

# Winning the Thought Battle

## LWCF

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### Introduction

(Mat 6:25-33) {25} "Therefore I tell you, do not **worry** about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? {26} Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? {27} Who of you by **worrying** can add a single hour to his life ? {28} "And why do you **worry** about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. {29} Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. {30} If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? {31} So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' {32} For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. {33} But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

### **Effectively Defining Worry... What is Worry? Definitions**

- Old English word "worry" from wyrgan and Old High German wurgen, both meaning "to strangle, to choke"
- Greek word merimnao used in most NT references ...derived from merizo = "to divide;" and nous = "mind." means "divided mind"
  - It comes from a Greek word which means **to have a divided mind**. So to be a worrier is to have your mind divided between legitimate thoughts and thoughts that are not legitimate, thoughts which you shouldn't be thinking.

Some clarification

So, when Jesus says, "Don't worry," He doesn't mean "Don't plan" and He doesn't mean "Don't be concerned."

### **Difference in Concern and Worry...**

- "**concern**" means to "have an interest in, give attention to, be engaged by a situation, as a matter of consideration or responsibility"
- "**Concern**" becomes "**worry**" when we fail to relate the situation that confronts us to the source of sufficiency in God.
- **To worry** is to assume a **responsibility** that is not ours to assume; failing to recognize that God is bigger than any problem we might have, and loves us enough to seek our highest good in the midst of every situation.

## **The Dangerous Cycle of Worry?**

Worry has a cycle... in order to defeat it we must understand how it works against our mind...

### **1. A Spirit of Fear**

- Anytime you hear could have, would have, should have... generally not healthy
- The Spirit of fear has one clear job description... to cause you to worry
- This spirit of fear desires to divide our minds

### **2. A divided mind through unbelief**

(James 1:5-8) If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. {6} But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. {7} That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; {8} he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.

How does He do this?

- The mind is the battle field and the enemy works through **deception** to cause **doubt** to cause **division**, not only in the body of Christ but in your own mind...

**1:6 Doubting** means “to be divided in one’s mind” or “to debate.” The term does not describe a momentary doubt but a divided allegiance, an uncertainty.

**1:8 Double-minded** is literally “two souls.” If one part of a person is set on God and the other is set on this world (see Matt. 6:24), there will be constant conflict within.

### **3. The Multiplication (Fragmentation) of Thoughts**

(Psa 94:19) When anxiety was great (Multiplied...) within me, ...

- **Picture** your **heart like a garden**... and **worry is like weeds**
- Now once our minds enter into
- this realm... we become very vulnerable to the enemies Worry weeds...
- **As we read the next step in the cycle of Worry**...

### **4. Replacing the Word with the cares of this world**

- (Mat 13:22) The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the **worries** of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful.

**G3308** merimna 1) care, anxiety (through the idea of distraction)

- Notice it chokes the WORD (seed) making it unfruitful...

- Picture your heart like a garden
- Creates... THE DEADLY CONSEQUENCE OF WORRY = UNBELIEF

## What does Jesus say... Matthew 6

### **Worry Is Inconsistent (6:25)**

"Therefore I tell you, do not **worry** about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?"

- It doesn't make sense to conclude that God has already done the biggest job (creating our body, our life) but then would fail to do the smaller job (providing what we need to live the life He has given us).
- It is an argument from the greater to the lesser. God obviously knew what it would take for bodies like ours to exist—food, clothing, and shelter.
- It is completely inconsistent with the wise and loving character of God to think that He did the one thing without also doing the other.

### **Worry Is Irrational (6:26)**

{26} Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?"

- "If God provides for something as simple as the birds of the air, won't He also provide for you?" It's irrational to think that He wouldn't.
- Therefore, if tiny things like sparrows and hair are under His watchful eye and concern, how much more are we who are the pinnacle of His creation. Will He care for us? The answer is: "Of course He will!"

### **Worry Is Ineffective (6:27)**

{27} Who of you by **worrying** can add a single hour to his life ?

- Verse 27 asks, "How can worrying add anything to your life? Answer: It can't.
- Worry is totally ineffective when it comes to improving or changing your prospects
- Worry doesn't change tomorrow, but it sure changes today.
- Worry robs you of the strength and ability to enjoy the gift of life today that God wants you to enjoy.

### **Worry Is Illogical (6:28–30)**

{28} "And why do you **worry** about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. {29} Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. {30} If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?"

### **Worry is INSANE**

It is allowing what is on the outside to get on the inside

*All the water in the world... However hard it tried, ... Could never sink a ship... Unless it got inside. All the hardships of this world... Might wear you pretty thin, ... But they won't hurt you one least bit Unless you let them in.*

Effectively dealing with worry

### **1. Seek First the Kingdom of God**

(Mat 6:33-34) But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. {34} Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

### **2. Actively take your thoughts captive**

(2 Cor 10:5) We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

### **3. Stand on the promises of God**

(Rom 4:18-21) Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be." {19} Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead--since he was about a hundred years old--and that Sarah's womb was also dead. {20} Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, {21} being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.

### **4. Implement faith and action**

(James 2:17-18) In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. {18} But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do.

How do we do this...Replace fear with prayer

- (Phil. 4:6-7) - "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God...shall guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus"