

“The End of Anxiety”

(Luke 12:22-34)

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I. Introduction

A. A day in the life of your pastor two weeks ago

1. Calls...emails...and face-to-face
 - a. Falsely accused
 - b. New in area and no friends
 - c. At odds with a close friend
 - d. Waiting for a biopsy on a tumor
 - e. Divorced and floundering
 - f. Could lose their job
 - g. A daughter out of control
2. All consumed with worry
 - a. Like a black cloud hanging over them
 - b. Can't sleep at night
 - c. Wrestling with worry
3. *What are you worried about this morning?*

B. Worry can cause other problems

1. Increases stress in your life
2. Panic attacks

- a. Think you're having a heart attack
- 3. Anxiety
- 4. Paranoia

C. The impact of worry

1. Physical effects:

- a. Migraines
- b. Backaches
- c. Impotence
- d. High blood pressure
- e. Insomnia

2. Social effects:

- a. Bad grades
- b. Loss of friends
- c. Loss of job
- d. Miserable to be around

3. Spiritual effects:

- a. Worry is a sin
- b. Attacks the foundation of your faith
- c. The words of Jesus—"Don't worry"

D. George Mueller

- 1. 19th century founder of orphanages
 - a. Cared for thousands of children
 - b. Refused to worry about God's provision...just prayed

- c. Millions of dollars came in faith
- 2. His solution for worry and anxiety?

The beginning of anxiety is the end of faith. The beginning of true faith is the end of anxiety. (George Mueller)

- 3. Today....”the end of anxiety”

II. Review

A. Jesus’ sermon in Luke 12 and 13

B. The gathered masses

- 1. Last week....Money and contentment
 - a. Those with too much money
- 2. Today...Stress, worry and anxiety attacks
 - a. Those with not enough money

III. Text...Luke 12:22-34

A. The simple secret to enjoying life

(22) Then Jesus said to his disciples: “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. (23) Life is more than food, and the body more than clothes.

- 1. “Worry” is from German word – *wurgen*
 - a. It means “*to strangle or choke*”
 - “Worry is a thin stream of fear that trickles through the mind. If encouraged, it’ll cut a channel so wide that all other thoughts will drown in it”*
- 2. Worry can completely engulf your thoughts
 - a. Preparing to hit a golf ball
 - b. Tossing in bed wrestling with worry

- c. Will ruin your productivity

“Worry is wasting today’s time...to clutter up tomorrow’s opportunities...with yesterday’s troubles.”

3. An important disclaimer
 - a. Depression & chemical imbalance
 - b. See your doctor
4. And we all worry somewhat
5. However; chronic worry is a sin
5. Jesus said, ***“Don’t worry about the basics of life”***
 - a. “What you shall eat”
 - b. “What you shall drink”
 - c. “Your body”
 - d. “Clothing”
6. Jesus said ***“Life is so much more than these”***
7. Why chronic worrying is so wrong:
 - a. Worrying is evidence of a serious lack of trust in God and His unfailing promises.
 - b. Worrying saddens, blights, destroys, kills. It depletes your energies, devitalizes the physical man, and impoverishes the whole spiritual nature.
 - c. Worrying about outcomes restricts the work of God
 - d. And, worry is a favorite ploy of Satan
 1. To get you to doubt God
 2. Fear he is incapable or unwilling
8. Jesus shared some reasons why you shouldn’t worry

B. Consider the following:

1. *God takes care of the birds...and you're far more valuable than the birds (v. 24)*

(24) Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more valuable you are than birds!

- a. Sitting on the gentle slope of a hill
- b. Birds fluttering all around and above them
 - 1. They don't worry about food
 - 2. God created them and God sustains them
 - 3. Martin Luther wrote in his autobiography (7577)

I have one preacher I love better than any other; it is my little tame robin, who preaches to me daily. I put his crumbs upon my window sill, especially at night. He hops onto the sill when he wants his supply, and takes as much as he desires to satisfy his need. From thence he always hops to a little tree close by, and lifts up his voice to God, and sings his carol of praise and gratitude, tucks his little head under his wings, and goes fast to sleep, to leave tomorrow to look after itself.

- c. Not because they don't work!
 - 1. Birds work hard
- d. **What's your big worry today?**

1. Financial

- a. Car repairs
- b. Broken water heater
- c. Cost of kids going to college
- d. Orthodontist bills
- e. Shoes for kids with growing feet
- f. Unemployed

2. Family

- a. Call last night regarding broken marriage
 - 1. Making a marriage work is hard work
- b. Raising kids
- c. Aging parents
- d. Stress at home is the worst stress...no escape

3. Fatigue (Physical)

- a. Worry about cancer
- b. Not knowing what's going on
- c. Irregular heartbeat

4. Fear

- a. Fear of change
 - 1. Alvin Toffler—"Future Shock"
"Millions of ordinary, psychologically normal people will face an abrupt collision with the future"
- b. Fear of dying
 - 1. Why death is so hard on us
 - 2. We weren't created to die
- c. Fear of aging
 - 1. Dementia
 - 2. All the guys my age and their parents

5. Frustrations

- a. On the job
 - 1. Unreasonable boss

- 2. Rotten pay
- 3. Away from your family
- b. Stuck in a rut
- c. Consequences of past mistakes
- e. Remember how valuable you are to God
- f. If God cares for the needs of the birds—He'll surely take care of the needs of His own children

1. Birds weren't created in the image of God....but you were

2. God didn't send his Son to die for the birds

3. Birds won't reign with Him in Heaven

4. Birds aren't indwelt and empowered by the Holy Spirit

5. God didn't give spiritual gifts to birds

- g. And yet God cares for them

- 1. How much more will He care for you

2. Worry has never fixed anything (vs. 25-26)

(25) Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life? (26) Since you cannot do this very little thing, why do you worry about the rest?

- a. People struggling to live longer
- b. God has an appointed hour for your death
- c. Call from our son last night regarding his father-in-law
 - 1. Carolyn's flight this morning
 - 2. Took excellent care of himself
- d. The two witnesses of Revelation 11:7
 - 1. 3 ½ years of testifying for Christ

a. Satan unable to stop them

2. When they had accomplished their mission (Revelation 11:7)

(7) Now when they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the Abyss will attack them, and overpower and kill them

a. Couldn't get them until God's appointed time

3. Then God called them home

(12) Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they went up to heaven in a cloud, while their enemies looked on.

e. Don't waste your living by fearing dying

1. It won't be a minute too soon...or too late

f. Worry does nothing to solve your problems

1. Vance Havner

"Worry, like a rocking chair, will give you something to do, but it won't get you anywhere."

g. Problems are fixed by action....not worry

1. Attack problems one baby step at a time

2. ***Stop standing staring up the steps...and start stepping up the stairs***

3. Action is the cure for worry

4. Make a plan...and get started

3. Worry is a result of an immature faith (vs. 27-28)

(27) Consider how the lilies grow. They do not labor or spin. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. (28) If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today, and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith!

a. The beauty of God's creation

1. Flowers

- 2. Look closely
- 3. No person ever adorned like a flower
- b. If God can clothe the flowers, which have no soul...
 - 1. Think about what he's preparing for you
 - 2. How the angels view us
 - 3. Created in God's very image
- c. Yet, He asks you to step out in faith...to trust him
 - 1. And to sometimes take "leaps of faith"
- d. Lord please don't ever let us get "comfortable"
- e. Pressing forward as a church
 - 1. ***If it isn't scary...it isn't a step of faith***
- f. Find the dream God has given you
 - 1. No regrets
 - 2. God favors the bold

4. Worry subsides when you get your priorities in order (vs. 29-31)

(29) And do not set your heart on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. (30) For the pagan world runs after all such things, and your Father knows that you need them. (31) But seek his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

- a. Our number one priority is to seek his kingdom
 - 1. Begins with salvation
 - 2. Then to become more like Christ
 - 3. Why we're studying the life of Christ
- b. He promises "the rest" will be given to you
- c. If not here...in eternity

5. Invest where the value never drops (vs. 32-33)

(32) Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.

(33) Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out, a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys.

- a. The call to give sacrificially
 - 1. This is a leap of faith
 - 2. Have you ever tried it?
- b. The value of eternal investments
- c. What will they be like?

6. Be careful where you invest your treasure (v. 34)

(34) For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

- a. Where's your treasure?
- b. What are you worried about today?

IV. Philippians 4:6

A. Life changing counsel in Philippians 4:6

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” Philippians 4:6

- 1. Don't worry about anything
- 2. Worry is the greatest thief of joy
 - a. Miserable Christians
- 3. Worry questions God's faithfulness
- 4. Remember George Mueller's secret?

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5. Lets see how to end anxiety in your life

B. The End of Anxiety

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.”

1. Don't be afraid that you're pestering God

- a. ***“but in everything”***
- b. Not just “big” spiritual matters
 - 1. Like salvation
- c. Don't forget the *daily* hassles of life
 - 1. Those are the ones that pile up
 - 2. A *daily* exercise in prayer

2. Don't worry about how things will turn out

- a. “Just do what's right until the stars fall out of the sky”
 - 1. ***“present your requests to God”***
- b. “Dream no small dreams, for they stir not the heart of God”
- c. Live a life where the unexplainable happens
- d. Allows God to demonstrate His greatness

3. Don't give up on your prayers

- a. ***“by prayer and petition”***
 - 1. “petition”.....persistence
- b. Satan's goal—
 - 1. Keep you from praying
 - 2. Cause you to not think about God

3. Discourage you from persistent prayer

c. Jesus wants you to persist

1. Luke 11:9-10

(9) And I say to you, ask and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. (10) For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

2. Most Christians pray, but few persist in their prayers

4. Be thankful for what God has already done for you

C. God's promised peace (Philippians 4:7)

(7) And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

1. So what are you worried about this morning?