

“Don’t Worry”

August 30, 2020

Luke 12:22-34

I. Introduction

As the time for His earthly ministry was drawing to a close, Jesus was teaching His disciples what it meant to be a child of God—what eventually was called a Christian ([Acts 11:26](#)). The world around them—and the world around us—is not a Christian world. Paul wrote in [1 Corinthians 2:14](#), “**The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit.**” Luke 12 began with Jesus speaking “**first to his disciples, saying: ‘Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees.’**” As we saw a couple of weeks ago, Christians need to beware of hypocrisy which is sin. Then Jesus used the interruption of a greedy brother to warn all those listening, including the disciples, about greed. He said in [Luke 12:15](#), “**Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.**” Such an attitude is also not understood by the world which says, “*He with the most toys wins.*”

Sometimes when we read Scripture the theme or point isn’t obvious, but in today’s Scripture Jesus didn’t beat around the bush—His point is “**Don’t Worry—Trust God.**” Jesus isn’t telling us something we don’t know. It’s common knowledge that worry causes a lot of physical ailments including loss of sleep, disabling headaches, stomach ulcers—even some heart issues are caused by worry. Corrie ten Boom put it this way, “*Worry doesn’t empty tomorrow of sorrows; it empties today of strength.*” Someone else has said, “*Worry is a thin stream of fear that trickles through the mind, which, if encouraged, will make a channel so wide that all other thoughts will be drained out.*”

On the other hand, Jesus isn’t saying that one shouldn’t take care of himself or his family. In [Proverbs 6:6](#), the sluggard or lazy person is told to take a lesson from the ants that work hard and gather for the winter. In [1 Timothy 5:8](#) Paul wrote, “**If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially**

for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” What Jesus is saying is that being anxious or worrying even about the necessities of life is wrong.

II. Don't Worry

A. The Christian Perspective Jesus began His teaching on worry by giving the Christian perspective: “Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes.” Jesus was saying that there was no need for worry about their lives, “what you will eat;” or for their bodies, “what you will wear.” Jesus’ words imply that Christians should be continually free of anxiety or worry. As children of God, Christians are under God’s care, instead of worrying—even about the basics of life: food, health, and clothing—Christians are, as 1 Peter 5:7 says, to “Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.” Jesus used several examples of God’s care in nature. His 1st example was “Ravens.”

B. Example 1: Ravens Ravens were despised and unclean birds (Leviticus 11:13-15). Jesus said, “They do not sow or reap.” And, unlike humans and some animals, they do not even store food for the long term, having neither a “storeroom or barn.” They survive because “God feeds them.” Throughout Scripture we are reminded of God’s care for His creatures: Job 38:41 says, “Who provides food for the raven when its young cry out to God and wander about for lack of food?” Psalm 104:27 says, “All creatures look to you to give them their food at the proper time.” Jesus said that God’s children are “much more valuable ... than birds,” so, if God takes care of lowly, insignificant, unclean birds, He will certainly not fail to meet the needs of those who belong to Him. But this isn’t carte’ blanche—those who disobey or forget God may temporarily be deprived of resources as a result of His chastening. For example, **turn to Haggai 1:1-11**. God will take care of us if we obey Him.

Following the example of ravens, Jesus considered some practical applications about worry. What does worry contribute? Does it add any length to one’s life? If not, why worry about the things of life? Although it’s a natural or human response when sensing events that are beyond our control, worry is one profitless activity. In fact, rather than reducing problems, worry can lead to many physical problems:

headaches, neck pains, ulcers, even back pains. Worry can affect thinking, digestion and even coordination. Worry takes away joy. Jesus said, “**Since you cannot add an hour to your life, why do you worry about the rest?**”

C. Example #2: Lilies Jesus then turned from the issue of food to that of clothing. To demonstrate God’s provision of clothing, Jesus used another example from nature: lilies. *Lilies* is a generic term for flowering plants. “**They do not labor or spin**”—flowers make no effort to grow and they don’t design themselves, yet their beauty is unsurpassed by any man-made garment. “**Not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these.**” Flowers serve no spiritual purpose other than to show that God is a God of beauty, goodness, order, design, and variety.

The point of Jesus’ examples is that since God prefers His people over the birds and plants, He will care for them even more—Jesus said, “**If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you?**” If God is so concerned about the flowers—what they look like; how they grow—even though they have a very short lifespan; how much more concern will He have for His very own children? Jesus is saying that by worrying about the things we need to survive; we are showing little faith in God. It’s as if Jesus is saying, “*You trust God to save you from your sins, to rescue you from Satan’s control, to take you to heaven to the place He has prepared just for you and to keep you for all eternity, but you don’t trust Him to supply your daily needs.*”

Worry demonstrates a lack of trust of the Father and in His promises and wisdom and power and love. Such a weak view of God dishonors Him, produces needless worry, and restricts the flow of God’s blessings—**turn to James 1:5-8**. On the other hand, in **Psalm 40:4** David wrote: “**Blessed** (or happy or content) **is the man who makes the LORD his trust, who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods.**” Therefore, Jesus commanded His disciples, “**Do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it.**”

D. Reasons not to Worry

1. You have a Father in heaven. Jesus went on to give some reasons not to worry. The first reason is: you have a Father in heaven. Every good father watches over and cares for his children, and our heavenly Father does the same. **Philippians 4:19** says, “**And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.**” This is why Christians shouldn’t worry: we have a Father in heaven. “**The pagan world runs after**” all the things, but our Father knows of our needs and will supply them. God not only knows of our needs, He is sympathetic, and has unlimited resources and power to meet every need of His children. God’s Fatherhood removes any cause for worry, fear, or anxiety. But not so the unsaved. Those outside of God’s kingdom have no claim on Him—no promises, pledges, or guarantees. Having no godly focus in their lives, the unsaved run after—strain-to-the-max after—material things. Their lives are filled with worry and fear and anxiety and rightly so. But Christians have a Father in heaven.

2. God will provide for those who belong to Him. Instead of pursuing earthly things, Jesus told his disciples, “**But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.**” Christians aren’t to focus on food, clothes, money, houses, cars, or other material possessions, instead they are to “**seek His kingdom,**” i.e., they are to worship, serve, and proclaim Jesus Christ as they live obediently to His Word, pursuing truth, holiness, and love. **Turn to Colossians 3:1-3.** Jesus promised that those who set their hearts and minds on seeking the kingdom glories, will find that God will meet their earthly needs. **Turn to Psalm 34:8-15.** God will abundantly provide for those who belong to Him, are faithful to Him, and seek His kingdom above all else—in **Matthew 6:33** Jesus repeated Himself, “**But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.**”

3. God wants to give you the kingdom. Jesus then said, “**Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.**” This is another reason not to worry: God wants to give you the kingdom. As a caring Shepherd, God doesn’t give reluctantly, He gives gladly. It is God’s good pleasure to grant the kingdom in all its fullness to His children. **Romans 8:17** says, “**Now if we are**

children, then we are heirs-- heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.” Romans 14:17 says, “For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” As children of God, as co-heirs with Christ, Christians have all the kingdom’s riches of righteousness, peace, and joy. There is no reason to worry, if God has given freely, happily of all the glorious riches of His kingdom, how much more willingly will He give His children what they need to serve Him in that kingdom? As Psalm 23:1 reminds us, “The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.”

Since His children don’t need to worry about the provisions of life, then they can be generous with what God has given them. Such generosity God honors with “treasure in heaven.” Being generous accomplishes more than supplying aid to others. Where our treasure is, there our heart will be as well. In other words, how we use our resources shouts our values. If we invest in earthly possessions, we show we care about things. If we invest and care for people, we radiate our love for others. God’s kingdom is about people. That is where our investments of time and resources should be: people, especially with those who have needs to be met.

III. Conclusion

We may give it any name we want, but worry, anxiety, fear is unchristian; it is sin. It shows a lack of trust in God and it is a form of idolatry. We replace God with fear or despair or hopelessness and turn to our own efforts to try to control our environment. Worry keeps us from growing and it makes us like the unsaved in the world. How can we witness to a lost world and encourage them to put faith in Jesus Christ if we ourselves are doubting God and worrying? Isn’t it inconsistent to preach faith and yet not to practice it?

How can we win defeat worry? The first step is to realize that God knows our needs, so we can trust Him to meet them. We are sheep in His flock, children in His family, and servants in His kingdom, and He will see to it that our needs are fully met. It is His pleasure to give us His kingdom. In love He

sent Jesus to die on the cross for us—so will He not take care of our needs? [Romans 8:32](#) says, “He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all-- how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?” [Isaiah 26:3-4](#) says, “You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD, is the Rock eternal.”

But God’s pleasures and our treasures must go together. We must look at earth from heaven’s point of view and make sure that we put God’s kingdom first in everything. *The main question is: “Where is your heart?”* If hearts are fixed on the short-lived, temporary things of earth, then there will always be worry. But if our eyes are fixed on the eternal, then God’s peace will guard our hearts and minds—[turn to Philipians 4:6-9](#). We must hold this world’s goods in an open hand and, like the early church ([Acts 2:44-45; 4:34-35](#)), be willing even to sell what we have in order to help others. It is not wrong to own things so long as things do not own us. Jesus put it this way in [Matthew 6:19-21](#), “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

From the world’s viewpoint, David had more than enough reasons to worry and despair, but listen to [Psalm 121:1-8](#):

“I lift up my eyes to the mountains-- where does my help come from?

My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.

He will not let your foot slip-- he who watches over you will not slumber;

indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

The LORD watches over you-- the LORD is your shade at your right hand;

the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.

The LORD will keep you from all harm-- he will watch over your life;

the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.”

Don't worry—trust God.