

Worry Less, Trust God More

Philippians 4:6-7

I want to begin our program today by asking you a very specific, profound question. Do you worry? Are you a worrier? I would imagine that for many of us, worry anxiety. It's a natural part of life. There are some folks that, sadly, are chronic worriers, not a stand. I mean, there are those of us that live in the world and based upon the stresses and strains and trials and tribulations and temptations, we find ourselves in a state of anxiety.

We feel worried about the various things that are going on in life. So the question is, if we worry, is there a remedy? Is there an answer? I have no doubt that the problem of worry anxiety. I have no doubt it's very real. There are people today. They battle it day in, day out. But then to understand that there is a divine prescription, that there is a remedy, if you please, for worry.

And then thirdly, when I look at the scriptures, I find that there is a promise to those of us who face worry anxiety in life. So I want to begin by talking about the problem of worry. And I ask a moment ago. Do you worry? Are you a worrier? That might be that you're worried about any number of things.

Maybe. Maybe you lost your job and you're worried. You're worried about how you can care for your family financially. It might be that you're struggling on your current job, and the demands are such that you're worried how you can meet those demands that are so pressing on your life. It might be that you're worried about your health, or maybe the health of a family member, a friend.

Maybe you're worried and concerned about the state of our nation, the world that we live in. I mean, there are any number of reasons why we worry. I want to just share with you some statistical data that I think helps to put into perspective the why of worry. Approximately two thirds that 67% of US adults feel anxious about current events, with roughly 62 to 70% expressing specific worries.

Let me just now site for you some of those some of those things that create worry in the lives of people. Gentle anxiety. 67% of adults report feeling anxious about current global events. Financial stress. 70% of Americans report high levels of financial anxiety, including paying bills 65% safety and security 62% to 70% of adults worry about the safety of themselves or their families personal health.

66% of adults are anxious about their health. Increasing trend the percentage of Americans feeling more anxious than the previous year rose to 43%, up from 32%. And then, by way of the economy, 61% of Americans believe the economy is getting worse. That's according to a recent survey this year. Technology 45% of Americans are anxious about the impact of emerging technology on daily life.

Social connection. 53% of adults say stress has the biggest impact on their mental health. Societal division 80% of adults with high levels of loneliness report suffering from chronic illness. So what we're saying is worry or anxiety, that it is a documented fact that there's no question people worry, that people in this country are filled with worry and anxiety.

Now in Matthew chapter six, you remember Jesus asked the question and what we often call the Great Sermon on the Mount. Inherent in that sermon, the Lord dealt with the problem of worry and anxiety. And you remember Jesus asked this very pointed, poignant question why do you

worry? Now, it might be that you're watching this telecast today, and there are reasons why you worry.

So you might just write that question out. Why do you worry? And then you fill in the blank. Why is it that you find yourself worrying or filled with anxiety on a regular basis? But then note this three times in that same context, Jesus makes this statement. Here it is. Do not worry. Do not worry. Do not worry.

Now I think what the Lord is saying is he. He understands, and he understood in his day and time that worries a reality. Those of us who belong to the human family, that we are creatures that often find ourselves in a state of anxiety. We're anxious about any number of things you remember. On one occasion, Jesus said to Martha that she was anxious or distracted and worried about many things.

Well, for many of us, we can identify with that. We understand that. I mean, there are times in life when we're just so weighed down by anxiety and where we might add that to the equation, there's the why of worry and then the weight of worry. Jesus in the book of Luke talked about those who allow the cares of life to weigh them down like a heavy weight.

I mean, it'll drag you down. And so it's a real problem. I mean, there are so many people that are filled whose lives are filled with anxiety and worry and stress, but there has to be an answer to that, doesn't there? I mean, if the Lord understands worry is a reality in life, would it not stand to reason that Jesus, the Son of God, and that the inspired scriptures would lend insight into how we can deal with the worries and stresses and strains of life?

The psalmist on one occasion said, on behalf of God, he remembers our frame. He knows that we have been made of dust. The Lord knows us. He knows us inside and out. Remember David in Psalm 139. David said, Lord, you've known me, you've searched me. He said, you know, when I sit down, you know when I rise up.

He said, there's not a word on my tongue, but, Lord, oh, Lord, you know it all together. God has the ability to size us up. He knows us, Solomon said many years ago. The eyes of the Lord are in every place beholding the evil and the good. The Hebrew writer said it like this. Neither is there any creature that has not made manifest in his sight.

But all things are naked open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do. All he's saying is that God sees all. God knows all. Does God know me? Yes he does. Does he understand the anxieties and fears and worries that I have in my life? Sure he does. You remember the Bible tells us in Hebrews chapter four that Jesus has the ability to sympathize with us.

Look, the Lord has been here. He lived on planet Earth. He understands our makeup. He understands the struggles and and the struggles and trials of life. He gets it and he can eat us. So, number one, when we talk about the problem of worry and anxiety, to realize that there are a number of reasons why people worry, and then that when we talk about worry, we understand the weight of worry.

Now here's here's the sad reality of this. There are a lot of people today, and they're trying to deal with worry and anxiety in ways that are not sanctioned by God. How many people do you think tonight, when the end of the day comes, they're going to try to relieve stress? They're going to try to relieve the anxieties and stresses of the day with alcohol, or maybe some type of chemical substance, and maybe they're using some type of prescription drug to alleviate the cares and anxieties that they're facing in life.

Look, drugs and alcohol, that's not the answer. I mean, think about it like this if you come home at the end of the day in your life's filled with worry and stress and anxiety and you start drinking, let's just say that you drink yourself into a stupor, and by the end of the night, you've forgotten all your problems.

When you get back up tomorrow, guess what? Those problems are right back at you. That weight right back on your back. So what we want to do is look at what the Bible says. Because when it's all said and done, the Bible provides us with the template for how we can deal with worry and anxiety. I want to remind you of a passage of Scripture in Second Timothy chapter three, verse 16, beginning.

Paul talks about the all sufficiency of Scripture. I want to say that again. Paul speaks of the all sufficiency of Scripture. That is, the Word of God has the ability to meet every need that I face in this life. Paul said, All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and his profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped unto every good work.

Paul is telling us that the Word of God can benefit and bless our lives, but it will never benefit us, nor will it ever bless us if we never open it. Now, there are a lot of folks in our world today. They have access to the scriptures and they had before them a pattern of template, a manual, if you please, for life and how to live in this world, and how to deal with the complexities and worries and anxieties of life.

Now, that being said, here's the question. What then, is the prescription for worry? What's the divine remedy? What would God say to us today? Again, think if you had been living in the days of Jesus, and imagine you're among that multitude of people, that you were among that multitude of people listening to Jesus preach that great sermon? And imagine when Jesus asked that question, why do you worry?

Immediately your mind began to be filled with all the reasons why you were worried at that point in time and life. Well, and then to add to that what Jesus said, do not worry. Three times Jesus said, do not worry. You think he was on to something there? Sure he was. Now look, I get it. It's easy for me to say, don't worry.

I mean, how many of us have told somebody they're facing some type of some type of circumstance in life of epic proportions? Maybe they're battling some type of illness, disease, or some possibility of something to be being amiss in their health life. And we say, don't worry. Well, sometimes that's easier said than done, isn't it? Sure it is.

It's one thing to say, don't worry. But look, it's all together different to put that statement into practice. So how then can I resolve this problem in my own life? There has to be a remedy, doesn't there? Well, look at Philippians chapter four. Now, Paul is writing in about 1861 or 62, and Paul is a prisoner in Rome.

This is one of four prison epistles penned by Paul in spite of the Holy Spirit. Paul was in chains for the gospel of Christ. In other words, he was a Roman prisoner. He speaks in chapter one of his chains in Christ. And so over in Philippians chapter four, Paul would say, the Lord is at hand. And let me say this in the book of Philippians, Paul is in prison.

He's writing from a prison cell. And one of the great themes of this book is joy. Rejoice. Now why would the Lord Jesus, or rather, why would the Apostle Paul say to those who are in Philippi and here he is in prison? Why would he say to them, I want you to rejoice in the Lord? And again I want you to rejoice.

Oh, because I believe in Christ. The joy and the peace and serenity that we enjoy is unlike any thing that we will ever experience outside of Christ. You see, in Christ you have joy. In Christ you have peace. In Christ you can find contentment outside of Christ. Tough, tough to make those attributes come alive in life. So Paul's writing to the church at Philippi, and Paul said in nothing, be anxious.

Now wait a minute. Didn't Jesus say back some years earlier in that great sermon on the Mount? Didn't Jesus say, do not worry. Do not worry. Do not worry. And now Paul, writing by inspiration of the Holy Spirit and Paul in first Corinthians chapter 14, verse 37, said that the things that he wrote were the commandments of the Lord.

So what Paul is saying here comes from God in heaven. And what God is saying is this in nothing be anxious, but in everything with prayer and supplication and thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. Now wait a minute. What are you saying, Paul? Paul saying that when we face anxiety, when we feel worried about the various things that are going on in this life, the means by which we offset the worries, the stresses and strains of life.

The way to do that deal with it through prayer. You take it to God in prayer. Now let's just pause there for a moment. The theme of our study today is this worry less and pray more. Now, when we pray to understand that we are praying to an Almighty creator. Did you know that the God that we serve is omniscient?

That is, he knows everything. I mentioned a moment ago. Psalm 139 when David said, Lord, there's not a word on my tongue, but you know it all together. In that same chapter, in that same 139 Psalm, Psalm David rather talked about how there is nowhere we can go to escape the presence of God. He's everywhere. And then he talks about the power of God that we have been fearfully and wonderfully made.

Now that's the God that we're praying to. So what that says to me is I've got to put my trust in God. I've got to be willing to trust him enough to give him all of my cares and all of my anxieties and all of my worries. Can I do that? Am I willing to do that? One of the things that I read in connection with this study is that one of the reasons why people worry is because they feel like they have to be in control in life.

Now, think for a moment or two about the world that we live in. I am blessed to live in this country, as are you, and we can talk about the benefits and blessings of being an American citizen. And they are vast. It's my conviction that America is the greatest country in the world. We are blessed in so many ways.

There's a reason why people want to come to America, because there's something special about this nation. But now to understand America is not God's chosen nation of people. Know God's chosen nation of people today is the church. But I've got to put my trust in God. So I worry about the world. I worry about America. I worry about current events and what's going on in our country, and I worry about the future of our nation.

Well, I stand all that. But did you know what Daniel said? Many years ago? Daniel wrote that the most high rules in the kingdoms of men and gives it to whomsoever he desires. So what he's saying is, look, God is at work. I may not necessarily understand it. I might not be able to see it. But God is involved in the affairs of this life.

There are some that have this idea that God created the world and they just walked away from it. I don't believe that at all. No, I believe God is involved in the affairs of this world. He is intricately involved in the affairs of this world. Now, as a human being, can I

express my concerns? Can I have feelings of anxiety and worry about the state of our country?

Sure I can. You remember the great prophet Habakkuk. Go back and read the book of Habakkuk when you get a chance. Habakkuk can't understand why God would allow the nation of Israel to continue in light of their sinful ways. And so what God said to the prophet in the long ago was, look, there's a nation to the north, and let me tell you what, they're going to come in and they are going to judge the nation of Israel.

They're going to they're going to come in and punish them on my behalf. Well, that raised another question. Number one Habakkuk is worried about, okay, how is it, God, that you can allow the nation to continue on as they are? And God said, let me tell you what, there's a nation to the north, the Chaldeans, the Babylonians, and they're going to come in and they're going to do my bidding.

Well, that raised another concern. Well, God, how can you allow the Babylonians, who are much more wicked than your own people? How can you allow them to judge your people? And basically what God said was this, that once the Babylonians or Chaldeans had served their purpose, he had judged them well. What was he saying? Most high rules in the kingdoms of men gives it to whomever he will.

God is involved in the affairs of this universe. So we pray the word for prayer in Philippians chapter four verse six is a generic term for prayer. The word supplication, though, is a more specific term. It cares whether the idea of going before the throne of God with specific needs. In many ways, the backdrop to this term has to do with indigence.

Think for a moment or two about how, as members of the human family, in some ways we are indigent. We depend on God for everything. All the blessings that we enjoy in this life come from where? From what source? Well, James said, every good gift, every perfect gift comes down from above. The psalmist said, blessed be the Lord who daily loads us with benefits.

So God is our benefactor. But I've got to learn to trust him, don't I? Solomon said many years ago, trust in the Lord with all your heart. He said, lean not unto your own understanding. In all your ways, in all your ways where to trust him and what will he do? He'll direct our paths. Do you trust God?

In Psalm 56, which I believe to be one of the pinnacle Psalms. David and the long ago was being harassed and tormented. He was being oppressed. And David said, whenever I'm afraid, here's what I'm going to do, I'm going to trust in you, God. And then David would go on to say, you put my tears in your bottle.

Are they not written in your book, suggesting to us that our tears are precious in the eyes of our creator? And then he would say this I know. Listen to him. This I know. God is for me. Now remember that God's for us. God is. God is for us. God is beside us. God is behind us. He'll support us every step of the way.

But we have to learn to trust him. We've got to put our trust in the Lord. Sometimes one of the reasons our lives are filled with worry and anxiety, one of the reasons why we're divided in life and we lose focus is because we haven't learned to trust God. Now I've got to learn to trust him enough to cast all my cares on him in first.

In First Peter chapter five, at verse seven, Peter talked about how we are to humble ourselves and in the sight of God, and He'll lift us up. We have to be humble enough to turn to God and ask for his help. And so here's what Peter said. Casting all your cares on him,

for he cares for you. Now there are a couple of thoughts here.

Number one, note that little three letter word all Peter didn't say. Cast some of your cares on the Lord and cast a few of your. No, he said, cast all. Al. Now, I mentioned a moment ago inspiration. The fact that all Scripture is inspired of God. I believe every word is in Spirit of God. First Corinthians chapter two.

Every single solitary word is in spite of God. There's a reason why God said in the long ago the Peter to cast all our cares on him. And the reason is because he cares for us. God doesn't want us trying to shoulder our anxieties and our worries. And the fact of the matter is, we don't have big enough or broad enough shoulders to bear the burdens, anxieties, and worries of this life.

So what Peter is saying is, we've got to learn to trust God. We've got to pray more and worry less. If I'm going to God in prayer. And I am trusting that there is a God in heaven who is listening to my prayers, and that is interested in my plight on planet Earth, and who is more than willing to aid me in my times of difficulty and to rest?

Well? You know what? I'll tell you what. Look at Second Corinthians chapter 12, when Paul battled that thorn in the flesh. You remember how Paul dealt with that thorn in the flesh. He said, three times I prayed to God, and God's response was, my grace is sufficient for you. Now, look, God's grace can carry us through. And Hebrews chapter four, the writer said, therefore let us draw boldly under the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Now to stand as members of the human family. Though we are Christians, members of the Body of Christ, there are times when we succumb to temptation and we need God's grace and mercy. Forgiveness. As John writes in First John chapter one. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

As a child of God, I don't need to allow my shortcomings to weigh me down, to worry me. But I need to say to God, I acknowledge my wrongdoing. I'm repenting of this, and I want you to forgive me and move on. But is it not true that we can find grace to help with the stresses and strains and anxieties of life?

In Psalm 55, the psalmist there David again talking about some of the difficulties that he was facing, someone very close to him had hurt him, cut him deeply. And you remember David said, evening, morning and noon? Will I pray and cry aloud? Well, what was David doing? Praying to God? In verse 22 of Psalm 55. He said, cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you.

So what then, is the promise? Well, Paul said, the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, shall guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. And the idea there is that of think about a military guard standing watch over a city and not allowing enemy forces to penetrate the wall of that city. Or think about someone who's standing guard.

And the threat of the enemy is very real. And sometimes when the enemy is coming, people will turn to flight. Well, the idea here, the idea here, is that we don't have to worry about anybody invading our space, a hostile enemy, and we don't have to. We don't have to worry about getting on the run because, look, the Lord is standing guard.

Now, the Bible says the peace that passes all understanding will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. It's a blessing to be a child of God. Look, I do stand. Worry. Anxiety. It's a real part of life. And many of us, we know what it means to wake up worried and

anxious. We know what it's like to go to bed at night and where our lives are filled with anxiety and worry.

But what the Bible is saying is, what we need to do is trust God. Worry less. Trust more. Worry. Let's pray more. Are you a Christian? Have you obeyed the gospel? I can't imagine how anybody can deal with the stresses and strains of life outside of Christ. And so the Bible tells us that if we'll put our faith and trust in Jesus as the Son of God, repent of our sins, confess his name.

If we'll be buried with Christ in baptism, then we will enjoy forgiveness. Acts two, verse 38 God will add us to the church. Acts two, verse 47, and the Lord's promise to save the church. He's the Savior of the body. Ephesians chapter five, verse 23. And the bodies of the church. Colossians 1:18. Now once you become a child of God, you have at your disposal the privilege and power of prayer.

And it's in Christ that you can enjoy the peace that passes all understanding. God bless you.

Thank you brother.