

The Messenger



“... How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!” Romans 10:15

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Overcoming Worry

This is known as the “Age of Anxiety”. Martha has many brothers and sisters in our day who are “careful and troubled about many things” (Luke 10:41). Indeed, worry is the watchword of our world. If we do not have a job, we worry about that. If we have a job, we worry about losing it. If we do not have any money, we worry about that. If we have money, we worry about “where it all goes”. If we do not have a car, we worry about that. If we have a car, we worry about it breaking down. If we do not have an education, we worry about that. If we are getting an education, we worry about passing the course. If we are sick, we worry about that. If we are well, we worry about getting sick. If we feel a flutter of the heart or a pain in the abdomen, we are convinced that we have heart trouble or ulcers. One worrier said to the other, “I have so many troubles that if anything happened to me today it will be two weeks before I can get around to worrying about it”.

Now, life cannot be lived free from all sense of anxiety and concern. For example, being concerned about having an automobile wreck will cause us to practice rules of safety first. Concern over becoming ill will cause us to practice rules of good health. Concern about the proper provisions for old age will cause us to practice rules of good economy. However, the problem is this: it is easy to let our *concerns* become *cares*, and our *forethoughts* become *fear-thoughts*. Such obtaining, the sin of anxiety results.

Different Kinds of Worry

1. People worry about things that have already happened. How futile! One should never try to saw sawdust. Worrying about the past is like trying to put the toothpaste back in the tube. Past deeds cannot be undone. Past words cannot be unsaid. If the past involves sin, obey the conditions of pardon and let God abundantly forgive (Isa. 55:7). And, when God forgives you, forgive yourself. Lloyd George, former Prime Minister of England, once said, “I have made it a practice of my life always to close the gates behind me.”

2. People worry over things that will inevitably happen. How futile! Some people worry about their children marrying; but, they will enter into this honorable relationship (Heb. 13:4; Gen. 2:23-24). Some people worry about dying; but, they will die (Heb. 9:27). Some people worry about growing old; but grow old they must.
3. People worry about things that will never happen. How futile! Mark Twain said, "I have worried over a great many things in life, the most of which never happened."

Matthew 6:24-34 – The Lord’s Classic Text on Worry

From this text we can learn that worry is:

1. **Unnecessary** – *“Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.”* (vs. 32). We are children of an omniscient heavenly Father who is sensitive to our every need. Such obtaining, why worry?
2. **Cruel** – *“Behold the fowls of the air...your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?”* (vs. 26). The idea that God would take care of the lilies of the field and the birds of the air and not take care of us is preposterous; yea, brutal and cruel. As Delmar Owen says, “The heirs of heaven are better than the fowls of heaven.” Any father would feed his children before he would feed his fowls; thus, worry is distrust in God’s fatherhood, love, wisdom and power.
3. **Prohibited** – *“Be not anxious.”* (vs. 25, 31, 34). The same Lord that made belief and baptism a requisite to salvation (Mark 16:16) is the same Lord that prohibits worry!
4. **Futile** – *“Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?”* (vs. 27). One can put on the highest heels and wear the tallest hat, but he will still not be any taller. Worry is like a rocking chair; it will give you something to do, but it will get you no where. The women worried about who would roll the stone away from the sepulcher, only to find the stone had been rolled away (Mark 16:3-4). How fruitless was their concern?
5. **Heathenish** – *“For after all these things do the Gentiles seek.”* (vs. 32). Jesus is affirming that anxiety is a characteristic of the sinner, the heathen, the lost; but, we are not among that number. Rather, we are the saved! And, the saved are not to worry.
6. **Faithlessness** – *“O ye of little faith?”* (vs. 30). Jesus used the phrase, “O ye of little faith” four times. In Matt. 6:30 he used it in connection with anxiety, in Matt. 8:26 in connection with fear, in Matt. 14:31 in connection with doubt, and in Matt. 16:8 in connection with human reasoning. In reverse order, it is interesting to observe that human reasoning produces doubt, doubt produces fear, and fear produces anxiety. Faith is the remedy for all of these heart disturbers (John 14:1).

to be continued

News and Notes:

Remember to check the prayer list for those with ongoing spiritual weaknesses and physical illnesses. *“...Pray for one another...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”* James 5:16