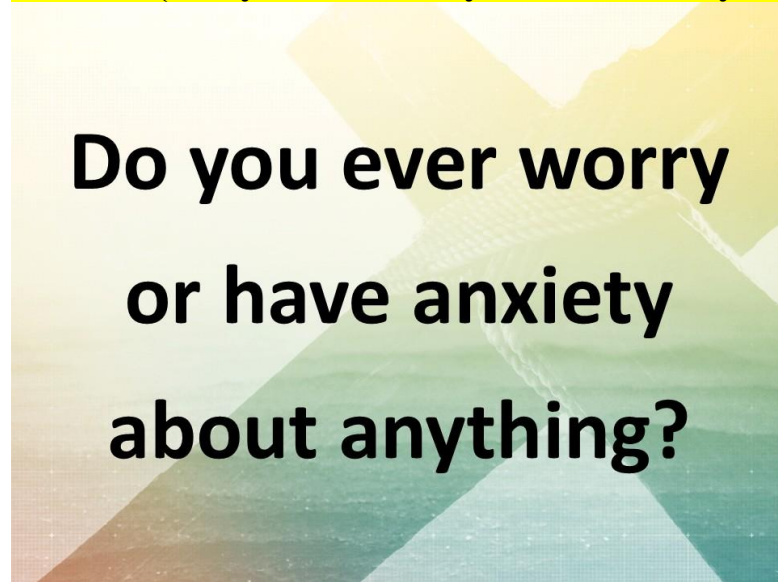
This morning, we are continuing to journey towards Good Friday, and soon Easter Sunday. We have been walking symbolically together along “The Road to Redemption,” to the cross of Jesus Christ our Lord. That cross where Jesus will offer all of us forgiveness for our sins, and the hope of eternal glory with Him. All of us need Jesus, all of us need to continue to turn to Jesus. Only through Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit can we be all that God has called us to be. Even though we make mistakes, and even though change can be hard, we all need Jesus. My sermon title for this morning is called:

**Slide 1 – (“The Road to Redemption – Part 5” – Opening Slide”)**



So, I chose this sermon title months ago, but I think that God plans things that we did not always know ahead of time. Now that we are in time of pastoral transition here at Panama Methodist Church, maybe this is exactly the sermon that God wanted us to hear this morning. Here is a question for us all to think about this morning then:

**Slide 2 – (“Do you ever worry or have anxiety about anything? - Question”)**



Our answers to this could be many, or very few. Certainly, this can be true in times of transition, as well. When the future is not fully clear to us, some of us can have worry or anxiety. What if we had no worry or anxiety though? What if we just trusted Christ with everything, we have all the time? Sounds hard, but this is what we are called to pursue.

In looking at a couple of supporting scriptures leading to our preaching scripture for this morning, I invite us all to turn in our bibles or our bible apps to

Philippians 4:6-7. In Philippians, we will hear what we are supposed to do about worrying about things. This is what Philippians 4:6-7 says:

**Slide 3 – (“Philippians 4:6-7, NRSV”)**

## **Philippians 4:6-7, NRSV**

**<sup>6</sup> Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**

The Apostle Paul tells the church in Philippi, or the Philippians to not worry about anything. Instead, the Apostle Paul tells us that by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving to let our request be made known to God. Further, the Apostle Paul says, may the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding guard our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus. In this section of Philippians 4, the subtitle is “Exhortations,” or encouragement. I would also say that this scripture is aspirational, in that many strive to do this, but sometimes we struggle. I have used the example before of an Olympic High Jump Bar, in the way of what Jesus wants to do. It can seem high, lofty, and out of reach. Living perfect is hard, even though Jesus calls to be more and more like Him.

The second supporting scripture for this morning before dive into our gospel reading from Luke 12:22-34 is 1 Peter 5:7. If you will then turn in your Bibles or Bible Apps from Philippians 4:6-7, to 1 Peter 5:7, we hear another verse about anxiety. So, this is indeed, a very biblical topic. In looking, once again at 1 Peter 5:7, it says:

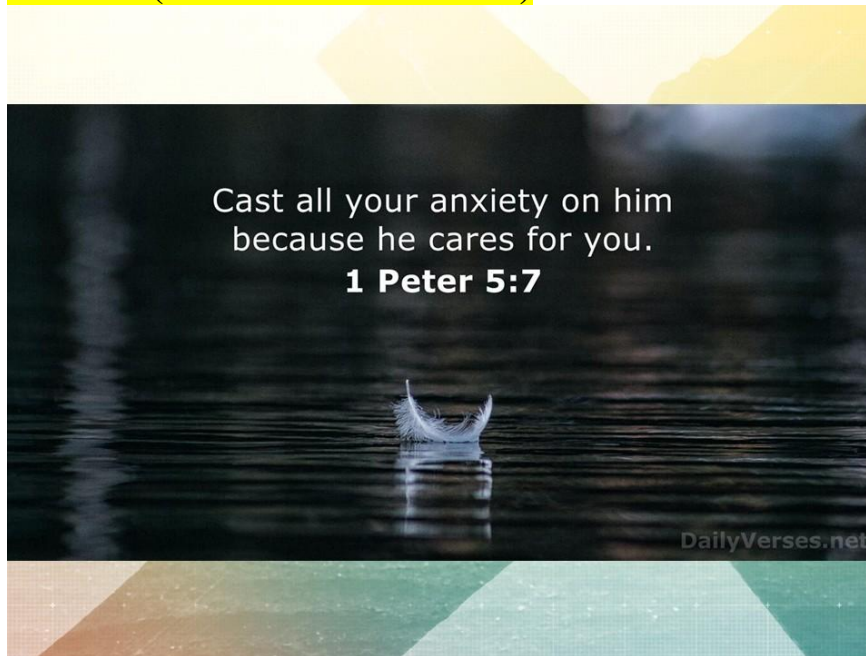
**Slide 4 – (“1 Peter 5:7 - NRSV”)**

## **1 Peter 5:7, NRSV**

**<sup>7</sup> Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you.**

In 1 Peter 5:7, we are told to “cast” or give all of our anxiety to God, because God cares for us. Once again, this is sometimes easier said than done, but it is what we are called to do in the Bible. I heard one Christian scholar joke once saying, “Give God all your problems and go to bed and sleep like a baby, because God is going to be up all night anyway!” Further, here is a good picture of this scripture to put it into a better context:

**Slide 5 – (“1 Peter 5:7 - Picture”)**



This gentle scene reminds us to have to trust in Jesus, and to cast or give Him all of our cares and anxiety. To trust Him with everything we are, and all that we are.

With this said, I invite you to turn in your Bibles or Bible Apps one more time, to the gospel of Luke. This morning, Jesus is telling to not worry. Jesus is telling us to not have anxiety. Let us open to Luke 12:22-34, and the let us read through this gospel lesson together. This is what Luke 12:22-34 says:

Slide 6 – (“Luke 12:22-23, NRSV”)

## **Luke 12:22-23, NRSV**

### **Do Not Worry**

**<sup>22</sup> He said to his disciples, ‘Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. <sup>23</sup> For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing.**

Slide 7 – (“Luke 12:24-25, NRSV”)

## **Luke 12:24-25, NRSV**

**<sup>24</sup> Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! <sup>25</sup> And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?**

Slide 8 – (“Luke 12:26-27, NRSV”)

## **Luke 12:26-27, NRSV**

**<sup>26</sup> If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest? <sup>27</sup> Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these.**

Slide 9 – (“Luke 12:28-29, NRSV”)

## **Luke 12:28-29, NRSV**

**<sup>28</sup> But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith! <sup>29</sup> And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying.**

Slide 10 – (“Luke 12:30-31, NRSV”)

## **Luke 12:30-31, NRSV**

**<sup>30</sup> For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. <sup>31</sup> Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.**

Slide 11 – (“Luke 12:32-34, NRSV”)

## **Luke 12:32-34, NRSV**

**<sup>32</sup> ‘Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. <sup>33</sup> Sell your possessions, and give alms. Make purses for yourselves that do not wear out, an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. <sup>34</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.**

This gospel reading from Luke 12:22-34 is not a story or a parable from Jesus.

Instead, in this scripture Jesus is teaching us and instructing us not to worry. We

are not to have worry or anxiety, but instead to trust in Jesus. Even more deeply, Jesus tells us to not worry about our lives, to not worry about what we will eat, or the clothing that we will wear.

Jesus then, in a similar fashion to one of his stories or parables, gives us an example of not worrying, or not having anxiety. What is this first example, once again, ravens. No, not the NFL team from Baltimore, MD., but literally the birds, Ravens. Jesus is talking about ravens, as in the birds. Jesus says that Ravens do not sow or plant crops, nor do they reap or harvest crops. Further, these same ravens have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds the ravens. The ravens have nothing of earthly value, yet they are able to eat and live. In fact, Jesus then tells us that we are off much more worth than birds!

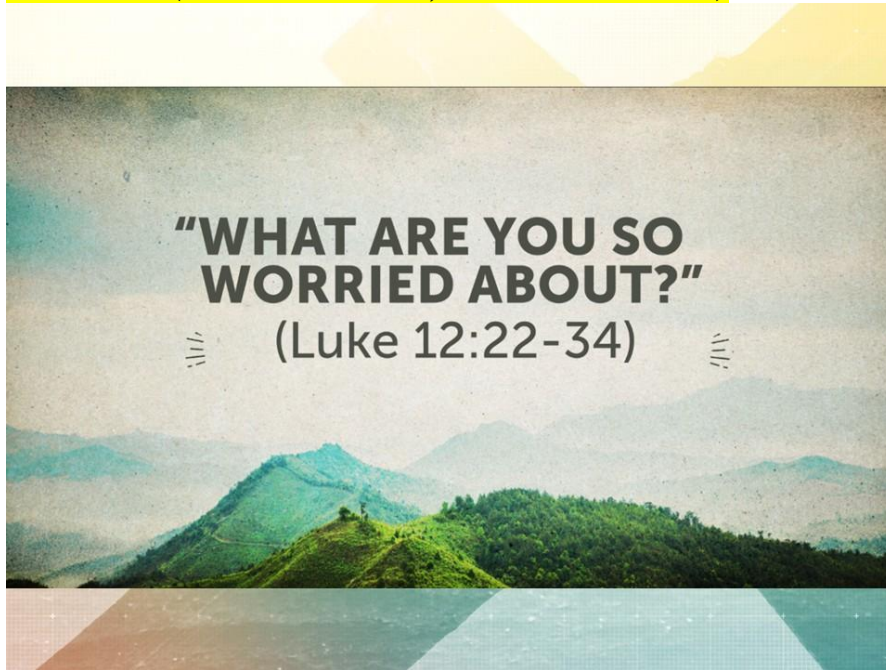
Jesus then gives us another example when he compares not worrying and trusting God to lilies. By lilies, I mean the flowers, that maybe we have seen before, especially on Easter Sunday. Jesus said that the lilies grow, and they neither toil nor spin. Jesus then said the great King Solomon with all his fancy attire, was not clothed as nicely as a lily is. When then hear from Jesus that God clothes and grows the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven. If this is true, Jesus said that God will clothe us even more. Jesus then emphatically says, “you of little faith!” Trust God do not worry, and do not have anxiety, trust God!

Jesus then continues on saying, do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. Imagine if we had full trust in God, with no worry and no anxiety. What would that be like? Should we not all strive towards this? Jesus tells us next that the nations of this world that strive after these things, and God knows this. God knows the things that we need, and God will provide. Jesus says strive after Him and the kingdom of God, and God will provide what we need.

Lastly, Jesus tells the church, us, do not be afraid, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give us his kingdom. Jesus continues that a select group in this world is called to follow Him with absolutely nothing, to sell their possessions, give alms to people who need them, and make purses that do not wear out. For we will have an unfailing treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near, and no moth destroys all that awaits us in eternity. Jesus finally, tells us, "where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." So, if our focus is on Jesus, and in trusting Him, that there is where our heart and our treasure will inevitably be, as well. When we worry too much about worldly things, then we lose our focus on Jesus. I am not saying this is always an easy thing to do, but Jesus, and the scripture in general, calls us to not worry and to have anxiety for nothing. It is that Olympic High Jump Bar that we are called to strive to get over top of, but sometimes it can be such a

challenge for some of us. In fact, there is a good picture that really encapsulates Luke 12:22-34 well.

**Slide 12 – (“Luke 12:22-34, NRSV - Picture”)**



So that is the question. What are we so worried about? Is worrying and having anxiety helping us, or hurting us? Further, has God brought us this far to let us down? I know that God has a plan for all of us, for the Panama Methodist Church, and in general. We need to trust God, for the future of this church, the future of our lives, and our future in general. If God has never let us down, than “What are” we “so worried about?”

To pull this all back together, let us first summarize what we have just discussed in Luke 12:22-24:

**Slide 13 – (“Application to Our Lives # 1”)**

## **Application to Our Lives # 1**

- In Luke 12:22-34, Jesus urges his followers to stop worrying about earthly needs and instead seek God's kingdom, promising that God will provide for their needs and that where your treasure is, there your heart will be.

Trusting in Christ, and trying to not worry, to not have anxiety, and to not lose sleep. Imagine having no worries or anxiety? We are called to strive towards this.

Here is a little more of how this applies to our lives today:

**Slide 14 – (“Application to Our Lives # 2”)**

## **Application to Our Lives # 2**

- The Problem: Worry and Anxiety
- Jesus addresses the common human problem of worry, particularly about food and clothing.
- He tells his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on" (Luke 12:22).

How are we all doing with this in our lives today?

Further, Luke 12:22-34 promises us, once again, eternal treasure through Jesus Christ. We see this in looking at how with applies to lives more:

**Slide 15 – (“Application to Our Lives # 3”)**

## **Application to Our Lives # 3**

- **The Promise: Eternal Treasure**
  - Jesus reminds his followers that they are worth more than the birds and flowers (Luke 12:24, 27).
  - He encourages them to "sell your possessions and give to the needy" (Luke 12:33), suggesting that earthly possessions are not the true treasure.
  - He emphasizes that where your treasure is, there your heart will be (Luke 12:34).

Lastly, the big take aways from this message of “Anxiety, Trust, and Hope” are these:

**Slide 16 – (“Application to Our Lives # 4”)**

## **Application to Our Lives # 4**

- **Key Takeaways:**
  - Don't let worry about earthly needs consume you.
  - Trust in God's provision and seek His kingdom first.
  - Focus on eternal treasures rather than earthly possessions.
  - Where your heart is, that is where your treasure is.

As I call the praise team forward, and as I said, at the beginning of this sermon, I picked this sermon title out months ago, but nevertheless, it is a good reminder for us to not worry, to not have anxiety, and to trust God in all things. God has a plan for all of our futures, and the future of the Panama Methodist Church. We need to trust God, to not worry, to not have anxiety, and to know that God is already at work. In fact, one of the saints of the Christian Church, Julian of Norwich said this in 1300's/early 1400's "All shall be well, and all shall be well and all manner of things shall be well". Let us not worry, not have anxiety, and put our hope and trust in God. Amen.