

Intro: Did you know that Anxiety is the number 1 mental health issue in the US? Anxiety disorders affect 18 percent of the US population, or about 40 million people every year! This time last year 40 percent of the US population said they were MORE anxious than they were a year before. We tend to be anxious about the same things: Top 3:
Safety Health Finances (Followed by: Politics and Relationships!)

No one is exempt. Even if you don't have an ongoing struggle with this issue, all it takes is a problem of some kind and you can go there before you know it. In Mt 6:25ff Jesus has some very clear directions on what to do about worry.

Mt 6:25-34 Pg 685

How To Overcome Worry

1. First, Don't Focus On Secondary Issues.

Mt 6:25

- Here is what Jesus says to us first. All too often what we are "worried" about...isn't really important at all!

We think about secondary things: Food, Drink, Clothing.

Jesus teaches us here a very important principle.

"There are things more important than food, clothing drink!"

Stop and think about that. For many people...if not in fact for MOST in our culture, that is heresy!

We feel like we must do ANYTHING...and EVERYTHING possible to protect our those things

Jesus says, "No...understand...there is something more important. It is your **SPIRITUAL LIFE!**"

Applic: Aren't you glad that Jesus understood this...that there was something more important in this world than His life!

- Notice how He phrases it:

"Don't worry about your life!" What you will: Eat, Drink, Wear (later adds...how LONG you will have physical life!

This is the very first step toward a worry free life. That is, Get your priorities right. When you do that...Perspective:

YOU HAVE JUST REMOVED THE TOP 3 ISSUES OF CONCERN IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA!

- Finally, notice Jesus doesn't say, be reckless, be blind, don't pay attention to these things. He just says: "Don't worry"

What you should be doing instead He says is this: *Trust that you have a Heavenly Father that knows your needs...and will provide!*

VS 32: God knows you need them...He will give you what you NEED; (Def might be different!)

Two Examples of God's Provision

1. Birds have food: Why? Because the Father feeds them
2. Flowers of field Why? Because the Father clothes the grass with beauty

- Also, Jesus says, Remember this: You aren't HELPING anything by worrying! It doesn't FIX a single thing!

You can lay away for hours, turn over every possibility in your head, agonize over 12 solutions...no help at all

Illus: I remember when I learned this lesson: I think it was when we were building this building and builder went bankrupt, we needed another 1 ½ million or so to finish it: Lying away worrying, fretting, heart pounding: Finally occurred to me:

I can lay here for another couple of hours: Tomorrow is coming just as surely. Only difference between my worry and sleep I'll be MORE tired and LESS prepared to deal with whatever comes. ONLY thing I can do...doesn't help! Hurts! SLEPT!!

Applic: When we start to worry, here is what we should ask ourselves.

Q: *Is this something that affects my Spiritual Life in a significant way? If not...then don't worry! Move it to the side...No Worry*

2. Secondly, Jesus Says, Put First Things First!

Mt 6:35

Notice that what Jesus tells us to do is to replace bad thinking with good thinking, bad actions with Good actions.

Instead of worry he tells us we are to seek two things:

- **Seek His Kingdom:** **Kingdom:** lit = God's rightful rule in your life!
You see, when we are pursuing something else FIRST, we have moved God from His proper place!
He is the one who provides all we need, and when we forget that, and think WE have something to do with it,
Or someone else does, or life does, or circumstances do...Then we are following the wrong path
Seeking God's Kingdom says, "He has the right to rule in my life...and whatever he provides is right...and good...best"

Applic: Learning to trust that is difficult. But I would submit to you that part of what we see in the bible is just that Men and women of faith, trusting God's Kingdom is right and best!

>**Esther:** *Perhaps you have come to your place...for such a time as this! (God was in charge...of all Mordecai planned)*

>**David:** *Out in desert, tending the sheep, Lion and the Bear comes (God preparing him!)*

>**Paul:** *In prison, missionary journey halted, "all" he could do, write letters...(God was in charge!)*

Each one of them continue to SEEK GOD, and His Rule in their life...right where they were

All could have worried...been immobilized by fear, doubt, anxiety...Sought Him Instead!

- **Seek His righteousness:** **Righteousness:** lit = God's character and acts in your life
Here Jesus is saying, instead of worrying, ask yourself, "How can this situation help me BE more like Jesus", ACT more
How can this develop my spiritual character, so that my life is more like His? Grow, Mature, Remove, Strengthen
How can this help me ACT, or DO the things Jesus would do!

Applic: In every single example I used, we see them men and women of faith, (Esther, David, Paul) do exactly what Jesus said and they disregarded their PHYSICAL LIFE and emphasized their SPIRITUAL LIFE!

They understood...there was something more important:

Esther: *If I die, I die!*

David: *The Lord that empowered me to win then...will empower me now!*

Paul: *I could sit and worry...instead...I will write to my friends...(Became 2/3 of the NT)*

3. Finally, Live Today And Don't Worry About Tomorrow! Mt 6:34

Here Jesus is very clear. Take one day at a time. If we were to actually do this, it would remove most of our anxiety. It has only take me about 40 years of walking with Jesus to START to learn this, but I think I'm finally starting to "get it!" Not good at it But I am at the place where I am able to say, "Today...I'm going to deal with Today...and Let God deal with tomorrow!"

Now, I know that is not as easy as it sounds, but I think the Apostle Paul has given us some help with this. Look with me at **Philippians 4:4-9 Pg 832**

This is an awesome parallel to what Jesus had to say to us. I love it because Paul gives us the same direction...Fleashes it out Not only does he say, Don't Be anxious...He is then VERY specific about the 3 things we can do to overcome worry!

- Vs 6: The Command: *"Do not be anxious about anything!"*

Lit = *To take worrisome thought of, to be anxious, to be worried or concerned* (Exact same word Jesus used!)

You read that and say...Paul, Easier said than Done! Paul says, great...Let me give you 3 Steps Overcome Worry

1. Pray right: Instead of talking to yourself, to others, to people that can't help, Talk to God! He CAN help!

And, talk in the right way...Pray in the right way.

>Prayer: Talking to God: It is the generic word: TALK to Him about what is going on

>Petition: Request HIS help! "God I need YOU to show up," YOU to do what ONLY YOU CAN DO!

>Requests: Ask for a specific thing, item or action. God THIS is what I need!

>Thanksgiving: Praying, Requesting His help and your specific needs...with an attitude of THANKSGIVING:

- a. For what He has ALREADY provided you! b. In ADVANCE for what you need c. That you can APPROACH Him!

2. Think Right: Replace the AWFUL what if it all goes WRONG visualization...with a picture of what God can do! RIGHT

>True: *What does the BIBLE and GOD have to say about this:*

>Noble: (Honorable) *Worth elevating and honoring* (Godly)

>Right: *Right, evenhanded, the correct thing to do*

>Pure: *Clean in thoughts words and deeds*

>Lovely: *To be pleasing, attractive, to be desired*

>Admirable: *To be well spoken of, well thought of, desired*

>Excellent: *To have moral, physical or spiritual quality*

>Praiseworthy: *Something to be celebrated and exalted*

Not just think...but KEEP ON THINKING...Make it your habit to think this way...Start and don't stop thinking these things One great way to do this is through Scripture memorization. That replaces your BAD thinking...with BIBLICAL thinking The more you put God's word in your mind and heart...the more it will push out the worry and struggle!

3. ACT right: Pray right, Think Right, and Do right! Don't wait until you FEEL like doing the right thing. Just DO it!

Go ahead and START...Long before you have the feelings...and guess what...the Feeling will follow!

Vs 9: Paul says: Act like I Act, Do what You have seen me do!

>Learned: Look at what I have taught...and DO it (Probably from his letters)

>Received: To be handed off, to learn from more directly (Probably from mentoring, personal instruction)

>Heard: To listen to, be instructed by (Sermons preached)

>Seen: To observe (With him in person)

Do those three things...And the God of PEACE will be with you!

CONCL: Jesus is giving us good news! We don't have to be anxious, we don't have to worry, we can overcome it!

So, if you are here...and you are battling anxiety, Good news!

1. Is this a secondary issue...Or does it truly affect what is eternally important?

2. Am I seeking God's Kingdom and Righteousness in this? Am I pursuing Him...or something not all that important?

3. Am I living today...instead of worrying about tomorrow!

4. Am I Praying right...Thinking Right...and Acting right

Listen: You can't pray right, think right an ACT right...and still worry. IF God is there with you...and He will be...No Worry Here is what we do instead though. We own it, hold on to it, try to solve it...Figure our our Plan B, Plan C Our "What If"