
DO NOT WORRY

Last Monday at 65th Street, Mike Pittman gave a very good lesson about worry. I thought it would be good to give a summary of the lesson for our benefit.

What I liked so much about Mike's lesson is that he, in fact, taught *the Lord's* lesson. We find it in **Matthew 6:25-34**. After reading the text, let us make some observations.

The main idea is not to worry. This is mentioned four times in this passage (**v.25,28,31,34**). If we do worry, then we are showing a lack of faith (**v.30**). Our thinking should rise above the thinking that you can expect to find in the world (**v.32**). If our mind is filled with worry, then our mind is distracted from spiritual matters. Here are five things we should remember when we are confronted with worry.

Remember to put God first (**v.33**). We are to put the spiritual matters first. The kingdom of God is spiritual. It is seeking the rule of God in our hearts and wanting to be right with God. "These things" to be added are the material things we are not to worry about. We must meet the condition in order to receive the promise in this verse.

It would be good to remember the statement in verse **24**, which is in this same context dealing with materialism as a value system in opposition to God and spiritual things. Jesus did not say the we "*should not*" serve God and mammon; He said that we "*cannot*" serve two masters. If you worry about material things, where is your heart? Who is your master?

Remember that God cares (**v.25-30**). This is the point Jesus spends the most time explaining. God wants us to be convinced of Matthew **6:25**, Jesus argues from greater to lesser. He says not to worry about your "life, what you will eat and drink." Which is greater, the life God has already given you, or the food and drink to keep you alive? Isn't it logical to believe that if God cared enough to give us life then He will give us what we need for that life?

He also said not to worry about "*your body, what you will wear.*" Which is greater, the body or the coverings for the body? Isn't it logical to believe that if God cared enough for us to give us a body, then He will give us clothing for the body?

For the same reason, we should never doubt God's love for us when it comes to spiritual blessings. **Romans 8:32** puts it this way: "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"

In verses **26** through **30**, Jesus reasons from the lesser to the greater in order to show God's care for us. He gives the example of God's ability and care to feed the birds and clothe the grass of the field. He then compares our superiority to the birds and grass to imply that God cares that much more for us, so we can trust that He will provide food and clothing we need.

Another verse that tells us not to worry is **Philippians 4:6**. We are not to worry about anything; we are to pray about everything. Then the following verse promises the peace of God that passes understanding. The peace of God is the peace that only God can give. Where there is worry, there can be no peace. Where there is peace, there is joy (**Rom. 15:13**).

Remember to live one day at a time (**v.34**). We can be distracted by worrying about tomorrow. We can be worn out by worrying all night about tomorrow. Worry, like fear, can paralyze us as it did the one-talent man (**Matt. 25:14-30**). It is one of the most disabling sins there is.

However, we need to understand the difference between legitimate concern and sinful worry. Planning and forethought to carry out a plan is right to do (**2 Corinthians 1:17**). Concern for others is legitimate, too (**2 Cor. 11:28**). We need to be concerned enough about today's troubles. It may well be that tomorrow's problems and worries will never materialize. Whatever does materialize, be assured that God will give you the strength to handle it (**2 Cor. 12:9; 1 Cor. 10:13**).

Remember that worry does no good (**v.27**). If we can't do anything about the problem, worry does no good. If we can do something about the problem, then we should take action instead of worry.

Remember that it is the unbeliever's place to worry (**v.31-32**). The believer has no reason to worry. He believes in the love God has for us (**1 John 4:16**). He will have the wisdom to trust God's power, love, and wisdom. He will seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness so he can believe in God's promise to supply his material needs.

Jesus observes that the "Gentiles" (these would be non-religious heathens in the minds of the Jews to whom Jesus is talking) seek the worldly things. They are preoccupied with food and clothing. That is their value system. Since that is the case, the unbeliever should be worried. If the most important things to him are physical in nature, then he will most certainly lose them, even health and life itself. If he puts his faith in money, he has reason to be worried that he will lose it.

But an unbeliever has more reason to worry. The guilt of sin can cause us to worry. If we have a clear conscience, he would have no reason to worry. However, the person who does wrong must constantly worry about getting caught or suffering consequences of his wrongdoing. **Proverbs 28:1** says it well: "The wicked flee when no one pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion."

I enjoyed the lesson very much and wanted to share it with you for your edification. God bless your walk with Him.