

“What, Me Worry?”
Matthew 6:25-34
Series: In Not Of Week 6
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This is God’s word. Do Not Worry

²⁵ “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

²⁸ “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? ³¹ So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. Matthew 6:25-34

The word of the Lord

A Pastor was heading home after a business trip across the country. It had been a long but successful trip, and he was looking forward to a simple plane ride home. The first warning of approaching problems was when the announcement was made, “We shall not be serving the beverages at this time as we are expecting a little turbulence. Please be sure your seat belt is fastened.” As he looked around the aircraft, it became obvious that many of the passengers were becoming apprehensive.

Then the storm broke. The cracks of thunder could be heard even above the roar of the engines, and the lightning lit up the darkening skies. One moment the airplane was lifted on terrific currents of air; the next, it dropped as if it were about to crash.

The pastor confessed that he shared the fear of those around him. He said, “As I looked around the plane, I could see that nearly all the passengers were upset and alarmed. Some were praying.

Then, he saw the little girl. Apparently, the storm meant nothing to her. She had tucked her feet beneath her and was calmly reading a book. While the plane was being lurched this way and that, and the adults were scared half to death, that marvelous child was completely composed and unafraid.” The minister could hardly believe his eyes.

When the plane finally landed the pastor lingered to speak to the girl whom he had been watching. After talking to her about the storm and behavior of the plane, he asked why she had not been afraid.

The child replied, “Cause my Daddy’s the pilot, and he’s taking me home.”

I was on a flight like that once. We were crossing the Rockies on the way the California and I have never felt turbulence so rough. And yet I wasn’t afraid the plane would crash, and I didn’t panic. I wish I could say it was because I knew God would get me through it. But the real reason was because the woman sitting in the middle seat, between her husband and me, was clutching my forearm so tightly I was more frightened her nails were going to sever an artery.

How about you? How do you react to stressful times in your life? From a 2024 study, about 86 percent of people in a survey described themselves as worriers.

How much worry? The average was 1 hour and 50 minutes a day. That comes to almost 13 hours a week. And for what?

In today’s passage, look what Jesus is telling us: “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Matthew 6:25

So what is Jesus saying here? Is he saying we won’t, or don’t, have things to worry about? No. He made it clear at other times in his ministry things would not always be easy for us. In John 16 he says,

³³ “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” John 16:33

Is he suggesting we shouldn’t care about our troubles? No. He is specifically telling us not to worry about our troubles.

A 2019 study by National Library of Medicine disclosed the following numbers:

Overall percent of worries that did not come true 91.30%

That means only 8.70% of the worries people have actually come true.

Yet even when the worries did come true, the statistics are surprising.

The percentage of true worries with an outcome as bad as expected was 44%

There were times when the outcome worse than expected, about 26%

But 30 % of the time, the outcome was better than expected

And let’s be honest: No matter what the outcome was, how did the act of worrying affect the result? The answer is... zero. Planning helps. Action gets things done. Worrying, nope. There is a quote attributed to both Glenn Turner and Erma Bombeck: “Worrying is like a rocking chair, it gives you something to do, but it gets you nowhere”.

²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Matthew 6:26

This is yet another time we see the value God puts on his relationship with us. He loves everything he made, but we are who he wants a relationship with. There are many verses in the bible explaining the desire he has for us to love him, as he loves us.

¹⁷ The Lord your God is with you,
the Mighty Warrior who saves.

He will take great delight in you;
in his love he will no longer rebuke you,
but will rejoice over you with singing.” Zephaniah 3:17

Worry gets in the way of our relationships, both with God and each other. And yet, believe it or not, there are some who even recommend it. I came across a paper in “The Indiana Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute – 2020”. The article suggested the following, “Designate “Worry Time”. Set aside a half hour each day for “worry time”. This half hour should happen at the same time every day. Choose a certain place to spend your “worry time””. A half an hour, every day, over 7 and a half days per year, putting aside time to do something with no redeeming value??

²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?” Matthew 6:27

Worrying adds zero value to your life. In fact, worrying has the opposite effect on our health. Among other things, it is said worry or stress can cause a weakening of your immune system, an increase in your risk of heart disease, as well as causing digestive issues.

Worrying is worthless, even dangerous...We are priceless.

²⁸ “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Matthew 6:28-30

Clothes. How we stress over clothes. Something different for every occasion. Different clothes for every day of the week – at least. Have you ever been in a really old house and wondered how they survived with so few, and so small, closets? It is simply because they didn’t need so many clothes. Honestly, it is ok to be seen in the same outfit more than once. And men, don’t think I’m just talking about the ladies. We can be just as bad. I remember a time not too long ago where I looked back at past sermons I had shared, just to make sure I wasn’t wearing the same shirt. Would anybody here know if I had? Why should I care?

³¹ So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. Matthew 6:31-32

Our relationship with God is supposed to make us different. This whole sermon series is about that – IN NOT OF. So how can we be different? How do we differentiate ourselves from the pagans? How do we not worry?

³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Matthew 6:33

We turn to God. When we seek Jesus, we find the peace he promises.

²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. John 14:27

When you find yourself worrying, turn to God instead. Many of you know I grew up at Woodside. Sunday school, youth group, and church were a big part of my life. But in high school, I turned away from the church, for over 30 years. I never stopped believing in God, but I wasn't pursuing a relationship with him. Some time around 2003 I started listening to God. I was attending Al-Anon so I could deal with my stepson's addiction issues. Prior to Al-Anon, I thought I could fix his problems. Then I found the Serenity Prayer:

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change. Courage to change the things I can, and Wisdom to know the difference.

I learned we all have problems, but worrying about them doesn't help. This is the same time Matthew 6:27 became my life verse. Although I recently realized I usually use the words in the Luke passage: ²⁵ Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life? Luke 12:25

I began to turn over the things I had no control over to God. But I didn't give up trying to help. I kept trying to help and find resources for Jimmy. There were actions I could still do. As the saying goes, "God is in control, but he doesn't expect you to lean on a shovel and pray for a hole." And trying to figure out the difference of when to **do**, and when to pray, is where the wisdom comes in.

In 2006, I came back to Woodside, along with Michelle. Our time together here has helped us strengthen **our** relationship and build a stronger one with our daughter, Lizz. It also jumpstarted our ministry growth. It was through a Woodside growth group we were connected to Conquering Life Prison and Recovery Ministry. We started off working mostly with the prison part of the ministry, but eventually found ourselves drawn to the recovery side as well. We found the resources were often helpful in our own circumstances, and our own journey allowed us to connect with other families dealing with many of the same issues.

We lost Jimmy to an overdose in October of 2016. It wasn't easy. It still isn't. Lizz posted a memory last month and wrote: "And I wouldn't want to be selfish by bringing you back into this world where you would only go back to the pain you were feeling. But I do wish everyday that I could have just one more chance to talk to you." I cried again. The old me probably would have spent time wondering how I could have done things better, but I've learned to turn those thoughts over to God as well.

I still use the Serenity Prayer regularly. I carry a copy in my wallet always. Sometimes it isn't so difficult. But sometimes I really need to pray hard to God for the wisdom to know which path to take.

³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. Matthew 6:34

There is some very important advice here. There are, hopefully, many days in front of us to live. And while it isn't mentioned here, each of us has already experienced many days in the past. But today is one day, and you only get the day once.

Were you aware the Serenity Prayer usually cited, is only the short version?

The full version includes other important advice:

Living one day at a time; Enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;
Taking, as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it;
Trusting that He will make things right if I surrender to His Will;
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with Him
Forever and ever in the next. Amen.”

There are two reasons we miss today – yesterday and tomorrow. We tend to dwell on the past and worry about the future. When we miss today, we miss the opportunity to spend more time with Jesus. And I have found the more often I am with him, my relationships with everybody else, are just better.

It probably isn't possible to eliminate all worry from our lives. What action steps can we take, this week, to do our best to minimize the time we spend on that particular activity?

- Let's start with the elephant in the room. The day after tomorrow is election day. If the polls are accurate, or close to it, our country is split 50-50. If you're of age, and registered, do your civic duty and vote. But please, don't allow the results to ruin your life, your year, or even a day.
 - Action Step # 1 – On Tuesday, I will turn it over to God.
- Every day we have things come up and we worry about them. Try to be aware of those moments this week. Your first thought when something comes up should be, What can I do about it? If there is nothing you can do, then
 - Action Step # 2, Prayer - Rather than worry, set the time aside and have a discussion with God. Ask him for guidance, strength, and comfort.
- We often allow the worry we experience to shape the way we act and react.
 - Action Step # 3 – Change your attitude. If we think about it, we can discern our attitude. If we recognize it as a problem, we should be strong enough to change it.
- And lastly,
 - Action Step # 4 - Trust in Jesus - He will make things right if you surrender to His Will.

All of us spend time worrying. It is a part of our life. But when we let it control us, allow it to take away from our relationships with God and each other, we give the worry too much power. Worried about why your spouse or child is late? That's understandable. Worrying they might be late coming home tomorrow, is borrowing trouble.

I bought my Oasis Senior Advisors franchise in 2018 and was excited to have the opportunity to provide a free service to seniors and their families as they search for the senior living community which is a good fit for their needs, wants and resources. To me, it is an extension of my ministry work. My first year went ok; a little slower than I hoped, but I was excited because multiple other franchise owners told me their second year was their springboard year. Unfortunately, for me, my second year was 2020, and Covid-19. As the year wore on, I was getting less and less busy. Many people suggested to me it was so slow because people were scared to move to Assisted Living because they were afraid of catching Covid. I heard different.

I had people tell me their loved one said they would prefer to catch Covid, rather than to not be able to see their grandchildren. I understood. The isolation was scarier than the virus.

The year continued on and even though I wasn't getting placements, I still had bills to pay, both for the business and our household. The savings accounts dwindled. The first quarter of 2021 was even worse. I had zero placements, and I began to wonder if I could continue funding the business. But as we moved into the 2nd quarter of 2021, I began to get busy and by the end of the year I was able to start paying the loans back Michelle and I had made to the business.

Throughout the entire time, I worked hard, continued to come up with new ways to stay relevant in the industry, and do the best I could with the few clients I did get. But I remember I did very little worrying. Rather than worrying about the business, I spent more time praying to God and asking him to continue to give me ideas, and strength to continue. The dba name of my business is Oasis Senior Advisors. My official corporate name is Burgi 627, Inc. 627, as in Matthew 6:27, Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

Please pray with me.