**KEYS TO OVERCOMING WORRY**

**Matthew 6:25-34**

* **“Worry is a cycle of inefficient thoughts whirling around a center of fear…Worry doesn’t empty tomorrow of its sorrow; it empties today of its strength.” – Corrie ten Boom**
* *“Don’t worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”* (Philippians 4:6-7)
* *“casting all your cares on him, because he cares about you.”* (1 Peter 5:7)
* **It is insensitive, egregious, and unbiblical for any pastor, preacher, or Christian to tell everyone who is suffering from hunger and lack across the world that their suffering is due to a lack of faith.**
* *“Make the Kingdom of God your primary concern.”* (Matthew 6:33a NLT)
* **What is your #1 PRIMARY concern? What garners the bulk of your attention, your energy, your money, your time, and your commitment?**

**THE BIG IDEA: The key to overcoming anxiety in any circumstance to fully trust in the Lord through faith.**

**WORRYING WILL NOT CHANGE THE CIRCUMSTANCE, BUT IT WILL NEGATIVELY AFFECT YOU**

* **Worrying weakens our resistance to illness and adversely affects our nervous system, digestive system, and heart.**
* *“Therefore I tell you: Don’t worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Isn’t life more than food and the body more than clothing?,,,* *Can any of you add one moment to his life span by worrying?”* (Matthew 6:25, 27)
* **According to Jesus, worrying is actually a sin because it mirrors the pagans who have no faith in God at all.**
* *“So don’t worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ 32 For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.”* (Matthew 6:31-32)
* **Jesus taught that worrying is pointless and sinful because it shows lack of faith and never brings positive results anyway.**

**WE OVERCOME WORRY AND ANXIETY THROUGH FAITH IN OUR LOVING HEAVENLY FATHER**

* *“Consider the birds of the sky: They don’t sow or reap or gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Aren’t you worth more than they?”* (Matthew 6:26)
* **God still expects us to work to provide for ourselves and our families, understanding that He is the ultimate Provider.**
* *“But if anyone does not provide for his own family, especially for his own household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”* (1 Timothy 5:8)
* **“Worry is a poor substitute for prayer, planning, and working.”**
* *“If that’s how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, won’t he do much more for you—you of little faith?”* (Matthew 6:30)
* **Knowing your value in Christ is a key step to eliminating worry in your life.**

**WE OVERCOME WORRY BY SEEKING AND SURRENDERING TO GOD FIRST IN ALL THINGS**

* *“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you. 34 Therefore don’t worry about tomorrow, because tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” (Matthew 6:33-34)*
* **Seeking to live under God’s rule and reign by His standards should be our primary concern.**
* *“Worrying about tomorrow does not help either tomorrow or today. If anything, it robs us of our effectiveness today-which means we will be even less effective tomorrow. Someone has said that the average person is crucifying himself between two thieves: the regrets of yesterday and the worries about tomorrow. It is right to plan for the future and even to save for the future ( 2Co 12:14; 1Ti 5:8). But it is a sin to worry about the future and permit tomorrow to rob today of its blessings.”* Wiersbe
* **When we are seeking the kingdom of God above all else we won’t have time or room in our minds to worry.**

**Connect Group Discussion**

**ICE BREAKER: What would you consider the most peaceful place or vacation? Explain.**

**Understanding:**

* What do we learn about God/Jesus in Matthew 6:25-34?
* How is Matthew 6:25-34 linked to the previous section of Matthew 6?
* What does Jesus mean when He says “the Gentiles” in verse 32? What is He conveying? (Hint: He is not simply referring to all non-Jews, although that is in part.)
* What does the “Kingdom of God” mean? How do you seek that “first” as in verse 33?

**Digging Deeper:**

* What causes you worry/anxiety? How do you typically address it?
* Why is worry a sin according to Jesus?
* How does knowing worry is a sin affect your view of worrying?
* What does the Gospel say that can help you overcome worry?
* How can trusting God instead of worrying be a positive example to others? In what ways can you put God’s Kingdom first in your life?

**Loving Outward:**

* Who do you need to share the gospel with this week?
* Who do you need to follow-up with regarding the gospel?
* Who are you bringing to church next Sunday?

If you are not in a Connect Group and would like to get connected to grow in your relationship with God and others, contact the church office at 225-272-3740, and we can help find a group that fits your schedule.

**Additional Notes**

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