

**Sunday Sermon**  
**February 7**  
***Why Pray When You Can Worry!***  
**Matthew 6:25-34**

Someone has said that worry is concern on steroids. It attacks our peace of heart, assaults our faith, ties our intestines in knots, fills our minds with shadows, and sends flaming darts to pierce our emotional wellbeing.

What do you worry about? What do you fear? Are you afraid to fly? You have a .00001 per cent chance of dying in an airplane crash. The odds of dying in a car crash are one to two percent. Are you afraid of heights? Your chance of being injured by falling, jumping, or being pushed from a high place is 1 in 65,092. The chance of having your identity stolen is 1 in 200. Do you fear being killed by a bolt of lightning? The odds of that happening are 1 in 2.3 million. You're much more likely to be struck by a meteorite. How about sharks? You're much more likely to be killed by your spouse (1 in 135,000) than a shark (1 in 300 million). It is also interesting to note the fears of famous people. Jennifer Aniston, Cher, and Whoopi Goldberg are all afraid of flying. Barbra Streisand is uncomfortable around strangers. Michael Jackson was haunted by the fear of contamination, infections, and diseases. But the celebrity with the most phobias is Woody Allen. He's afraid of insects, sunshine, dogs, deer, bright colors, children, heights, small rooms, crowds, and cancer. Famous people of the past were no different. George Washington was scared to death of being buried alive. Richard Nixon was terrified of hospitals, and Napoleon Bonaparte, the military and political genius, feared cats.

We certainly live in a world caught in the grip of anxiety. And there is surely a great deal to worry about. Happy days seem to have fallen by the wayside. Families are squeezed as expenses soar and wages fall. The middle class seems to be going out of existence. One middle-class man said, "I don't care about being rich. I'd rather just be comfortable and not have to struggle every month." And then there is the

failure of our leadership and presidential candidates that are either untrustworthy or act like elementary school children.

Is there any hope for us? Yes, there is! As we come to our passage, *Jesus gives us four prescriptions for troubled hearts*. Three times in our passage he says, “Do not worry!” But what does he mean by worry? Worry has been defined in a number of ways. Someone has said, “Worry is like a rocking chair. It gives you something to do but doesn’t get you anywhere.” Others have said such things as: “Worry is the interest we pay on tomorrow’s troubles; worry is an emotional spasm which occurs when the mind catches hold of something and will not let it go.” The word Jesus uses is a mind torn apart, being pulled in opposite directions. It is a mind divided between legitimate concerns and destructive exaggerated even fantasized concerns. Here he is referring almost exclusively to economic concerns - what you eat, drink, your clothing, housing, insurance costs, medical costs, etc. But what about solutions you ask? Listen then as Jesus gives us four solutions for anxious hearts.

**I. Understand that the size of your worry is small compared to the size of your God. (6:25 – 26, 28 – 30)**

<sup>25</sup> *“Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? <sup>26</sup> Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?*

<sup>28</sup> *And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, <sup>29</sup> yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. <sup>30</sup> But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?*

1. The substance of your worry is small.

It has been reported that a dense fog extensive enough to cover seven city blocks 100 feet deep is composed of less than one glass of water. In the right form, a few gallons of water can cripple a large city. In a similar way, the substance of worry is nearly always extremely small compared to the size it forms in our minds and the destruction it brings

into our lives. Someone has said that “worry is a thin stream of fear that trickles through the mind, which if encouraged, will cut a channel so wide that all other thoughts will be drained out.”

2. The size of your God is infinite.

1) God as Creator and King has made everything, given life to everything, and provides for everything and everyone.

2) If God gave us life and a body, he surely will give us what it takes to maintain that body.

3) If God provides for little birds, he surely will provide for the “crown of his creation.”

4) If God dresses the fields more beautifully than any king (here Solomon), if he cares for that which is here and gone (transitory), will he not care for that which will live forever (eternal)?

## **II. Understand that your worry is futile and ineffective. (6:27)**

<sup>27</sup> *And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?*

You can't grow an extra inch by worrying. You can't add a day to your life by worrying. Worrying cannot help us grow taller or live longer, but it may very well shorten our lives. We can certainly subtract days from our lifespan by worrying. One man observed, “There are undoubtedly graves all over America where lie the sleeping bodies of truly believing people who cheated God out of 10, perhaps 15 or more, years of life because they worried themselves into their graves ahead of time.

## **III. Understand that defeating your worry comes by desiring God. 6:31 – 33)**

<sup>31</sup> *Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’* <sup>32</sup> *For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all.*

<sup>33</sup> *But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*

1. Don't act like pagans who bow down to gods that can't meet their needs (Indeed, they do not even exist!).

2. Act like a fully devoted followers of Christ.

Hudson Taylor once said, “Let us give up our work, our thoughts, our plans, ourselves, our lives, our loved ones, our influence, our all, right

into his hand and then when we have given all over to him there will be nothing left for us to be worried about, or to make trouble about.”

Richard Greene learned that lesson while he was in college. One day he was fretting over his bills and suddenly decided to simply give them to God and ask God to help pay these bills. As he finished balancing his checkbook, he noticed the final digits on his pocket calculator were 6.33 (He had \$6.33 left.). Suddenly he remembered Matthew 6:33. He laughed and took it as a message from the Lord. Shortly afterward, he received an unexpected scholarship. A little later a friend handed him a check for his month’s rent. God provided all his needs throughout college and later Richard became director of public relations for Transworld radio, beaming the message of Scripture around the world.

#### **IV. Understand that defeating your worry comes from living one day at a time. (6:34)**

<sup>34</sup> *“Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.*

John Stott said that in this way, “One day’s trouble is enough for one day for each day has troubles enough of its own. So why anticipate them? If we do, we double them. For if our fear does not materialize we have worried once for nothing. If it does materialize, we have worried twice instead of once. In both cases it is foolish: worried doubles trouble.” Don’t worry about yesterday sins; God has forgiven them; don’t worry about yesterday’s successes; God has recorded them. Don’t worry about yesterday’s sorrows; God can heal them and point us forward. We’re to live life on a daily basis. As Dale Carnegie once said, “we are to live in day-tight compartments.” David Jeremiah says, “You and I are standing this very second at the meeting place of two eternities: the vast past and the future. We can’t possibly live in either of those even a split second. But by trying to do so, we can wrap up our bodies in our minds. So let’s be content to live the only time we can possibly live from now until bedtime.”

#### **Conclusion**

Warren Wiersbe has said that “most Christians are being crucified on a cross between two thieves: yesterday’s regrets and tomorrow’s worries.”

But God wants us to focus on the present and live one day at a time. Is it not of interest that Yahweh describes himself to Moses as “I Am Who I Am.” I am with you right now in the midst of your situation providing everything you need to get through that situation. You are living like the exclamation “why pray when you can worry!” I ask you, “Why worry when you can pray?” Come and talk to me. Give me your burden. What is your biggest worry right now? I AM is the answer. So understand that the size of your worry is small compared to the size of your God. Understand that your worry is futile and ineffective. Understand that defeating your worry comes by desiring God. Understand that defeating your worry also comes from living one day at a time. Understand that God has provided the solution to your harried existence. Now go with Him and take on your day.