

INTRODUCTION:

Good morning everyone. It's good to see you all.

I'm currently reading through a book titled, "**The Beauty & Power of Biblical Exposition – Preaching the Literary Artistry & Genres of the Bible**".

Basically, the premise of the book is to help you **understand the different genres** and **how to preach those genres** of the bible such as epistles, proverbs, preaching narratives such as the gospels, visionary writings like prophecy and of course poetry. That's the chapter I'm on and so that's the genre we will be in today.

We would like to turn your attention to **Psalms 37:1-7**. The message this morning deals with the issue of **worry** so if that doesn't apply to you then you're welcome to read any other portion of scripture you'd like, but I'm confident we all fall into this category in one form or another.

The title of this Psalm is "**A Psalm of David**". Written by King David sometime in his later years. We know that because **verse 25** of this Psalm, David says, "**I have been young and now I am old**". And so David is sharing this wisdom from his own experiences that he's learned and he's communicating that in the form of Jewish poetry.

It seems to me that no matter where I looked commentary wise, they all pointed out that this Psalm is written in an **acrostic** arrangement. Surprisingly the chapter in my book didn't point that out. That simply means that each line in the Psalm begins with a letter from the Hebrew alphabet and then moves in order from there consecutively.

Now, it could be that David used this **acrostic** method of poetry to indicate the subject was being fully covered like we might say "**from A to Z**". It could also be more of a way to help the young people in learning this psalm from a pattern to help with remembering.

We still use that method today to instruct little ones. I have a book I read to my daughter, **A** is for **Apple**, **B** is for **BALL**, **C** is for **Cat**, **D** is for.....**Dog**. Good, you're as smart as a 2-year-old. If there's nothing else you learned today. **D** is for **Dog**.

But David wants this wisdom that he's sharing to get across to his readers. And what's interesting is this psalm is mostly instructive. David isn't crying out to the Lord in this Psalm; David is speaking us.

So, with that said we are only going to look at the first 7 verses.

Title: Worship Instead of Worrying

Subject: What is God's solution for worrying (**Verses 1-2**)?

- **Point #1 - Trust** in the Lord, and do good; (**Verse 3**)
- **Point #2 - Delight** yourself also in the Lord, (**Verse 4**)
- **Point #3 - Commit** your way to the Lord, (**Verse 5**)
 - **Conclusion**
- **Point #4 - Rest** in the Lord, (**Verse 7**)

Idea: God does not want us to worry. He would rather His people worship by trusting, delighting, committing our concerns and resting in Him.

Let's go ahead and read verses **1–7** and then we'll break it down.

Psalm 37:1-7

¹ Do not fret because of evildoers,
 Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.
² For they shall soon be cut down like the grass,
 And wither as the green herb.

³ Trust in the Lord, and do good;
 Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.

⁴ Delight yourself also in the Lord,
 And He shall give you the desires of your heart.

⁵ Commit your way to the Lord.
 Trust also in Him,
 And He shall bring **it** to pass.

⁶ He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light,
 And your justice as the noonday.

⁷ Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him;
 Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way,
 Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.

¹ Do not fret because of evildoers,
Nor be envious of the workers of iniquity.

Asaph in **Psalm 73** wrestled with this same idea. Lord, why do wicked so often prosper.

Why do they seem to always have the upper hand? They get all the control, the promotions, you name it, it seems so often that they have it all.

Notice there in the first verse what David says about that, "**Do. Not. Fret.**" You may not be all that familiar with that word "**fret**". I like what bible commentator:

James Montgomery Boice (from David Guzik's commentary) - Boice says:

"The words '**do not fret**' literally mean '**do not get heated**,' which is also how we might express it. Or we might say, '**Don't get all worked up**.' Or even, '**Be cool**.'" (Boice)

Spurgeon put it this way, "**To Fret is to WORRY**" ... and it's a common thing for us as God's people to worry.

Don't worry about the ungodly. **Do not fret** because of evildoers.

THE PROBLEM OF WORRY

You know, practically speaking, one of the dangers of worrying about someone or

- about what someone did to you **or**
- what someone said **or**
- the difficulty someone is making your life,

One of the dangers of worrying about them is, we end up lying in bed at night, rehearsing the whole outrageous episode we had with them.

First, we think about what they **said** and **did**

then we go over **how** we answered them

then we wish we **had thought of some other choice words** to throw at them.

Next thing you know, we're tossing and turning trying to sleep but it won't come.

So, you end up getting up ... again to use the restroom, get a drink of water but this time just a sip so you don't have to go to the restroom and taking a melatonin hoping it will push you over the edge into sleep.

But our worrying ends up only hurting no one but ourselves.

Maybe those around us because we're irritable. It really is pointless activity.

And worry paralyzes our mind AND body and it ultimately hinders our growth in Christ like all sin does.

It becomes an obstacle to our spiritual maturity when we get all caught up in worry.

And it's a real problem in the life of a believer when

- worry is driving our decisions,
- when worry is robbing us of our sleep,
- when worry is disrupting our relationship with others around us and
- our relationship with the Lord.

Do not worry because of evildoers. Why? Because in verse 2

**² For they shall soon be cut down like the grass,
And wither as the green herb.**

They're here today and gone tomorrow. The Lord is going to take care of them. He'll deal with them. God is still on the throne.

So **Do. Not. Fret.** God is saying **Do. Not. Worry.** About that person you work with.

Jesus said, "**Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?**"

In other words, what is the use of it? It can't accomplish anything.

Jesus spoke to those who were worried about tomorrow. He said don't worry about tomorrow, what you're going to eat, what are you going to wear, how you're going to pay your rent. After all these things, the gentiles worry. But if you will just seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, if you focus on that, all these other things will be taken care of.

Reminds me of Mary and her sister Martha from **Luke chapter 10:38-42.**

³⁸ Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. ³⁹ And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."

⁴¹ And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are **worried** and troubled about many things. ⁴² But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that **good part**, which will not be taken away from her."

You have to wonder how many times is our worry keeps us from the "**good part**". That it keeps us in the kitchen like Martha rather than at the feet of Jesus like Mary?

We see the problem – worry. Whether it's inflicted upon us by other people or our other circumstances.

Well, David gives to us in this psalm **THE CURE FOR WORRY**. He essentially says **to worship the Lord**. Worship isn't something that is only done here corporately before we get into the message. It is. But it's also a lifestyle of walking in obedience to the Lord. Not limited to a location but a lifestyle. We are to worship in spirit and in truth.

So let's look at some things here that we should do as a form of worship or lifestyle of worship to the Lord rather than be overtaken by worry.

³ **Trust in the Lord, and do good:**

Dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness.

Instead of giving yourself over to worry David says "**Trust in the Lord...and do good!**"

Isn't that a great way to sum up what we should always be doing in any circumstance in our Christian life?

"**Trust in the Lord AND do good**" I'm going to get that tattoo. But it is a good summary verse for the believer.

In other words, instead of giving yourself over to worry, and sleepless nights, **trust in the Lord and do good**.

We are to take our eyes off our situation off our circumstances and put them on the Lord.

Trust in Him and do good – What do I mean by "**do good**"? Keep doing what God has called you to do or start doing what God has called you to do.

For me, so often I get into a place in life where I'm worrying and saying:

- **Lord what do I do in this situation** or
- **What are my next steps** or
- **When is this going to happen** or
- **How long is this going to take**

I'm like the way Boice put it, I'm all "**worked up**", I'm **fretting**, I'm **worried**.

And you know, **although I trust in the Lord and I'm crying out to Him** - it doesn't always mean I get an answer.

It's usually a waiting game and I'm uncertain what to do exactly so I often find myself reminding myself of this very idea. **Trust in the Lord AND do good**.

I'm reminding myself, He knows my needs, He loves me and He has a plan for me, so I'm going to keep on doing what He's called me to do until He makes it clear what to do.

There's an old saying "**don't give up what you do know for what you don't know**".

Sometimes in life things happen, worry, anxiety and fear can swoop in quickly.

And there ARE a lot of things that we can worry about - losing your job, your health, recent medical diagnosis, financial situation, uncertainty about the future, loneliness, or a relationship.

Don't give into that temptation to think that God isn't with you. Or that it's not something He's concerned about.

Don't give up what you do know for what you don't. You know He loves you, He died for You, He rose from the dead, He has a plan for your life and those things don't change because you're in a state of worry. We need to hold on, **Trust God and do good.**

Keep trusting and keeping doing what He's called you to do. What has God called us to do?

- Serve,
- pray,
- keep reading and feeding on His Word,
- stay in fellowship,
- walk in obedience.

Do not fret – trust in the Lord and do good – keep your eyes on Him and do what you know you're supposed to be doing –

You're feeling anxious, worried, fretting? Again, you don't know what's going to happen which is ultimately making you worry so fall back on those things you know you're supposed to be doing as a believer (**DO GOOD**).

Don't pull back rather, press in.

I remember (this is years ago – like 10 years ago) I received an email from someone and it was hurtful. It was on a Wednesday evening so there was a Men's Bible Study that night. But after reading that email, I wasn't in the mood to go. As Boice put it, "I was all worked up". I was fretting over this.

But I decided to go. I shared with the guys and of course they prayed for me. But they also joked about it during the evening, which really helped me lighten up. And it really defused the situation that was going on in my mind. So it was good to gather and be prayed for and encouraged and I was strengthened. I left a different person than when I walked in. Imagine if I had stayed home and didn't go, I would have just felt horrible. I wouldn't have slept.

Sometimes we don't know what to do when you worry, but I do know as a Christian I need to stick to the basics.

After all, that's what the Christian life is and consist of. Sticking to the basics. I like how Pastor Jeff put it, he said,

“The Christian life involves the repeated application, of the same essential truths, to increasingly complex circumstances”

We just keep applying the basic principles of scripture to our lives through all circumstances of our lives at every phase of life. Whether single, married, kids, retiring (kids moving out). We're always applying the **repeated application of the same essential truths to increasingly complex circumstances.**

So, when we find ourselves in a state of worry because of someone or something going on in our life we don't pull back, remember we need to **Trust God and do good.**

David also says in verse 4 rather than to worry you should.

⁴ Delight yourself also in the Lord.

And He shall give you the desires of your heart.

David is advising the man or woman of God to replace worry with a conscious delight in the LORD.

It can be hard to delight in the Lord when you are in a state of worry. I think sometimes the temptation is to rather blame the Lord. **“Lord why are You letting this happen?!”**

And we're displeased rather than delighting in Him.

Sometimes our emotions get the best of us in the moment.

I like how Spurgeon says it:

“Do not think first of the desires of thy heart, but think first of delighting thyself in thy God. If thou hast accepted him as thy Lord, he is thine; so delight in him, and then he will give thee the desires of thy heart.”

It's easy to get that reversed, give me the desires of my heart and then I will delight in you. No, delight in Him and then He will give you the desires of your heart.

And of course, the idea there is when believers delight in the Lord, His desires become our desires. Then our prayers are answered as we do His will.

Is it possible to delight in the Lord rather than worry?

Yes, there are many biblical examples but one that comes to mind is in Acts Chapter 16 where Paul and Silas were beaten (actually it says they were severely beaten) thrown into a prison there in Philippi and their feet were fastened in stocks.

But in verse 25 of Acts 16, it says, “**About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.**”

We can always delight in the Lord. This comes through praise as we see with Paul and Silas and it comes with thanksgiving.

If we just stop and pause and reflect on the goodness of God, you can't help but delight in Him for what He's done for us and knowing that even in the midst of trials, He's at work and He's working out His purposes for good in our life and our future. Again, we take our eyes off our circumstances and put them on the Lord.

Some of you may remember a couple weeks back I shared about how I was working at the Pentagon and I prayed when I was walking through one of the corridors and just prayed Lord, I want more of You. This prayer was birthed out of a working week days and often week nights and weekends. It was making me hunger and thirst for more of the Lord.

So long story short, the door opened up for me to go on a mission trip to SE Asia for 4 months. Went to Thailand, Cambodia and Burma. Got to do a lot of ministry. But after 4 months came back and that verse was heavily impressed upon my heart on the flight back.

I wanted more of the Lord. That is a prayer God will answer. That is a prayer that is in alignment with His will. That's not the only prayer that is in alignment with His will.

But one more thing I want to point out about this verse, you notice that David wrote delight yourself **ALSO in the LORD**. I think the word also is important, reminding us that there are legitimate joys and pleasures in life outside the life of the spirit.

It's not a bad thing to delight in many of God's blessing here in this life, but delight yourself **ALSO** in the **LORD**.

David sharing his wisdom. When you find yourself fretting because of the wicked or fretting, worrying, or you're getting all worked up and heated about something and that's robbing you of your sleep. We need not to stay there but **trust in the Lord, delight in the Lord** and then in verse 5 we **Commit your way to the Lord**.

⁵ **Commit your way to the Lord,**

Trust also in Him,

And He shall bring it to pass.

To commit is literally 'roll', as though getting rid of a burden.

My bible has a footnote for commit and it says it's literally to "roll off onto". But it comes to be used simply as a synonym for 'entrust'.

I'm putting it on the Lord and I'm entrusting it to Him.

This is how we're going to find peace, when we have a surrendered focus upon God.

I'm not saying this is easy and I think as you grow in the Lord and learn to trust Him and learn to follow Him and walk with Him, you learn to commit, you learn to entrust whatever it is you're going through and allow Him to take care of it and replace your concern with His peace.

I remember when I was single and for a young man or woman or woman for that matter to be single it brings great pressure from your friends and family. I'm seeing everyone get married and I'm thinking "that's wonderful...when am I going to be next?"

But rather than wonder all the time and try to put yourself in situations where you are likely to meet someone rather than let that consume your thinking and only keep leading you in to disappointment, I decided to just entrust this to the Lord.

It's one of the big things that comes to mind when I think of something that I committed to Him.

I had to come to the realization that God, you are big enough, when you think of just how powerful God is, He created the heavens the earth and everything in them, every single planet and galaxy throughout the vast universe.

But He loves me so much that He suffered and died for me. Peter tells us to "**cast our cares upon Him for He cares for us**".

So, I committed it to the Lord, and it was such a relief. It felt like weight was lifted off my shoulders. I don't have to worry about that (is she the one mindset). God is going to take care of it. He's big enough and cares enough. Doesn't mean I was all closed up from that moment on, it just meant, it didn't consume my mind as something that I had to resolve.

Notice he says **Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.**

What is the **it** here in this verse? The **it** in this verse is God's will. Just trust in the Lord, commit your way to Him and He will bring **it** to pass. The **it** there is referring to His will. He will bring His will to pass. Give it to the Lord and He will work out His purposes in your life. He's asking you to commit whatever it is that is troubling you over to Him today.

Doesn't matter how big and complex or small, if it's causing you to worry, then He says cast it upon me because He cares for you.

And when you do that, you can rest in Him. Let's read verse 7.

7 Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him;
Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way,
Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.

Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him: Because God has promised to faithfully take care of those who put their trust in Him, we can rest in the LORD. We can wait patiently for Him instead of fretting and fearing that God has forgotten us or intends evil for us.

One of the greatest blessings of the Christian walk is to be able to rest in the Lord in the midst of the problems, in the midst of the trials, in the midst of a world of turmoil.

Resting in the Lord.

If that's you today, and you have something weighting you down something that's causing you to get "worked up", and worrying. Then trust God, trust He loves you and doesn't want you carrying that burden. Commit it to Him this morning. We're here to pray for you, I'll be around here in the front if you'd like to pray. Thank you.

Questions

1. Is there something in your life that is causing you to worry, causing you to get all worked up? Have you (based off the study here in Psalm 37:1-7) committed it to the Lord? If not why not? What is holding you back especially when you consider the goodness of God?
2. Are you believing that God can take care of you?
3. Are you believing that God loves you?
4. Can you recall a previous time in your life when God delivered you or provided for you or sustained you through a difficult season? When you recall God's past faithfulness in your life, does that make it easier to trust Him in the future?
5. Do you find it hard to delight in the Lord? It's hard to delight in the Lord if we don't know Him, if we don't spend time with Him.