

Overcoming Worry

*“And don’t be concerned about what to eat and what to drink. Don’t worry about such things. ³⁰ These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers all over the world, but **your Father already knows your needs.**”* Luke 12:29-30 NLT



- On a scale of 1 to 10, (1 is chillin, no worries, and 10 is freaking out), what is your worry level?
- How much of your day is overshadowed by worry—a few minutes, half a day, most of the day, all day?

We all worry about something—job, family, health, safety, the future, etc. People had worries in Jesus’ day, too. They worried about many of the same issues we do. Jesus taught on many important subjects during his early life, and worry was one of them. We have record of it in the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew gives the fullest record of this teaching (Matthew 6-8). Luke recorded only a summary of the Sermon on the Mount. His teaching on worry is recorded in Luke 12:22-32.

The Central Lesson:

Overcome worry by having faith in God’s care and provision.

1. Refocus your view of the meaning of **LIFE** (12:22-23).

*²² Then, turning to his disciples, Jesus said, “That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food to eat or enough clothes to wear. ²³ For **life is more than food, and your body more than clothing.***

Jesus is not denying our basic need for food or clothing. Rather, he is challenging **materialism**. He is warning against living life *only* for food and clothing, or any other material thing.

Bible teacher, Warren Wiersbe, wrote, “Worry is... deceptive. It gives us a false view of life, of itself, and of God. Worry convinces us that life is made up of what we eat and what we wear. We get so concerned about *the means* that we totally forget about *the end*, which is to glorify God (Matt. 6:33). There’s a great difference between making a living and making a life.” (The Wiersbe Bible Commentary, p. 178).

In addition, Wiersbe wrote, “When we substitute *things* for *life*, we stop living by faith and trusting God. All nature trusts God to meet their needs, and so should we. Worry only tears us down. The key to a worry-free life is a heart fixed wholly on God....” (Wiersbe Expository Outlines, 177).

Jesus is telling us that we must refocus our view of the meaning of life if we are to overcome worry. That is, we need to ask ourselves, what is it that I am really living for—material things, or God?

2. Recognize your **VALUE** to God (12:24).

*²⁴ Look at the ravens. They don’t plant or harvest or store food in barns, for God feeds them. And **you are far more valuable to him** than any birds!*

Jesus wanted his followers to understand how deeply God values and loves them. He reasons from the lesser to the greater—if God cares for the birds (the lesser), be confident that God will take care of you (the greater). Recognizing our value to God can help us overcome worry.

3. Realize that worry accomplishes **NOTHING** constructive (12:25).

*²⁵ Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? ²⁶ And if worry can’t accomplish a little thing like that, **what’s the use of worrying** over bigger things?*

Vance Havner (1901-1986), once said, “Worry is like a rocking chair; It will give you something to do, but won’t get you anywhere.”

4. Rest (have faith) in the **PROMISE** of God’s care for you (12:27-28).

*²⁷ “Look at the lilies and how they grow. They don’t work or make their clothing, yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. ²⁸ And if God cares so wonderfully for flowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, **he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?***

God has promised to care and provide for his people. Paul wrote, “*And this same God who takes care of me will **supply all your needs** from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus.*” Philippians 4:19 NLT. Our response is to **have faith** and **trust** God, even when we think he is delaying.

5. Remember that God **KNOWS** our needs (12:29-30).

*²⁹ “And don’t be concerned about what to eat and what to drink. Don’t worry about such things. ³⁰ These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers all over the world, but **your Father already knows your needs.**”*

Warren Wiersbe explained “How do we win over worry? The first step is to realize that *God knows our needs*, so we can trust Him to meet them. We are sheep in His little flock, children in His family, and servants in His kingdom, and He will see to it that our needs are fully met.” (p. 179). Do you believe that God has his eyes on you, knows you, and is aware of your needs? Remember that, and trust him.

6. Rush after what matters most - the **ETERNAL** over the temporary (12:31).

*³¹ **Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and he will give you everything you need.***

Life Application Study Bible on Lk. 12:31. “Seeking the Kingdom of God above all else means making Jesus the Lord and King of your life. He must control every area – your work, play, plans, relationships. Is the kingdom only one of your many concerns, or is it central to all you do? Are you holding back any areas of your life from God’s control? As Lord and Creator, he wants to help provide what you need as well as guide how you use what he provides.”

7. Refuse (intentionally) to be **FEARFUL** (12:32).

*³² “So **don’t be afraid**, little flock. For **it gives your Father great happiness to give you the Kingdom.***

Sometimes we need to talk to ourselves. We need to tell ourselves to stop worrying. Sometimes we have to tell ourselves over and over.

Conclusion

Overcome worry by having faith in God’s care and provision.

- ▶ Receive Christ as your Savior. ▶ As a Christian, dedicate your life to Christ.
- ▶ Invite someone to next Sunday’s study. ▶ Attend a small group. ▶ Read the Bible this week & journal meaningful verses. ▶ Pray for friends that need Jesus.