

SERMON NOTES

SERIES: Gospel Fluency
TITLE: WORRY
SCRIPTURE: Matthew 6:25-34
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The word *gospel* simply means good news. When we read the word gospel in the Bible and in most other places, we know that it is referring to the good news about Jesus. The idea of fluency is used most often in relation to being able to speak two or more languages. Yet the word fluent means to be able to express oneself easily and articulately not necessarily just in foreign languages. Meaning when we talk about Gospel Fluency this summer, we are talking about being able to express and communicate the good news about Jesus easily and articulately to yourself and others.

Even though we don't think much about it, all of us are "unbelievers" to some extent. We say we believe certain things, but those beliefs don't have priority influence over what we actually do. For example, many of us *say* we believe that exercise is an important ingredient for healthy living. But, many of us find lots of reasons not to exercise. The question is: *How much of what we say we believe do we actually believe? ...*We all have *functional beliefs* in God that sometimes trump our confessional beliefs. (Functional beliefs are the ingrained beliefs that guide our perceptions of things—our understanding of things—and ultimately, they are the primary influences on our behavior. *Functional beliefs are beliefs I hold that determine how I actually function day to day.*) For example, we say we believe that God is in control of all things, but when life runs off the rails, it's our functional beliefs that convince us it's up to us to make things right, that influences us to take control, sometimes in ways that don't even factor God into the situation. We say we believe that we should forgive others just as Jesus has forgiven us, but it's our functional belief that—"I've been wronged and he/she has to pay"—that results in hearts full of bitterness and resentment. But if you are serious about following Jesus then you want what you say you believe about God and the gospel to trump those ingrained functional beliefs and to silence all those voices that call you to do life your way rather than God's way. And God has given us his Word and his Spirit to help us do just that. We need to know how to believe and speak the truths of the gospel into our lives every day in every way.

Matthew 6:25-34 —Jesus commands us—*Do not worry.*

1. Jesus says, "Your life is much bigger than the things you worry about." (v25)
2. Jesus says, "If God feeds the birds, will he not take care of you. Your Heavenly Father holds you in the highest value." (v.26)
3. Jesus says, "Worry doesn't change anything." (v.27)
4. Jesus says, "If God takes care of wildflowers and grass, how much more will he be concerned with taking care of you?" (vv.28-30)
5. Jesus says, "People who don't know God spend their lives worrying about everything. You are not like them. You are your Heavenly Father's dearly beloved child." (vv.31-32a)

6. Jesus says, "Your Heavenly Father knows you need all these things—you can trust him." (v.32b)
(In one sense, to worry is to live like an atheist because when we worry, we're living as if God doesn't exist.)
7. Jesus says, "Change your focus. Seek me, my will, and my rule over your life and I promise you, I will give you all the things you need to live life for me my way." (v.33)
8. Jesus says, "You need to re-label all your worries as _____." (v.34)

Summary: Do not worry. Your Heavenly Father knows what you need today and you can trust that he will give you what you need tomorrow—he knows and he cares.

Two Questions:

1. What if you really believed what Jesus teaches here? Imagine the difference that would make.
2. Why not believe it? Well, truth is, we're not sure it works. Worry carries with it an illusion of control. Worry assumes the possibility of controlling the uncontrollable rather than trusting God who is ultimately in control. *So, how does the gospel help us think about worry?*

Application: You've got to talk yourself out of your worries. You've got to use gospel-reasoning to talk yourself out of your worries.

Jesus commands us—Don't worry (3X, v. 25, 31,34). Then he gives us eight reasons we can use to argue ourselves out of worrying. (see above) Jesus is arguing against whatever functional beliefs are feeding our worrying. We should use his reasons to talk ourselves out of our worries.

Start your day by getting ahead of worry. "If you get ahead of worry, you can stay ahead of worry, but if you let worry get ahead of you, then worry will worry you until you think you have more to worry about than you really have to worry about." (Andy Stanley)

- Read Matthew 6:25-34 out loud.
- Personalize the passage as if Jesus was speaking just to you.
- Pray about what you are worried about and tell God you are trusting in Him. (Phil 4:5-7)

During the day, when worries melt into your mind, remind yourself, under your breath, God knows—God cares. I can trust my Heavenly Father with everything.

Get ahead of worry by immersing yourself in this gospel—this truth that is in Jesus and that comes from Jesus. Jesus sees. Jesus knows. Jesus cares. He has promised you, by the power his death and resurrection, that he will never leave you or forsake you. And that is good news!

For Discussion —

1. What are the things you worry about the most?
2. What makes it so hard to let go of worry?
3. What was your biggest "aha" and/or "take away" from this passage/message?
4. What is the main application from this message?
5. How would you use what you've learned from this message to help and encourage someone you know who is "worried sick" about something to find some freedom?