

Finding Hope in Handling Worry Worry Leads You Astray

Introduction

Philippians 2:15-16 - *...prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.*

2 Corinthians 5:17 - *Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.*

1 Peter 2:12-15 - *Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation...For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men.*

1 John 2:3 - *By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.*

1 Peter 3:15 - *but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;*

Matthew 5:16 - *Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.*

2 Corinthians 8:20-21 - *taking precaution so that no one will discredit us in our administration of this generous gift; for we have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.*

Titus 2:6-8 - *Likewise urge the young men to be sensible; in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.*

1. Worry Tears You Up

“worry” - merimnaw – “To divide, rip or tear apart.”

2. Worry Makes You Small

Matthew 6:25 - *Is not life more than _____?*

3. Worry Steals Your Hope

4. Worry Wastes Your Time

Matthew 6:27 - *And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life?*

5. Worry Offends Your Father

I. The Challenge – Use “Potential Worry Situations” as an Opportunity to Shine the Light of Christ

verse 32 - *For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things...*

A. Compared to Gentiles

1. Who?

Gentiles – Greek word ethnos

Matthew 20:25-26 - *But Jesus called them to Himself and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant,”*

2. What?

v. 32 - *...eagerly seek all these things...*

eagerly seek – Greek word epizateo – conduct a diligent and focused search, crave, desire so badly that other things are set aside...

Matthew 12:39 - *But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet;”*

Acts 12:19 - *When Herod had searched for him and had not found him, he examined the guards and ordered that they be led away to execution. Then he went down from Judea to Caesarea and was spending time there.*

3. Why?

1 Corinthians 15:32 - *If from human motives I fought with wild beasts at Ephesus, what does it profit me? If the dead are not raised, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.*

B. You can be [different]

II. The Model – Follow Paul’s Example in Prison

A. His setting

Philippians 1:20 - *according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ will even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.*

Philippians 2:17 - *But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all.*

B. The context

1. Choosing to be joyful

Philippians 4:4 - *Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice!*

2. Choosing to be gentle

Philippians 4:5 - *Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near.*

C. The call

Philippians 4:6 - *Be anxious for nothing.*

1. This is not to say that you will ever completely overcome worry

Philippians 3:12-13 - *Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect...Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet...*

2. The Lord expects us to be trying to make regular progress in this area

Philippians 3:12-13 - *...but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus...but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,*

D. The antidote

Philippians 4:6 - *...but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*

1 Peter 5:7 - *casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.*

E. The result

Philippians 4:7 - *And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

III. The Take-Aways

A. Are you sure that you have a personal relationship with God so that you have Someone to cast your care upon?

B. List your 5 greatest worries. Is your response really different than those who do not know Christ? How? Are you finding opportunities to shine the light of Christ?

C. Review your prayer life. How much is devoted to thanksgiving? Could/should you pray more and worry less?