

**Sermon Title: The Battle of Anxiety/Worry**

**Sermon Text: Luke 12:22-34**

**Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to a biblical understanding of victory over worry/anxiety.**

**Sermon Proposition: There are 5 perspectives of worry/anxiety free living.**

**Introduction:** Have you ever heard the statement, “It’s only human to worry or be anxious? The Scriptures would agree. But where the Scriptures would make a distinction is between pagans of the world and citizens of the Kingdom of God. Therefore the real question before us today is, “Is it right for Christians to worry and be anxious? Most of the people Jesus is speaking to in this text, were people who labored from day to day for one day’s wage. Therefore, if Jesus can say such things to those of humble means, how much more are they true for those of us whose daily needs are constantly met?”

The medical world’s solutions for worry/anxiety is to teach people how to manage their stress, worry, and anxiety. Some of the statistics show the epidemic that lies before us.

- The US government spends over 42 billion dollars a year on this issue.
- Categories of stress, anxiety, and worry:
  - General AD – Everything under the sun.
  - Excessive Compulsion Disorder – washing of hands, rubbing of hands, etc.
  - Panic Disorder – Hear issues, fear, breathing, etc.
  - Post Traumatic Disorder – Stress, anxiety from situations or circumstances.
  - Social Anxiety Disorder – People panic or anxiety.
  - Specific Anxiety Disorder – Snakes, storms, claustrophobia, heights, etc.
  - 50% of the American population deal with Psychiatric Disorders.
  - 100 million people worldwide experience panic attacks.

“Worry and fear are sort of Siamese twins. ‘Anxiety is a thin stream of fear, trickling through the mind. If encouraged, it cuts a channel into which all other thoughts are drained.’” [Arthur Somers Roche, quoted in Bob Phillips, Philip’s Book of Great Thoughts and Funny Sayings {Charles Swindoll, Swindoll’s Ultimate Book of Illustrations & Quotes, Thomas Nelson, Nashville, 1998, p.35}]

“The National Anxiety Center of Maplewood, New Jersey, gives a list of the top ten anxieties for the nineties: (1) AIDS, (2) drug abuse, (3) nuclear waste, (4) the ozone layer, (5) famine, (6) homelessness, (7) the deficit, (8) air pollution, (9) water pollution, and (10) garbage. [ *ibid.* p. 35]

- I. Worry fails to understand divine priorities. (Matthew 6:19-24)
- II. Worry fails to understand divine provision. (Luke 12:22-24)
- III. Worry fails to understand divine providence. (Luke 12:25-28)
- IV. Worry fails to understand divine pursuits. (Luke 12:29-31)
- V. Worry fails to understand divine protection. (Luke 12:32-34)

- I. Worry fails to understand divine priorities. (Matthew 6:19-24)

Jesus argues from the lesser to the greater in this passage. In the first part of this passage Jesus compares the following:

1. Treasure/Heart
2. Eye/Focus
3. Service/Devotion/Trust

## II. Worry fails to understand divine provision. (Luke 12:22-24)

The imperative used here implies that Christians, who are citizens of the Kingdom of God, should be constantly and consistently free from anxiety, worry, and stress, when it comes to earthly issues. The literal meaning is “be not anxious.” It is from the Greek word “merimnao” meaning distracting care, which divides or distracts the mind.

Ravens were considered unclean animals and creatures.

**Leviticus 11:15** `every raven after its kind,

**Deuteronomy 14:14** "every raven after its kind;

They were considered the lowest ranked living creatures. It stands to reason that if God will take care of the lesser creature, then He will take care of the greater. Therefore, if God created you [the greater accomplishment]. He is certainly capable of feeding, clothing, and caring for you [a lesser accomplishment].

## III. Worry fails to understand divine providence. (Luke 12:25-28)

Worry is futile and doesn't solve anything, worry cannot prolong your life, but it can shorten it! Worry is so sinful, because it casts doubt on God's care. Jesus revealed in Matthew 6:30 the real cause of anxiety is when disciples have little faith, meaning doubt about God's power, promises, and provinces. Anxiety though a natural response to events of life that are beyond our control is still sin in the sight of God.

**1 Peter 5:6-8** Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, **7** casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. **8** Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

**2 Corinthians 1:3-7** Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, **4** who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. **5** For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ. **6** Now if we are afflicted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation, which is effective for enduring the same sufferings which we also suffer. Or if we are comforted, *it is* for your consolation and salvation. **7** And our hope for you *is* steadfast, because we know that as you are partakers of the sufferings, so also *you will partake* of the consolation.

## IV. Worry fails to understand divine pursuits. (Luke 12:29-31)

Christians must seek and represent Jesus, to reflect His righteousness and the rule of God, in a world unconcerned about knowing God. This is the constant call of the true disciple as the Greek imperative “seek” indicates.

Obsession with material possessions, worldly pursuits and passions displays a warped pagan mentality of idolatry.

**Colossians 3:5** Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

**2 Chronicles 9:13-21** The weight of gold that came to Solomon yearly was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold, **14** besides *what* the traveling merchants and traders brought. And all the kings of Arabia and governors of the country brought gold and silver to Solomon. **15** And King Solomon made two hundred large shields of hammered gold; six hundred *shekels* of hammered gold went into each shield. **16** *He* also made three hundred shields of hammered gold; three hundred *shekels* of gold went into each shield. The king put them in the House of the Forest of Lebanon. **17** Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with pure gold. **18** The throne *had* six steps, with a footstool of gold, *which were* fastened to the throne; there were armrests on either side of the place of the seat, and two lions stood beside the armrests. **19** Twelve lions stood there, one on each side of the six steps; nothing like *this* had been made for any *other* kingdom. **20** All King Solomon's drinking vessels *were* gold, and all the vessels of the House of the Forest of Lebanon *were* pure gold. Not *one was* silver, for this was accounted as nothing in the days of Solomon. **21** For the king's ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram. Once every three years the merchant ships came, bringing gold, silver, ivory, apes, and monkeys.

The disciples who values the reign and rule of God over their life and who will diligently pursue righteous living can trust God to supply all their needs for those pursuits.

According to (**Matthew 6:34** "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day *is* its own trouble.") Jesus does not prohibit planning for the future, but He does prohibit worrying about it or be anxious about it. He instead urged His disciples to focus on the challenges of the present.

#### V. Worry fails to understand divine protection. (**Luke 12:32-34**)

“Peace is that calm of mind that is not ruffled by adversity, overclouded by a remorseful conscience, or disturbed by fear. [**Ibid**, p.431]

##### A. The communication for worry and anxiety. (**Philippians 4:6-7**)

Prayer is an antidote for worry/anxiety.

1. Prayer – as a worshipful attitude.
2. Petitions – sharing of needs.
3. Requests – the specific concerns
4. Thanksgiving – Shaping of prayer with gratitude.

##### B. The cure for worry and anxiety.

1. The right heart.
2. The right focus.
3. The right devotion.
4. The peace of God – provide power to endure.
5. The peace that surpasses all understanding – calming troubling situations when explanation fails.
6. The peace that guards our hearts and minds – this includes the choices and attitudes.

“When I understand that everything happening to me is to make me more Christlike, it resolves a great deal of anxiety.” – AW Tozer (quote from Facebook)