How To Worry Less and Enjoy Life More
MATTHEW 6: 25-34

READ SCRIPTURE TEXT

PRAYER

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Introduction

The title of my message this morning is “How To Worry Less and Enjoy Life More.”

Do you know GOD wants you and me to enjoy life?

In JOHN 10: 10b Jesus said........

“I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.”

Just as any loving father wants the very best for his children........

God, Our Loving Heavenly Father, desires for you and me a life that is fulfilling........rewarding........and meaningful.

But in spite of GOD’S desire........many of us rob ourselves of an enjoyable life by engaging in an unhealthy.....un-productive activity called.........WORRY!
ILLUSTRATION: According to a recent survey by HARPER’S INDEX, the AVERAGE AMERICAN is in a BAD MOOD 110 DAYS out of every year.

Assuming this figure is fairly accurate.........nearly 1/3 of every year is dominated by the effects of WORRY, STRESS and ANXIETY. Now.......do the math! If you and I consider ourselves to be AN AVERAGE AMERICAN, this means we WASTE nearly 1/3 of our earthly life on this MEANINGLESS, UNPRODUCTIVE activity called...........WORRY!

Someone else said.........”Worry is tomorrow’s RAT eating today’s cheese.”

Still another said.......”Worries are those things you see when you take your eyes off GOD.”

He worried about the weather
He worried about his health
He worried about his business
He worried about his wealth.

She worried about the children
She worried about her clothes,
She worried about the neighbors
She worried about her woes.

They worried about their taxes,
They worried about their pets,
They worried about the future,
They worried about their debts.
They worried, still they worried;
They worried, but alas,
They worried about a lot of things,
That never came to pass.

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In his book, *What You Don’t Know May Be Killing You*, Dr. Don Colbert says........

CHRONIC WORRY and anxiety can lead to:

- HEART DISEASE
- HEART ATTACKS
- MENTAL ILLNESS
- PANIC ATTACKS
- AND ACUTE DEPRESSION

OTHER SIDE EFFECTS OF CHRONIC WORRY include................

- CHRONIC FATIGUE
- IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME
- TENSION HEADACHES
- WEAKING OF THE IMMUNE SYSTEM

“People who’s lives are controlled by fear and worry become tormented by frequent panic attacks, crippling phobias and perceived dangers and illnesses that are not real.”

I ask you Christian........Is this the kind of life God desires for you and me? The answer to that is obviously “NO” isn’t it?

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Jesus begins and ends this passage of scripture with a command.........”*Do not worry.*”

**vs. 25**  “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life......”

**vs. 34**  “Therefore do not worry about tomorrow.....”
By issuing this to us in the form of a COMMAND........Jesus is reminding us that when it comes to this matter of WORRYING.....you and I have a CHOICE.

In other words.......some people are not born to be worriers while others were not. Worrying is an exercise of one’s free will.

* If I am a chronic worrier, it is because I have made a willful choice to be a worrier.

* If I rarely, if ever, worry about anything, it is because I have made a willful choice to allow my life to be controlled by worry and anxiety.

How Can I Worry Less........And Enjoy Life More?? That's the question we want to answer in our remaining time together.

The scriptures provide us with THREE KEYS on how to Worry Less and Enjoy Life More.

Here is key number one........
Key #1: Learn To Replace Worry With Prayer

Turn with me to........

PHILIPPIANS 4: 6, 7  Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, 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.

1. Do you know the amount of time you spend worrying is a reflection of the amount of time you spend praying?

   The more you worry.......the less you pray.
   The more you pray..........the less you worry.

2. One way to WORRY LESS is to PRAY MORE. We have to replace the NEGATIVE ACTIVITY with a POSITIVE ACTIVITY.

   We have to replace the COUNTER - PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITY of WORRY...........with the PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITY of PRAYER.

   illustration: Just contrast the nature of someone who worries alot with the nature of someone who prays alot.

Someone who worries alot, tends to be high strung, nervous, ultra-sensitive, figity, restless and hyper-active. On the other hand, someone who prays a lot, tends to be calm, cool and collected........As verse 7 says, they have a peace of mind and heart that passes all understanding.

3. It all comes down to this: Either God is BIG enough to handle your greatest worries and fears............or.....HE ISN’T!

4. Turn your WORRIES into PRAYERS........and see if life doesn’t become a whole lot more ENJOYABLE!
Now here’s ………

**Key #2: Learn to Let Go of Things That Are Out of Your Control**

**MATTHEW 6: 27** Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

1. **Illustration:** Margaret McCordie of the University of Wisconsin, conducted a survey on WORRYING. The results of her survey concluded the following........

   -40% of our worries are over things that never happened.

   -30% of our worries are over things that happened in the past that we couldn’t change with all the worrying in the world.

   -12% of our worries are over imaginary health problems.

   -10% of our worries are over petty, insignificant issues.

   -This leaves 8% of the things we worry about are issues we can actually do something about.

2. If you will stop and think about it........most of the things that you and I worry about the most are things that are totally out of our control.

   Jesus is asking us, “Who of you by worrying, can add a single hour to his life?

   In other words......”Why rob your life of enjoyment worrying about a lot of things over which you have no control?”
3. **Illustration:** In my family, there has been a history of heart disease. My dad suffered his first heart attack when he was in his early 20’s.............had three multiple heart by-pass surgeries over a seventeen year span........and died at the relatively young age of 58.

Now what should I do?  I just turned 54 in July
Should I spend my days worrying that I could die of a heart attack at any time?  Should I worry myself sick that just because my dad died when he was 58 years old........that that means I only have about four more years to live?

NO........I choose not to spend my days worrying about something that is out of my control.  I cannot change my inherited genes.  So I’m taking care of the things I do have control over.  I’ve totally changed the way I eat.............I’ve gotten rid of 54 extra pounds that was putting a heavy strain on my heart.......and I see my doctor more frequently to keep a close eye on the further development of heart disease.

Who knows, the good Lord willing, I might live as long as my Dad’s dad. Grandpa Braziel was 96 when he died.

4. **Think of all the things you and I waste our lives worrying about over which we have NO CONTROL.**

* We worry about what other people THINK about us.

* We worry about what other people are SAYING about us behind our back.
* We worry about how other people ACT toward us........

“Well he didn’t speak to me this morning at Church, I must have done something that made him mad.”

“She didn’t wave at me the other day........she must be upset with me about something.”

*We worry about what the ECONOMY may or may not do.

*We worry about HEALTH PROBLEMS we may or may not ever have to deal with.

*We worry about what the DOG is thinking when he sees us get out of the shower.

And the list just goes on and on and on..................

5. Here’s a good motto to live by:

   * If something is out of my control, the best thing I can do is leave it in the hands of the One who is in control.*

6. When we STOP worrying about those things over which we have NO CONTROL........life becomes a lot more enjoyable.

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We must........LEARN TO REPLACE WORRY WITH PRAYER.

We must........LEARN TO LET GO OF THINGS THAT ARE OUT OF OUR CONTROL.
This brings us to our THIRD and FINAL KEY........And that is, TO WORRY LESS and ENJOY LIFE MORE, we must..................

Key #3: Learn To Truly Live One Day At A Time

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

1. Probably every one of us here this morning has advised someone at some time or another to “Just live one day at a time.” But how many of us fail to take our own advice?

2. Too many of us spend way too much time worrying about the future.

   *What if I get CANCER?
   *What if I get CRIPPLED UP in a CAR ACCIDENT?
   *What if I LOSE MY JOB?
   *What if I BECOME AN INVALID and can’t care for myself?
   *What if MY KIDS grow up and move far away from me?
   *What if I LOSE EVERYTHING I OWN?

   Are you living in “The Land of What If?”

3. Today is CERTAIN........Tomorrow is NOT PROMISED!

   TODAY is God’s precious gift to you!

   TODAY is filled with God’s blessings if you’ll stop worrying long enough to look for them.

   TODAY is meant to be enjoyed, not wasted worrying about what tomorrow may bring.
5. For you and me to WORRY LESS and ENJOY LIFE MORE ........we need to learn how to TRULY LIVE ONE DAY AT A TIME.

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CONCLUSION

ILLUSTRATION: Tom had been a compulsive worrier for years .......until he figured out a way to overcome his problem. His friends noticed a drastic change in Tom. One day his friend Doug said, “Tom you used to worry about everything, now you don’t seem to worry about a thing.” What’s come over you?

Tom said, “Well, I’ve hired a professional worrier to do all my worrying for me for a $1,000 a week........and I haven’t had a worry since.”

“A thousand dollars a week”.......said Doug, “How in the world are you going to pay the guy? Tom said, “I’ll let him worry about that.”

Wouldn’t it be great if we could hire a PROFESSIONAL WORRIER to do all our WORRYING for us?

Well guess what.......WE’VE GOT SOMETHING EVEN BETTER.

In I Peter 5: 7, Peter writes........

“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”
The Lord invites us to cast or throw all our worries on his shoulders, instead of trying to carry the load all by ourselves.

**Do you want to WORRY LESS and ENJOY LIFE MORE?**

*Learn To Replace Worry With Prayer  
*Learn to Let Go of Anything That Is Out of Your Control  
*Learn to Truly Live One Day at A Time

**THEREFORE DO NOT WORRY ABOUT TOMORROW, FOR TOMORROW WILL WORRY ABOUT ITSELF. EACH DAY HAS ENOUGH TROUBLE OF ITS OWN.**