

WCBC NEW YEAR'S SERMON - JAN. 8, 2017

TOPIC: "Christ's Message For 2017!"

TEXT: Matthew 6:25-34

INTRO:

- Worry-it is?

Today, we're going to look at worry from the perspective of Jesus. We'll see what the Lord Jesus has to say about it. We'll learn from the Greatest Teacher of all time how to appropriately handle the worries of life, especially in 2017!

I. WHAT IS WORRY?

The term "*worry*" comes from the Greek word, "merimnao," meaning, "to be anxious, distracted, to have a divided mind." It is the word that Christ used in Matthew 6:25 when He said, "*Do not worry about your life.*"

Worry is an emotion and a state of mind that is often the opposite of trusting God. It is being OVERLY concerned about something that MAY or MAY NOT happen.

In verse 25 of our text, here, worry is ASSUMED. It does not say, "if you worry," rather, "*do not worry.*" It clearly shows that all of us, in one way or another, have experienced worry in our lives!"

The Two Kinds of Worry:

1. Illegitimate (Unhealthy) Worry - Matt. 6:25-34

Note: This type of worry is baseless, unfounded, and unnecessary! It is not real. It just exists in the mind. This is the harmful, crippling worry!

- Chuck Swindoll, *Ultimate Book of Illustrations & Quotes*, p. 625:

A woman worried for forty years that she would die of cancer. She finally died of PNEUMONIA at age seventy. She wasted thirty-three years worrying about the wrong thing."

- Scottish Proverb

"What may be, may not be!"

2. Legitimate (Healthy) Worry - Phil. 4:6-7

Note: These are the worries that are for real! They are LIKELY to happen. They SHOULD bring us to our knees! - Phil. 4:6-7

- Final Exam = Failed because did not study!
Job = Did not get it because didn't prepare for the interview!
Sick = Did not eat healthy foods and did not exercise regularly!

II. THE CAUSE OF WORRY: v.30

Note: We worry because, as human beings, we were given by God an imagination that enables us to see the good and the bad possibilities of life. He has given us the capacity to care about what happens to ourselves and to others!

In verse 30, the Lord Jesus had identified the

underlying cause of worry amongst Christians as
THE LACK OF FAITH IN GOD - "*O you of little faith?*"

*"It is one thing to believe in God, but it's quite another thing to fully trust in Him!" We should live, day-by-day, putting our child-like faith in Him!

Note: Living by faith includes our responsibility to work and to do what we can to provide for the needs of ourselves and our families. That's why the Apostle Paul said in II Thessalonians 3:10 that "*If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.*" This is the "No work, no eat!" principle of life!

III. THE USELESSNESS OF WORRY: vv.25-32

Note: Worry is pointless. Nothing has ever been accomplished by worry!

- Vance Havner
"Worry, like a rocking chair, will give you something to do, but it won't get you anywhere!"
- 1. It causes us to forget our individual worth - vv. 25-26
Note: God takes care of the birds. In God's eye, our value far exceeds that of the birds! - v.26
- Matthew 10:29 - two sparrows sold for a cent!
- 2. No one can prolong his/her life one hour longer by worrying - v.27
- 3. It blinds us to God's blessings - vv.28-30

Note: We will always overlook God's bountiful blessings to us if we are preoccupied by worry and doubt!

4. It is PAGAN! - vv.31-32

Note: Matthew 6:25-34 is part of The Sermon on The Mount and taught by Jesus exclusively for His followers (Matthew 5:1, "*His disciples*").

Here, Jesus equates Christians who worry unnecessarily to pagans, or unbelievers. He, in essence, indicates that one of the marks of an unbeliever is WORRYING UNNECESSARILY!

IV. THE CURE FOR WORRY: vv.33-34

Note: In verses 33-34, here the Lord Jesus shows us that the cure for the illegitimate, unhealthy worry is a MATTER OF PRIORITIES! That we need to set our priorities straight!

1. We must exercise faith and prioritize God
- v.33
- Hebrews 11:6
2. We must take one day at a time, and everything will fall into place - v.34
Note: Phil. 4:6-7 = by-product of vv.33-34
 - Sleeping Well vs. Worry!
A negro woman lived to be 90 years old. When asked about the secret of her longevity, she said,

"When I works, I works hard, when I sits, I sits easy, and WHEN I WORRIES, I GO TO SLEEP!" She sleeps on her worries! - P.L. Tan

CONCLUSION: Christ's Twofold Message!

In a nutshell, Christ's 2017 message to all of us is simply, "Do not worry!" He emphasized this to us by mentioning it three times, in verses 25, 31, and 34. He stressed this message to us because of its great importance. Christ knows that we are prone to worry!

Now, in Luke 12:22-34, a parallel passage, Jesus, in verse 32, expanded His "Do not worry" message by saying, "Do not be afraid!" If we combine and apply these two inspiring and encouraging words from Christ Himself, we will then have GREAT HOPE AND OPTIMISM TO FACE THIS YEAR. WE WILL BE ABLE TO OVERCOME, BY HIS GRACE AND MERCY, ALL DIFFICULTIES, FEARS, AND WORRIES THAT LIE AHEAD OF US. WE WILL BE WELL- PREPARED TO TAKE ON ALL NEW CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OUR GOD HAS IN STORE FOR US IN 2017!

Story of J.C. Penney!

In 1929, J.C. Penney's business was highly unstable. And so he began to worry, and became sleepless. He worried to the extreme and contracted shingles. In the hospital, Penney was given medicine to tranquilize

him, but it was no help. He still worried about his business!

One night, he felt he would die before morning, and so he started writing farewells to his wife, son, and friends. But by the next morning, as he was lying in bed, he heard singing from the hospital chapel next door. He heard the line:

"No matter what may be the test, God will take care of you..." (p. 179 in our *Hymnody* song book)

Suddenly, he leaned up, thinking to himself: "It is real! God loves and cares for me!" In no time, he had jumped out his bed, and entered the chapel. And then a miracle took place in his soul, as if he were a little bird suddenly freed to fly out of the dungeon into the sunlight, from hell to paradise! - Paul L. Tan

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!

