

Essentials

Worry

Matthew 6:25-34

August 27, 2017 am

HDBC

Open your Bibles to Matthew 6:25-34. These are words spoken by Jesus to his disciples in what is called ***The Sermon on the Mount***. In it, Jesus is lays out the ***Essential Expectations*** for those who follow Him as savior and Lord.

In this part of the message Jesus deals with the emotional enemy called **worry!** We've all fallen prey to the predator called **worry**.

It comes from old German word which means **to choke** and came to denote ***mental strangulation***. Worry has the ability to emotionally strangle or paralyze a person. **Worry is the advance interest you pay on trouble that seldom comes.**

There is an endless list of things to worry about. Family, work, the weather, terrorism, homework, what's for supper. List goes on and on and on. If you want to worry, you can surely find a reason. But it will rob you of your joy.

Whether you worry occasionally or compulsively, you need to hear the words of Jesus. He offers a response the worriers of our church.

Read the text: Matthew 6:25-34

Seven statements that will help you overcome your worry.

1. Some things are more important than others (25)

Prohibition against worrying. First of three times it is found in this text. Literally, “stop worrying.” Or “do not go on worrying.” They were doing it.

Call to stop worrying. He goes right to the heart of what they typically worried about. Where they were going to get their next meal. How they were going to clothe themselves and their families. He will point out two illustrations from nature that demonstrate God's ability and willingness to meet those needs.

Before he gets to those illustrations, Jesus makes an important and interesting statement. ***Life is more than food and the body more than clothing.***

More than indicates contrast. Life has greater value and importance than the food which sustains it. The body is more important than the clothing which covers it. Jesus is pointing out something which we often forget. **Some things are more important than other things.**

We tend to focus on lesser things, which leads to worry. Often, the things we worry about are lesser things.

Need to focus our attention the more important things, which tend to be things that are **not material, not physical**. Food and clothing are material things. Life is not. Our tendency is to focus on the things we can see, touch, hear and experience in the physical world. These are not the most important things.

Relationship with Christ, faith, love, character, relationships, etc. The first step in overcoming worry is to make sure your priority is on the right kinds of things. When you begin to fret about lesser things, **think of what you have in Christ!**

Rube Waddell was a Hall of Fame southpaw who played baseball during a simpler time. He was the dominant pitcher of his era. 1897-1910. His Pirates took the field in for a game in 1900 and Waddell, who was scheduled to pitch that day could not be found.

Teammates raced out of the stadium and found him playing marbles with a group of kids. He asked them to hold up the game until he was finished playing with the kids. They grabbed him and brought him into the stadium where he pitched a shutout. At that moment, playing with kids was more important.

Some things are more important than others!

2. **You are important to God (26, 28-30)**

Jesus makes the argument that if God cares for birds and flowers (lesser things), which He does, He will certainly care for greater things (people).

Argument from lesser to the greater.

Two examples from nature show just how important you are to God:

A. Birds (26)

Pointed to birds. Don't sow or reap, yet they are fed. Just dumb animals. Not very smart. **Crash into the windows of my sun room. Tried to eat the siding on my house. I've had them try to eat my house.** Not smart animals. But they are fed. And they never worry about it.

How are they fed? God does it. He sees to it that they have food. I feed them, not because they need it, but because I want to watch them. If He does it for the birds, won't He more so do it for us?

B. Flowers (28-30)

Never work or worry. But they are beautifully clothed. How? God does it.

Look at what He is saying. If God cares for the lesser things (like birds and flowers) He will certainly take care of things that are greater (people). You are more important than birds or flowers. If God cares for them, how much more He will care for you. **Let every bird and flower be a reminder of God's great love toward you.**

3. Worry does not help (27)

Picture of a person worrying himself into a longer life. Opposite is likely true.

Vance Havner, the master preacher said, **Worry, like a rocking chair will give you something to do, but won't get you anywhere.**

John MacArthur said **worry is the sin of distrusting the promise and providence of God.**

I have read that a dense fog extensive enough to cover seven city blocks a hundred feet deep is composed of less than one glass of water, divided into sixty thousand million droplets. In the right form, a few gallons of water can cripple a large city.

In a similar way worry is a small thing compared to the damage that it does to our thinking and to our faith. It can consume our minds and disable our faith.

4. **Worry weakens your faith (30b)**

Note that Jesus calls them *men of little faith*. Why? Because their worrying was weakening their faith. Faith and worry are opposed to one another. When you are letting worry have a free reign in your life, you are not walking by faith. No wonder Paul wrote, ***Don't worry about anything, but pray about everything.***

5. **Worry is unnecessary (32)**

God knows what you need. Whatever it is that is worrying you, God already knows about it. **That job?** He knows! **Test?** He knows! **Medical report?** He knows! He not only knows about it, but knows what He intends to do.

6. **Worry reveals wrong priorities (33)**

When we focus our attention primarily on getting our needs met, it shows that our priorities are misplaced. The **cure** for anxiety is found in this verse.

Undivided commitment to His kingdom before everything else.

What is it that drives your life? Getting more things? Moving up in the ranks on the job? Financial security? Until the driving force of your life is the kingdom of God, you will struggle with anxieties. Because only the kingdom will last.

To really do this, it will involve . . .

A. A Radical Break with the World - “But” - Opposition to. . .

B. Effort - “Seek” - It will not come automatic.

C. Priorities - “First” - Putting His work and will first.

D. Faith - When I do this, He will meet my needs.

The faith not only is in the fact that He will meet my needs, but in the fact that what He provides is truly all that I need.

7. **Worry increases your burden (34)**

We are not equipped to carry tomorrow’s burden. We can only handle the challenges of one day. When we worry, we are multiplying our burdens. The result is that we not only fail to help the thing we are worrying about, but we created more problems because we fail to take care of today’s needs.

Practical Helps:

1. Prepare ahead with . . .

1) Memorizing key verses

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Philippians 4:6-7

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

2) Keep a journal of how God proves His faithfulness to you.

From time to time, jot down the good things God has done. How He has taken care of concerning situations in the past. Document His faithfulness.

2. Respond to specific attacks with . . .

1) Scripture

Quote the verses you have learned

2) Prayer

In prayer, give your worry to the Lord. Ask Him to release your mind from anxious thoughts. Consciously give it to Him.

3) Praise

Remember how God has been faithful in the past and praise Him for it. Praise and thank Him for the ways He has proven faithful in the past.

4) Support

Call one or two friends and ask them to join you in prayer.