



How Should The Christian Deal With Worry?

DISCOVERING GOD'S WORD BIBLE STUDY SERIES

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How should the Christian deal with worry? Pressures of this life confront every person – including those who are Christians. Sometimes these pressures and stresses result from illness, financial concerns, family problems, time constraints, persecutions, and many other things. But, worry is a joy-stealing and focus-grabbing tool that the devil uses to lure people away from God. Therefore, Jesus commanded people not to worry and to place their full trust in God (see Matthew 6:25-34). Still, this does not change the fact that Christians will experience the pressures of living on this earth. So, the challenge that every Christian faces is how to effectively deal with worry.

Determine Not To Worry

This may seem like a simple point, but the first step in properly dealing with worry in your life is to make the determination not to worry. In order to change anything in your life, you will need to identify the old as being displeasing to God and determine not to practice it any longer.

So, you need to identify worry as being sinful. Don't leave any doubt about it in your mind. Recognize that sin refers to anything that violates the law of God (1 John 3:4). And, recognize that the consequences of sin is spiritual death (Romans 6:23). Ultimately, the one who dies (physically) while living in sin will spend eternity in Hell fire (Revelation 21:8).

The Bible makes it very clear that worry is a violation of the law of God. Although Christians may be concerned over many things, Jesus directly forbade worry. Three times in Matthew 6:25-34, Jesus commanded us not to worry. Verse 25 says, "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?" Verse 31 says, "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'" And, verse 34 says, "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." Please recognize that in these verses, Jesus is even forbidding worry about having the necessities to sustain your life on this earth! Certainly, worry about lesser things are also forbidden.

Since worry occurs whenever your concerns are not dealt with properly, it is a matter of self-discipline. You must simply decide that you will not be so consumed by anything to allow it to develop into worry. In Luke 9:23, Jesus said, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.” All your focus must be placed on following the Lord Jesus Christ. To do this, you will need to deny yourself of worry. So, when you are tempted by the devil to worry, choose to obey God and resist the devil (say “no”) so that he will flee from you (James 4:7).

Be Diligent About What You Can Control

Many times, worry stems from things you cannot control. But, there are times that people worry about things that they could easily choose to do something about to eliminate the problem. You see, worry doesn't do anything to solve any problem. It only complicates the problem. Instead, if there is something that you can do to correct a problem or situation that you are worried about, do it – and do it quickly!

There are many problems in life that are left to escalate rather than just be taken care of. And, whenever this happens, the problems often get even bigger and more difficult to deal with. So, rather than being lazy and choosing to do nothing to resolve the problem, get to work! Proverbs 13:4 says, “The soul of a lazy man desires, and has nothing; But the soul of the diligent shall be made rich.” This proverb is also true about worry. The soul of a lazy man worries about many things, but the one who is diligent can eliminate some of his sources of worry!

This is certainly true on a spiritual level. There are many people who are worried about their souls. They are worried about whether they will go to Heaven or Hell. Yet, God has made every provision for them to go to Heaven. He has only required them to do what they are capable of doing – believing and obeying Him. Therefore, the only reason for someone to worry about the condition of his/her soul is either a lack of faith in God or a failure to be obedient to God. Instead of worrying, this individual needs to be diligent in trusting and serving God!

Have Faith In God

Yes, those things that you have the ability to control and influence should be worked out with diligence. In doing so, some of your worries will be eliminated. However, not every worry can be solved in this way. There are many things that people worry about that are outside of their abilities to control or even influence. Still, rather than being consumed by worry, the Christian's response should be one of unwavering faith in God.

For the Christian, his/her life is one that is lived in faith. 2 Corinthians 5:7 says, “For we walk by faith, not by sight.” Worry happens when this passage gets reversed – and we walk by sight and not by faith. Whenever we walk by sight, we will be consumed by the pressures that are mounting all around us. We will be consumed with anxiety about our jobs, about our families, about our possessions, about governmental affairs and politics, about world conflicts, etc. We will

see the potential for loss, suffering, and destruction all around us – and know that we cannot control any of it! Instead, we should view every situation in this life from the perspective of total faith in God, knowing that He is the one who is in ultimate control (although we acknowledge that God does allow suffering to happen on this earth).

From a physical perspective, you should learn to walk by faith. Yes, bad things will happen. Your loved ones will get sick and die. You will get sick and die. There will be conflicts between the governments of the world. There may be financial hardships. Yet, while God never promises you that this life will be a paradise (as that was forfeited when man sinned in the Garden of Eden), God does promise that you will have everything that you need – if you seek Him first. This is the context of Jesus' statement in Matthew 6:33. He said, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." If you will seek God absolutely first in your life in everything that you do, you will have everything that you need for living on this earth (i.e. food and clothing). So, no matter what pressures of life face you, you can walk by faith knowing that God will provide the necessary things as long as you seek Him first.

Then, you must learn to walk in faith from a spiritual perspective. No matter what they go through in this life, those who are Christians must fully trust that everything will work out for their spiritual good. Romans 8:28 promises: "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose." God has loved you enough to send His only begotten Son to die so that you can be saved eternally. Now, no matter what pressures you face, you can fully trust (if you truly love God and are obedient to Him) that He will save your soul. And, if you have the complete confidence that God will save your soul – what do you have to worry about?

Pray

When you fully trust in God, you will recognize that God has blessed you with the tremendous avenue of prayer. Prayer is taught in the Scriptures as being very powerful. For instance, James 5:16 says, "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." That is, prayer is powerful whenever there is a righteous man/woman praying!

Of course, prayer is only powerful because God is directly involved. The Scriptures teach that the entire Godhead is involved in our prayers. First, we pray directly to the Father (Matthew 6:9). Second, we pray through Jesus Christ, our Mediator with the Father (1 Timothy 2:5). Third, the Holy Spirit helps with our weaknesses in prayer (Romans 8:26-27). Furthermore, the Bible teaches that our God knows how to give good things to His children when they ask Him (see Matthew 7:7-11)!

Yes, our God cares about those who are His children. In fact, God's great care for us and His great power ought to cause us to utilize the avenue of prayer in addressing our concerns. 1 Peter 5:7 says, "casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you." Similarly, Philippians 4:6-7 says, "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, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

So, rather than keeping all of your concerns to yourself and allowing them to build up to the point of worry, determine that you will cast them all upon God – and trust Him to provide! In fact, recognize that when you trust in God enough to cast all your cares upon Him you will be able to be “anxious for nothing” and experience the “peace of God, which surpasses all understanding.” This peace of God is what will consume your heart rather than anxieties about the things of this life! When you do this, you will be able to experience true joy!

Get The Support Of Brothers And Sisters In Christ

God is not the only one we can cast our cares upon and receive help from. While God is the one we can find ultimate comfort and joy in, God has provided His people with a tremendous support group in His family. Like a family, those who are Christians not only have God as their Father, but they have brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ.

As brothers and sisters, there are responsibilities that each Christian has toward other Christians. This includes the responsibility to bear each other’s burdens. Galatians 6:2 says, “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” Similarly, Romans 12:15 says, “Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.”

Rather than worrying, those who are Christians ought to reach out to their brothers and sisters in Christ to find additional encouragement during their difficult times. They can and should pray for one another (James 5:16) – petitioning their Heavenly Father on behalf of their brothers and sisters. They also can offer the encouragement of knowing that they are not alone during their times of struggle.

Conclusion

The one who is not a Christian will be consumed with worry – because he/she does not have full trust in God. But, the Christian does not have to worry. Instead, he/she should determine not to worry (recognizing that worry is sin), be diligent to control what can be controlled, have faith in God, cast all his/her cares upon the God who cares, and find support through brothers and sisters in Christ.

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