

PRAYING THE PSALMS

WORKBOOK ON WORRY

Wednesday, January 10

Reading: Psalm 37:1-20

Psalm 37:3 *Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.*

4 *Take delight in the LORD, and He will give you the desires of your heart.* **5** *Commit your way to the LORD; trust in Him and He will do this...* **7** *Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for Him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.*

We are a society of worriers! Someone once said that “worry is faith in the negative, trust in the unpleasant, assurance of disaster and belief in defeat...Worry is wasting today’s time to clutter up tomorrow’s opportunities with yesterday’s problems.”¹

Much of our worry can come from comparing our lives with the lives of others. In Psalm 37, David warns us not to fret when we see the wicked prospering. We wonder how they can succeed while doing wrong while we struggle from day to day while doing what is right. David gives us a kind of “workbook” to defeat the worry that can overtake our lives.

First, he reminds us to TRUST in the Lord (37:3). The world trusts in money, power, and prestige. All these things are fleeting as the grass that will soon wither away. Our trust should be in the unfailing, all-powerful God. Keeping our eyes on Him and trusting in His promises will keep us from looking around at others for our source of security.

Our trust in God will naturally grow into DELIGHT in the Lord (37:4). We will find our joy and pleasure in serving Him. When God is our delight, our desires will be His desires. Living to please God will keep us from fretting about what others are doing.

If our trust and delight is in the Lord, what else can we do but COMMIT our way to the Lord (37:5). We let Him guide our steps, choose our joy, and guard our hearts. Worry is really a lack of trust in God’s care. When He is the One in charge of our life, we can be confident that His care and plans are for the best.

Committing our life to God brings REST (37:7). The words “be still” mean an absence of emotional distress; the ability to be quiet and relax. The Apostle Paul says “do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanks-giving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7).

Finally, David instructs us to WAIT patiently for the Lord (37:7). The only way to have true peace and rest is to follow the steps David has laid out in these verses. And it is a struggle. The word David uses here is often used to describe the labor pains of a woman giving birth. Waiting can be a painful process but the end result is joy as we see God’s work and peace “birthed” in our lives.

PRAYER THOUGHT: What are you worrying about today? Give it over to the Lord and ask Him to direct your paths and give you peace.

¹ <http://www.sermonillustrations.com/a-z/w/worry.htm>