

BIBLICAL COUNSELING: WORRY AND ANXIETY

Understanding Worry

- A. Worry is a problem of the mind.

- B. Worry is sin. *Phil 4:6-7; Matt 6:34*

- C. Worry is rooted in unbelief. *Matt 6:30*

- D. The person who worries desires something in the place of God.

- E. Worry can become life dominating.
 - 1. Worry can lead to depression.

 - 2. Worry can affect you physically. *1 Cor 6:19-20*

- F. Worry, stress, and fear are closely related.

- G. Don't deal with worry sinfully.

1. By trying to control whatever it is that worries you.

2. By misusing drugs, alcohol, shopping, etc.

H. It is not wrong to plan, so long as you leave the outcome to God. *Prov 21:5; Matt 6:34; Prov 16:9*

Why Shouldn't You Worry? The Disease: Matt 6:25-32, 34

A. Worry is senseless because your Heavenly Father cares for you. *Matt 6:25-26, 28-30*

1. Because God has already given you the greater gift of life, you can trust Him to provide the lesser needs of sustenance. *Matt 6:25; 7:9-11; Rom 8:32*

2. If God provides for the physical needs of the lesser creation, surely he will take care of you, His children. *Matt 6:26, 28-30; Ps 147:9; 104:25, 27; Rom 1:20*

B. Worry is useless because it accomplishes nothing. *Matt 6:27, 34*

1. Anxiety is futile. *Matt 6:27; Heb 9:27; Ps 31:15; 39:4-6; Luke 12:20; Job 14:5*

2. While fretting cannot lengthen your life, it may shorten it!

3. Worry about tomorrow keeps you from being productive today. *Matt 6:34*

C. Worry is faithless because it denies God's loving care for you. *Matt 6:30b-32; 8:26*

1. Ultimately anxiety is due to unbelief. *Matt 6:30b; 8:26; 14:30-31; 16:8; 17:20*

2. By worrying you are behaving like an unbeliever. *Matt 6:31-32a*

3. Fretting is unworthy of a child of the King. *Matt 6:32b; 10:29-31; Ps 84:11*

You Can Stop Worrying. The Cure: Matt 6:33

A. Commit yourself to the Lord's business. *Matt 6:33a*

B. Trust God to meet your needs. *Matt 6:33b; Heb 4:15; 13:5-6; Isa 26:3; Ps 55:22; 46:1-2*

1. Cast your cares upon the Lord. *1 Pet 5:7; Phil 4:6*

2. If you take care of His business, He will take care of yours. *1 Kgs 3:10-14*

3. If you rely upon Him, he will not disappoint you. *Ps 37:25; 34:10; Rom 9:33; 10:11; 1 Pet 2:6; 1 Cor 10:13*

C. Give thanks for His bountiful provision and be content. *Phil 4:6; 1 Thess 5:18; Phil 4:12; 1 Tim 6:6-8; Heb 13:5-6*

Don't Misunderstand or Abuse God's Promises!

- A. Jesus is not saying that you won't have any problems. *Matt 6:34b; Gen 3:17-19*
- B. Jesus is not advocating carefree irresponsibility. *Matt 25:14-30*
1. God ordinarily provides through means— sowing and reaping. *Matt 6:26; Gen 3:19* Believers are not exempt from having to earn a living. *2 Thess 3:10*
 2. You are responsible to take care of today's troubles today, as God enables you. *Matt 6:34; 1 Tim 5:8, 13; 2 Thess 3:10; Lam 3:22-23*

Introduction to Phil 4:4-7

- A. Rejoice in the Lord always. *Phil 4:4*
1. God commands you to be joyful. *Phil 3:1; 1 Thess 5:16*
 - How can Paul tell you to be joyful?
 - You are responsible for how you feel.
 2. True and lasting joy is found only in the Lord. *1 Pet 1:8*
 - Any other source of joy will let you down. *Prov 23:4-5*
 - Joy is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. *Gal 5:22ff*

- The Lord is sufficient cause for continual joy. *Phil 3:8-10; 3:20-21; 4:5; Ps 37:4; 16:11; John 15:11; Luke 1:14; 19:37; Acts 8:39; 13:48; Rev 19:6*

B. Be yielding and gentle towards all people. *Phil 4:5*

1. How does forbearance relate to joy and peace?

- Don't be the kind of person who is always frantically looking out for himself.

C. Instead of being anxious, pray. *Phil 4:6-7*

1. Turn to God with all your concerns. *1 Pet 5:7; Heb 11:6*

- Prayer. *Col 4:2; Matt 6:32*

- Supplication. *Eph 6:18; Heb 5:7; 1 Pet 3:12*

- Thanksgiving. *Eph 5:4; Col 4:2; 1 Tim 2:1ff; Rom 1:21; Phil 1:12-17; 2:17-18*

- Make your requests to God. *1 John 5:15*

2. God's own peace shall guard your hearts and your minds. *1 Pet 1:5; John 14:27*

- Notice what Paul doesn't promise.

- God's own peace is of surpassing value.

Data Gathering/Interpretation

- A. What is the focus of worry?

- B. What is this person seeking?

- C. What is the history/pattern of worry?

- D. How is this person seeking to deal with worry in a sinful way?

Homework for Those Who Are Anxious

- A. Pray. *Phil 4:6-7*
 - 1. Adoration.

 - 2. Confession.

 - 3. Thanksgiving. Recall His past faithfulness.

 - 4. Supplication. *1 Pet 5:7*

B. Rejoice in the Lord. *Phil 4:4-5*

C. Trust God for the outcome. *Jas 4:13-17*

D. Meditate upon what is profitable. *Phil 4:8-9*

E. Desire and seek first God's kingdom. *Matt 6:33; Matt 6:19-24*

1. Focus upon fulfilling your calling in life.

2. Don't follow your feelings.

F. Keep an anxiety and prayer journal.



Books

Fitzpatrick, Elyse, *Overcoming Fear, Worry and Anxiety*.

Mack, Wayne, *The Fear Factor*.

Mack, Wayne, *Homework Manual for Biblical Living Volume 1*.



Booklets

Adams, Jay, *What Do You Do When You Worry All the Time?*.

Lutz, Susan, *Thankfulness: Even When it Hurts*.

Powlison, David, *Worry: Pursuing a Better Path to Peace*.



Audios

Fitzpatrick, Elyse. "For Women Worriers."

Newheiser, Jim. "Don't Worry, Be Holy. Matt 6:25-34."

Newheiser, Jim. "How to Have Joy and Peace. Philippians 4:4-7"

Scippione, George. "What, Me Worry?"



Supplemental Resources

"Worry Homework – Sample Assignments"