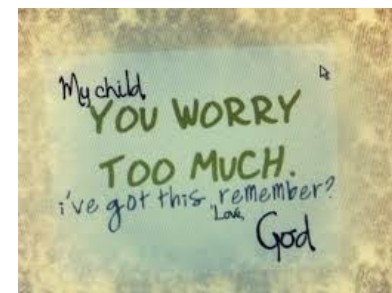


*Do
Not
Worry*



Do Not Worry

"Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?"
Matthew 6:25

Matthew chapters five through seven records what is often referred to as the Sermon on the Mount. Most likely this sermon was delivered on a hillside near Capernaum and it probably covered several days of preaching. In this sermon Jesus proclaimed his attitude toward the Law, and he concluded that position, money and human authority are not important in his kingdom. What matters most in the Kingdom of God is humble and faithful obedience from the heart.

In chapter six verse twenty-five, Jesus teaches a lesson about worry. He draws a comparison

between caring for the birds of the air and the flowers of the field with God's care that he provides for his children. Jesus begins by telling the people that they should not worry about their life, what they would eat or drink. He also cautioned them not to worry about their bodies, what they would wear or how they would be clothed. The birds of the air do not sow or reap or store up food in barns as people do, yet they are fed by the Heavenly Father. The lilies of the field do nothing; they neither labor nor spin and yet Solomon was not clothed as gloriously as one of these.

God lavishly provides for the birds of the air and all the other animals that he has created. In addition he clothes the grass of the field and all the other plant life. So Jesus asks his audience, "Why do you worry?" He tells them that they are much more valuable than the birds of the air



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Atheist and the Bear

An atheist was taking a walk through the woods, admiring all that evolution had created. "What majestic trees! What powerful rivers! What beautiful animals!" he said to himself. As he was walking along the river, he heard a rustling in the bushes behind him. When he turned to see what the cause was, he saw a 7-foot grizzly charging right towards him. He ran as fast as he could. He looked over his shoulder and saw that the bear was closing. He ran even faster, crying in fear. He looked over his shoulder again, and the bear was even closer. His heart was pounding and he tried to run even faster. He tripped and fell on the ground. He rolled over to pick himself up, but saw the bear right on top of him, reaching for him with his left paw and raising his right paw to strike him.

At that moment, the Atheist cried out "Oh my God!" Time stopped. The bear froze. The forest was silent. Even the river stopped moving. As a bright light shone upon the man, a voice came out of the sky, "You deny my existence for all of these years; teach others I don't exist; and even credit creation to a cosmic accident. Do you ex-

pect me to help you out of this predicament? Am I to count you as a believer?" The atheist looked directly into the light "It would be hypocritical of me to suddenly ask you to treat me as Christian now, but perhaps could you make the bear a Christian?"

"Very well," said the voice. The light went out. The river ran again. And the sounds of the forest resumed. And then the bear dropped his right paw, brought both paws together, bowed his head and spoke: "Lord, for this food which I am about to receive, I am truly thankful."

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Year as an incentive to finally stop drinking, most are not equipped to make such a drastic lifestyle change all at once. Many heavy drinkers fail to quit cold turkey but do much better when they taper gradually, or even learn to moderate their drinking. If you have decided that you want to stop drinking, there is a world of help and support available.

7) Get Out of Debt

Was money a big source of stress in your life last year? Join the millions of Americans who have resolved to spend this year getting a handle on their finances. It's a promise that will repay itself many times over in the year ahead.

8) Learn Something New

Have you vowed to make this year the year to learn something new? Perhaps you are considering a career change, want to learn a new language, or just how to fix your computer? Whether you take a course or read a book, you'll find education to be one of the easiest, most motivating New Year's resolutions to keep. Challenge your mind in the coming year, and your horizons will expand.

9) Help Others

A popular, non-selfish New Year's resolution, volunteerism

can take many forms. Whether you choose to spend time helping out at your local library, mentoring a child, or building a house, there are many nonprofit volunteer organizations that could really use your help.

10) Get Organized

On just about every New Year resolution top ten list, organization can be a very reasonable goal. Whether you want your home organized enough that you can invite someone over on a whim, or your office organized enough that you can find the stapler when you need it, these tips and resources should get you started on the way to a more organized life.

<http://pittsburgh.about.com/gi/pages/mmail.htm>

**I never worry about action, but only about inaction.”
– Winston Churchill**

“Worry is like a rocking chair: it gives you something to do but never gets you anywhere” – Erma Bombeck

(v. 26) and he also reasons that if God takes such care to clothe the grass of the field he will most certainly see that his children are clothed (v. 30). Jesus strongly indicates that their problem has to do with their faith, or lack thereof.

The words “faith” and “belief” here have basically the same meaning. If I have faith, or believe, that God will provide my daily bread and clothing, then why would I worry about it? Could it be that my faith is not strong enough? Do I believe without a doubt that God will take care of my needs? How can I be sure of these things and not worry about them?

If I have faith, or believe, that God will provide my daily bread and clothing, then why would I worry about it?

We know that we must have food to sustain us physically and clothing for covering and protection from the elements. Are we not supposed to prepare and plan for our needs? Jesus is not teaching that we should not plan and prepare for tomorrow. His point is that we should not burden ourselves and waste our time in

worrying about it. We can plan and be concerned about it without worrying. “Concern” and “worry” are two different words with two different meanings.

There is no doubt that the key to unlocking the truth that Jesus wants to impart to us here is found in verse thirty-three: “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” Jesus goes on to say that tomorrow is not here yet and it will take care of itself (v. 34).

The question is do I really believe this? Is this really true? In his prayer for his disciples Jesus says, “Sanctify them by your truth. Your word is truth” (Jn. 17:17). During the last supper with his disciples Jesus states, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (Jn. 14:6). Jesus says that He is the truth and that his word is true. Are we not able to depend on this to be true? If we can accept Jesus’ claims to speak the truth then we can lay our worries aside.

Worry can have some debilitating side effects for us physically. Worry can cause health issues. Worry can consume your thoughts and drive you to distraction. Worry can disrupt your productivity. Worry can negatively affect the way you treat

other people. Worry can even affect you ability to trust God.

I believe that we can agree that there is nothing good that comes from worry. We can do without the negative effects worry brings into our lives. So how can we eliminate worry? We must make seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness a priority in our lives.

I believe that we can agree that there is nothing good that comes from worry.

If we can believe and have faith that Jesus is the Son of God, and that he died, was buried and then rose from the dead then surely he can handle our daily bread. If we believe that he knit us together in our mother's womb (Psa. 139:13), he won't fail to see that we have adequate clothing.

Paul states in Acts 17:26, "And he has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and had determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings...." God gives us just the right mixture of components in the air so that we can breathe.

He makes our hearts beat and the blood to course through our veins. He has placed us here to dwell upon the earth. He has given us the freedom to worship him. All of these things don't just happen; God cares for his people. We need for God to be real in our lives. We need to see his hand at work in everything around us.

I close with this thought:

Praying for tomorrow is time well spent;
Worrying about tomorrow is time wasted.

Stanley Trotter
Greenwood, AR

"The reason why worry kills more people than work is that more people worry than work."—

Robert Frost

"Every tomorrow has two handles. We can take hold of it with the handle of anxiety or the handle of faith."— **Henry Ward Beecher**

Top 10 New Year's Resolutions

New Year's Eve has always been a time for looking back to the past, and more importantly, forward to the coming year. It's a time to reflect on the changes we want (or need) to make and resolve to follow through on those changes. Did your New Year resolutions make our top ten list?

1) Spend More Time with Family & Friends

Recent polls conducted by General Nutrition Centers, Quicken, and others shows that more than 50% of Americans vow to appreciate loved ones and spend more time with family and friends this year.

2) Fit in Fitness

The evidence is in for fitness. Regular exercise has been associated with more health benefits than anything else known to man. Studies show that it reduces the risk of some cancers, increases longevity, helps achieve and maintain weight loss, enhances mood, lowers blood pressure, and even improves arthritis. In short, exercise keeps you healthy and makes you look and feel better.

3) Tame the Bulge

Over 66 percent of adult Americans are considered overweight

or obese, by recent studies, so it is not surprising to find that weight loss is one of the most popular New Year's resolutions. Setting reasonable goals and staying focused are the two most important factors in sticking with a weight loss program, and the key to success for those millions of Americans who made a New Year's commitment to shed extra pounds.

4) Quit Smoking

If you have resolved to make this the year that you stamp out your smoking habit, over-the-counter availability of nicotine replacement therapy now provides easier access to proven quit-smoking aids. Even if you've tried to quit before and failed, don't let it get you down. On average, smokers try about four times before they quit for good. Start enjoying the rest of your smoke-free life!

5) Enjoy Life More

Given the hectic, stressful lifestyles of millions of Americans, it is no wonder that "enjoying life more" has become a popular resolution in recent years. It's an important step to a happier and healthier you!

6) Quit Drinking

While many people use the New

NIV

43. For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Hebrews 4:12 NIV

44. What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? Romans 8:31 NIV

45. As for God, his way is perfect: The LORD's word is flawless; he shields all who take refuge in him. Psalm 18:30 NIV

46. Are God's consolations not enough for you, words spoken gently to you? Job 15:11 NIV

47. The righteous cry out, and the LORD hears them; he delivers them from all their troubles. The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. The righteous person may have many troubles, but the LORD delivers him from them all. Psalm 34:17-19 NIV

48. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long. Psalm 25:5 NIV

49. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit. Jeremiah 17:8 NIV

50. For the word of the LORD is right and true; he is faithful in all he does. The LORD loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love. Psalm 33:4-5 NIV

Source: Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright © 1984

<http://www.womensbiblecafe.com/2012/02/50-scripture-verses-on-worrying/>

“We can easily manage if we will only take, each day, the burden appointed to it. But the load will be too heavy for us if we carry yesterday's burden over again today, and then add the burden of the morrow before we are required to bear it.”—

John Newton

“If you can't sleep, then get up and do something instead of lying there worrying. It's the worry that gets you, not the lack of sleep.”— **Dale Carnegie**

50 Scripture Verses on Worry

1. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. Matt 6:34 NIV

2. I can do all this through him who gives me strength. Phil 4:13 NIV

3. Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. Isaiah 40:31 NIV

4. 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 than food, and the body more than clothes? 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? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? Matt 6:25-27 NIV

5. But make up your mind not to worry beforehand how you will defend yourselves. Luke 21:14 NIV

6. Cast your cares on the LORD and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous be shaken. Psalm 55:22 NIV

7. For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. 2 Timothy 1:7 NIV

8. I keep my eyes always on the LORD. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken... Psalm 16:8 NIV

9. Truly he is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken. Psalm 62:6 NIV

10. Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings Psalm 17:8 NIV

11. He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart. Psalm 91:4 NIV

12. So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10 NIV

13. “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

14. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28 NIV

15. The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him, and he helps me. Psalm 28:7 NIV

16. I lift up my eyes to the mountains— where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. Psalm 121:1-2 NIV

17. They will have no fear of bad news; their hearts are steadfast, trusting in the LORD. Psalm 112:7 NIV

18. Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding Proverbs 3:5 NIV

19. There you saw how the LORD your God carried you, as a father carries his son, all the way you went until you reached this place. Deut 1:31 NIV

20. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Phil 4:6-7 NIV

21. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 2 Timothy 4:7 NIV

22. Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:1-2 NIV

23. God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1 NIV

24. Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. John 14:1 NIV

25. Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Matt 11:28-30 NIV

26. When I am afraid, I put my trust in you. Psalm 56:3 NIV

27. Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Deut 31:6 NIV

28. Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ. Galatians 1:10 NIV

29. What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? Romans 8:31 NIV

30. Know also that wisdom is like honey for you: If you find it, there is a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off. Proverbs 24:14 NIV

31. I prayed to the LORD, and he answered me. He freed me from all

my fears. Those who look to him for help will be radiant with joy; no shadow of shame will darken their faces. In my desperation I prayed, and the LORD listened; he saved me from all my troubles. For the angel of the LORD is a guard; he surrounds and defends all who fear him. Psalm 34:4-7 NIV

32. Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you. Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your Christian brothers and sisters all over the world are going through the same kind of suffering you are. In his kindness God called you to share in his eternal glory by means of Christ Jesus. So after you have suffered a little while, he will restore, support, and strengthen you, and he will place you on a firm foundation. 1 Peter 5:7-10 NLT

33. As for God, his way is perfect: The LORD's word is flawless; he shields all who take refuge in him. 2 Samuel 22:31 NIV

34. Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Matt 11:28-30 NIV

35. The LORD is my strength and my defense; he has become my salvation. He is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I

will exalt him. Exodus 15:2 NIV

36. We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. Hebrews 6:19 NIV

37. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace. Romans 8:6 NIV

38. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. John 14:27 NIV

39. May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 15:5-6 NIV

40. You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. Romans 4:22-24 NIV

41. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. Psalm 73:26 NIV

42. Because of the LORD's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. Lamentations 3:22-23