

In the Hot Seat with Jesus

Questions Jesus Asked

Is Not Life More than Food?

Worry

Grace Fellowship Church, Pastor Brad Bigney, Oct. 9, 2011

Matthew 6:25-34

I. Your Godly Compassion and Concern for Others is not a Sin

God hasn't called us to stop feeling or to stop caring about other people.

2 Corinthians 11:28 "And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure on me of my anxiety for all the churches."

Galatians 4:19 Paul addressed them as "My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you."

II. Your Godly Concern is Always Just One Small Step Away from Becoming Sinful Worry

A. You've Crossed the Line into Sinful Worry When Your Compassion and Concern Start to Consume and Control Your Thoughts

Matthew 22:37-39

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 "For the love of Christ controls me..."

When something other than the love of Christ begins to control you, you know you've crossed the line.

B. You've Crossed the Line into Sinful Worry When You Try to Control Things that God Never Assigned for You to Control

"One of the most important questions in life is, "Who is responsible for what?" As you deal with this question... you will encounter those who are *overly responsible*. These people take responsibility for things that God has not assigned or equipped them to do. But another class of people is probably the largest. These people are *genuinely confused* about which things are their God-given jobs and which things they can entrust to Him. Sometimes they are mini-messiahs, trying to do things that only God can do." *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*, 2002, p. 250

God doesn't give us grace to do what He's not called us to do

C. You've Crossed the Line into Sinful Worry When You're Focusing So Much on the Future that You Never Give Thanks for the Past or Present

Gratitude – by its very nature – entails slowing down, stopping, taking note of something, and reflecting it back to God in praise.

We short-circuit what God is doing in our lives because we don't like this uncomfortable feeling of the unknown... we don't like living in this middle ground of the 'already' and the 'not yet.'

Psalms 94:19 "In the multitude of my anxieties within me, Your comforts delight my soul."

III. Worry is a Big Deal Because Worry is a Sin that Flies in the Face of a Big God!

"Worry, therefore, is not simply an emotion that erodes our quality of life or a pain to be alleviated. It is a misdirected love that should be confessed. It is trying to manage our world apart from God. It is making life about our needs, desires, and wants... find anxiety... and you find sin; it is as simple as that." Ed Welch, *Running Scared*, 163

"God redeems our worry by using it as a flashing neon arrow that points right to our sin. His objective is... to reveal our desperate need for Jesus and the hope and joy He provides. If we see worry as an emotion or as pain, we can only mitigate or manage it. This makes us slaves to anxiety. But when we understand worry as sin, it is dealt with at the cross. Through Jesus' death we are forgiven and set free from all sin—including worry." *Money: God or Gift*, Jamie Munson, p.55-56

Suggestions for Fighting Worry

1. Make a written list of everything that you are worried about. Then prayerfully seek to determine what things are your responsibility and what things are simply areas of concern. If you need help ask another godly Christian to talk with you about your list.
2. Read one chapter per week of Elyse Fitzpatrick's book, **Overcoming Fear, Worry, and Anxiety**, and write out your answers to the questions at the end of the chapter. Approach another godly Christian and ask if they would meet with you for prayer and to discuss your answers each week (Continue this week by week, working through the book)
3. For every area that is one of your responsibilities make a list of what you can begin to do to solve that problem. Write steps to be taken. Ask someone to hold you accountable for following up on the actions that need to be taken rather than just stewing and worrying about it.
4. Do not pray as you are falling asleep because there is the danger that the praying can turn into worrying about the issue. Instead make a list of verses that you have memorized and choose one each night that you want to spend time meditating on. Select verses that speak of God's sovereign control, His abundant provision, His protection, etc.
5. During the day keep a 3x5 note card in your pocket and whenever your mind drifts to begin to worry about something, write it down on the card sit down at the end of the day or with your Christian friend that week and try to determine whether or not it falls in your circle of responsibility or just an area of concern.
6. Fight each day to focus your thinking and spend the bulk of your energy on solving today's problems that are truly your responsibility, rather than worrying about endless possibilities of 'what if?'
7. Read Jay Adam's pamphlet "What to Do When You Worry all the Time?" or David Powlison's booklet "Worry – Pursuing a Better Path to Peace" and discuss it with another Christian friend (Available in Book Nook).
8. Memorize Matt. 6:33-34 and write it on a 3x5 card to keep posted somewhere that is visible throughout the day - on your bathroom mirror, computer, kitchen cabinet, etc.
9. Memorize Phil. 4:6-9 and do a word study on each of the words listed as areas to 'think' on.
10. Read and work through Paul Tripp's article about the "Circle of Concern Versus Circle of Responsibility."

*But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore **do not worry** about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*

Matthew 6:33-34