

Matthew 6:25-24

A Life without Worry

Stress relief industry

Americans spend \$11 billion on products and services designed to relieve stress. Stress can cause appetite changes, asthma, back pain, cardiovascular disease, depression, digestive problems, headaches, immune deficiencies, insomnia, skin problems, memory loss, stunted growth, and thinning hair.

According to the National Institutes of Mental Health, about 19 million American adults suffer from anxiety disorders, with women more likely than men to be literally “sick with worry.”

“It’s chic to be stressed,” says Leslie Reisner, a Los Angeles psychologist and corporate trainer specializing in stress. “Not only do many of us *want* the stress in our lives, we want more stress than the next guy. It’s the new way of keeping up with the Joneses.”

You know the script. If you mention you worked until 10 p.m., your co-worker ups the ante to 10:30. If you are up to your neck in e-mail, she’s up to her eyeballs. If you are tied in knots, someone else’s knots are bigger, tighter, knottier.

Desk rage, road rage,

Julia Summerfeld, Senior health editor of MSNBC interviewed Ms. Reisner and she said: “People are now determining their self-worth on how busy they are and how much they have to do,” she says.

Competitive stressing seems to blend two of our favorite pastimes: bragging and complaining.

Dark faces of worry:
depression

suicide

Daily faces of worry:
insomnia

coping mechanisms that destroy health, diminish happiness, and deaden heart

three common responses:

Foot on gas - frantic, rattled, angry, agitated - “Fight”

Foot on brake - remove yourself, withdraw, crawl in shell - “Flight”

Foot on both - “Freeze”

Did Jesus ever speak to worry?

1. The Causes of worry

Jesus approaches the problem by speaking to the rational of a person - He appeals to them to consider causes. He uses reason

***Flawed virtue**

life is more than these

-things that sustain - food

-things that satisfy - clothing

food speaks of necessity that depends upon God to provide - the crops grow because of the conditions - clothes speak to a status that is achieved - clothes express your importance

-your life is more than food and drink

-your body is more than its wardrobe

Is your life an obsession for the next meal or the next wardrobe?

The next meal was such an obsession for Israel that they walked into idolatry because of it

2 reasons they were idolaters - food and status (we want to be like the others)

***Flawed value**

Look at the birds of the air - they do not try to do the job of God

Birds everywhere - doves, vultures, sparrows, hawks, cardinals,

God takes care of the birds - you say not at y place - I have to do it - I buy birdseed and place it outside in a feeder and I have so many birds come in and eat the seed that I am buy a bag of seed every week - it has become so expensive for me to do it - those poor little birds depend on me to eat

God has a human being spending lots of their life to feed the birds that God would feed

God takes care of them and He will do much more for you

***Flawed vision**

I will change my situation by my own volition

How many of you by worrying can add a cubit to your stature

you chose to worry!

Your choice to worry is a mentally questionable choice! -

Dan Allender's book, *The Cry of My Soul*, The power of explaining the nature and purpose of emotions to be our soul's cry helped me to see that my ups and downs, rages and joys are not mere feelings to be controlled, managed, ignored, or denied. Rather, my "insides" are constantly telling me what I am believing about God, myself, and the world. Accordingly, if I can learn to patiently listen to my heart instead of running from it, drowning its voice, or deadening its promptings, I will be more fully able to glimpse God's glory of how He is redeeming the whole of me (inside and out), giving me back my dignity, allowing me to become fully human (delighting in God's truth both in my inner world and my outer context).

Your choice to worry is fruitless!

2. The Casualties of worry

***Your Father**

grief of the Father

you begin to worship a false God because you do not believe that your Father will provide for you

***Your Future**

You spend the joy of today on the problems of tomorrow - anxiety

A census taker was going far into a rural area to finish the work in his territory. Driving down the country roads, he saw many houses with "Beware of Dog" signs. At the gate of the last address on his list, he saw another "Beware of Dog" sign as he entered a farmyard near a barn.

Afraid to get out of his car, he honked his horn, and soon a man came out of the barn with a small Chihuahua at his heels.

When the census taker was done asking his questions and filling out his paperwork, he mentioned how many beware-of-dog signs he had seen and asked, "Is this the dog all the signs are about?"

"Yup, sure is," the farmer replied, picking up the friendly dog.

"But that dog couldn't keep anyone away."

"I know," said the farmer, "but the signs sure do." The lesson is that fear is like a warning sign that makes us afraid of a dog that cannot hurt us!

Author C. H. Spurgeon stated, "Our anxiety does not empty tomorrow of its sorrows, but only empties today of its strengths."

***Your Faith**

O ye of little faith

you impact your faith

3. The Cure for Worry

***A decision**

***A direction**

***A discipline**

Philippians 4:6-7: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

Things that you can do something about - pray and act

Things that you can't do anything about - pray and rest

Things that you are not sure about - Pray and wait