

Subject: *Christ the Wonderful Counselor*

Scripture: *Matthew 6:25-34*

A lot of people are worrying these days. Even before this crisis people were stressed and worried about life. Worry has been called America's favorite pastime.

I told someone that I was going to preach on how to overcome worry and he said, "The only way to overcome it is to DIE."

A man was not feeling well and went to his doctor. After the examination, the doctor said I'd like to have a word with your wife. He told her, "Your husband is really a sick man, and he needs to live in a stress-free, worry-free environment or he is going to die." On the way home the man asked his wife what the doctor said. "He said you're going to die."

During this crisis people are looking for direction and advice on what to do and what not to do. Someone said that half the people in the world are looking for advice and the other half are willing to give it. But we need the right kind of counsel and that's why we look to Christ.

Isaiah 9:6 *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*

The word "wonderful" (Hebrew *pala*) means extraordinary, something beyond our ability to do or to grasp. The word "counselor" describes someone who directs or advises people.

We need to hear the words of our wonderful counselor in Matthew 6. When Jesus says "take no thought" he means take no anxious thought or don't worry, and then He tells us what's wrong with worry:

1. Worry doubts God's provision (vs. 24-25)

The word "therefore" (vs. 25) goes back to the previous verse about serving God. We worry because we don't trust God to meet all our needs. In Bible times a servant looked to his master for everything. He had no rights and no property of his own, but he also had no worries. His master was responsible to see that all his needs were met. When we worry we forget that God is our loving and faithful Master and it's His job to take care of us.

A man told his friend he had hired someone to do his worrying for him. His friend asked him how much it cost. He said, "\$1,000 a month." His friend asked, "How are you going to come up with that kind of money?" "I don't know, that's his worry."

2. Worry defeats God's purpose (vs. 25b, 27)

Jesus addresses our tendency to worry about physical and temporal things. God creates each person as a living soul (vs. 25, "life" Gk., *psyche*, soul). If God gives us life itself, won't He give us everything we need to live? Life is not about things. Life is not about what we are going to eat or drink or wear. Life is about more than physical or financial issues. It is about knowing God and serving Him in this world. God created us for a reason, and that is not to worry and fret about life. Worry never accomplishes anything. Worry never solves anything. In verse 27, Jesus reminded us that no one can add a cubit (18 inches) to his height. Someone

said worrying is like rocking back and forth in a rocking chair. It gives you something to do, but it doesn't accomplish much.

3. Worry denies God's providence (vs. 26-29)

Christ tells us to look around and consider how God takes care of His creatures. If He provides food for the birds, won't He take care of you? If He provides clothing for the flowers, won't He meet your needs?

*Said the robin to the sparrow, I should really like to know
Why these anxious human beings rush about and worry so.
Said the sparrow to the robin, I think that it must be
That they have no heavenly Father such as cares for you and me.*

The most important words in the text are "our heavenly Father" (vs. 26, 32). When God saves us, He adopts us into His family, and that changes everything.

4. Worry dishonors God's character (vs. 30b-32)

When we worry we act like heathen people (Gentiles). We act like God is not able or willing to take care of us. Worry dishonors the love, wisdom, and power of God. It dishonors God's love by acting like He doesn't care for us. It dishonors God's wisdom by acting like He doesn't know what He's doing. It dishonors His power by acting like He's not able to meet our needs. Worry is the very opposite of faith. That's why Jesus rebuked them: "O ye of little faith? (vs. 30)"

Hebrews 11:6 *But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

How can we tell other people to trust Christ for their eternal salvation if we are not willing to trust Him to meet our daily needs?

5. Worry distracts our focus (vs. 33)

Our first priority is to seek God's kingdom and His righteousness. "Seek" literally means "keep on seeking." If you take care of God's interests, He will take care of yours. When we worry, our mind is distracted. Christ was in the home of Mary and Martha when He spoke about the problem of worry and how it could distract us.

Luke 10:41-42 ⁴¹ *And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things:* ⁴² *But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.*

6. Worry depletes our strength (vs. 34)

God designed us to live one day at a time. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" means "every day has enough evil (trouble) of its own." Someone said, "Worrying is the interest paid on borrowed trouble." Worry is like pulling tomorrow's clouds over today's sunshine. Our life is like a boat and every boat has a load limit. If we keep taking on more worries, eventually the boat will sink. God gives us enough grace, strength, and wisdom to stay afloat each day. Our responsibility is to trust God one day at a time. His responsibility is to take care of us and meet all our needs one day at a time.

7. Worry damages our health

Dr. Charles Mayo of the Mayo Clinic said that “worry affects circulation, the glands, the whole nervous system, and profoundly affects the heart.” Worry is actually killing people. Our English word “worry” means to strangle. Worry can affect your mental and emotional state, and even your physical health. Worry causes sleepless nights, headaches, high blood pressure, heart attacks, and ulcers. It’s been said that ulcers are not only caused by what you eat, but by what’s eating you.

APPLYING THIS MESSAGE

- Confess and repent of worry

Worry is a sin. We all agree that murder, lying, and stealing are sins, but how many think that worrying is a sin? Worry is not a weakness; it is wickedness, and we must turn from it and confess it as any other sin.

Proverbs 28:13 *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*

- Turn your worries into prayers

Philippians 4:6 *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*

1 Peter 5:7 *Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.*

That means “Cast all your anxious care upon God because He has a legitimate concern for you.” The word “casting” means to throw something in a sudden motion such as tossing a blanket on a horse or casting out the tackling of a ship. The key to overcoming worry is turning it over to the Lord. Remember that great hymn: *Oh, what peace we often forfeit, oh what needless pain we bear, all because we do not carry everything to God in prayer.*

- Focus your mind on God and trust Him

The NT word “worry” literally means to divide the mind.

Isaiah 26:3 *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*

Proverbs 3:5-6 ⁵ *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.* ⁶ *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*