

Conquering The Anxious Heart

Introduction. According to the U.S. Bureau of Standards, a dense fog covering seven city blocks to a depth of a 100 feet condensed into water would not quite fill a drinking glass. Like fog, our anxiety can block our perception of God's care, but in reality, it has little substance.

Matthew 6:25-34 is a magnificent part of Christ's sermon on the mount. This part of the chapter deals with the state of mind of anxiety. Anxiety conflicts with faith, so every Christian needs reminding of what Jesus said about worry and ways to conquer worry.

I. ***What Jesus Said About Worry***

- A. "Therefore," in the light of the alternatives previously discussed (Matthew 6:19-24), Jesus instructs His disciples not to worry about physical necessities.
 - 1. The argument goes from the greater to the lesser: if God has given us life and a body, which is obviously more important, will He not also give us food and clothing?
 - 2. To worry about the physical is to have learned nothing from the natural creation, which testifies to God's providence (Matthew 6:28-29).
 - 3. The point is not that the disciples should shun work -- birds do not simply wait for God to drop food into their beaks -- but that they need not fret.
- B. According to the text, what will worry do?
 - 1. Worry keeps us from enjoying what we have (Matthew 6:25).
 - 2. Worry makes us forget our worth (Matthew 6:26).
 - 3. Worry is completely useless (Matthew 6:27).
 - 4. Worry erases the promises of God from our mind (Matthew 6:30-31).
 - 5. Worry is characteristic of unbelievers, not Christians (Matthew 6:32).

II. ***How To Conquer Worry***

- A. While anxiety is common, its results are sobering. If anxiety is a state of mind, it is going to have to be conquered in the mind. This is the recipe for change (Colossians 3:1-2; Philippians 4:1-2).
- B. There are several ideas we need to focus on to defeat worry.
 - 1. Perspective (Psalm 127:2).
 - 2. Patience (Isaiah 40:31).
 - 3. Presence (Isaiah 41:10).
 - 4. Promises (Proverbs 3:5).
 - 5. Prayer (Philippians 4:6-7).

Conclusion. Paul had legitimate concern (2 Corinthians 11:28) and fear (Galatians 4:11) for Christians, but when it came to physical necessities, he was content and composed (Philippians 4:10-13). Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God.

Worry over tomorrow's misfortunes is irrational, because today has enough to occupy our attention and because tomorrow's feared misfortunes may never happen. Moreover, today's grace is sufficient only for today and should not be wasted on tomorrow. If tomorrow does bring new trouble, there will be new grace to meet it (Matthew 6:34).