

**Scripture Reading:**

Please go ahead and turn in your Bibles to Matthew 6:25-34 for our scripture reading today...Matthew 6:25-34...As you turn there, I would just like to thank all those who faithfully serve on Sunday morning...Thank you...We are in Matthew 6:25-34...And I will ask you to please stand if you are able to do so for the reading of God's Word...

<sup>25</sup> “For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, *as to* what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, *as to* what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? <sup>26</sup> Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and *yet* your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? <sup>27</sup> And who of you by being worried can add a *single* hour to his life? <sup>28</sup> And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, <sup>29</sup> yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. <sup>30</sup> But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, *will He* not much more *clothe* you? You of little faith! <sup>31</sup> Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ <sup>32</sup> For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. <sup>33</sup> But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

<sup>34</sup> “So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will <sup>[v]</sup>care for itself. <sup>[w]</sup>Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

Please be seated...

Before I begin, I'd like to open our time in the Word with a moment of prayer...

**(Pray)**

**Introduce Yourself:**

Good Morning...My name is Byron Bradshaw and I am privileged to be the pastor here at Calvary Bible Church...Thank you for being here this morning...I always enjoy seeing you all and I always our time in the Word on Sunday morning...

Go ahead and open up your Bibles once again to Matthew 6...

Today I'd like to talk to you about Anxiety and Worry...

As I began to chew on this week's passage...I realized something...that Anxiety and Worry plagues our human nature...it plagues our broken nature and we oftentimes worry and nailbite over almost every aspect of life...It seems like we have the propensity to stress and worry over issues that are very important or even rather minute...

We stress over whether the stock market will go up or down, we stress over our favorite sports team...But then we also stress...over whether we have enough to pay our bills this month, whether we have enough for retirement, whether our children are safe, or whether our cancer will return,

But why do we worry? What does worry reveal about our view of God?

**Transition:** Many of us recognize our struggle with worry and anxiety but very few of us actually recognize the short term and long term effects of holding onto worry and anxiety...

**Transition:** I found that anxiety and worry is kind of like a hot coal...The tighter you grip it the more it burns...In the same way as a hot coal, handling anxiety and worry will harm depending on how long and tightly we grip it...

**Biologically,** when we are worried, stressed or anxious, it releases the hormone "cortizol" which is essentially adrenaline...When we are stressed or worried, we biologically release large amounts of adrenaline into our blood stream causing hyper awareness in the "fight or flight" mentality...

In the short term and in limited doses, cortizol can be helpful...And the short term effects aren't nearly as great as the long term...In the short term worry and stress can cause fatigue, headaches, nausea and sweating...

However, friends... the longer and tighter you grip the hot coal of stress and worry...the deeper it burns and the less and less we trust God...If you are a worrier, then you are headed down a dangerous road...

**The Long terms effects** of gripping worry and stress are depression, illness, memory loss, or even heart attack and stroke...I even have a friend that has been hypervigilant or hyper stressed most of her whole adult life and now she has perforations in her digestive tracks...which will likely lead to a deadly autoimmune disease...such as MS or ALS...

**Friends, can I state the obvious?** God did not design us to be stressed or worriers but rather trusters...God did not design us to worry and fret over the details and issues in life but rather to trust in Him with the struggles of life...

**Or another way to say it, God designed us not to be independent but rather dependent...**God designed for us to trust Him with our needs and grow in our relationship with God allowing Him to care for our daily needs rather than us gripping the hot coal of stress trying to do everything in our own ability...

**Personal:** I have to be honest for a second...Personally, this passage is a bit convicting... Because I often struggle with worry and anxiety...My wife even said to me the other day, “Man, it must be exhausting being you...” At a previous church I served, I was known to be the guy that “sighed”...Sighing was a sign to everyone around the office of worry level...Studying this passage; however, has forced me to look in the mirror...

#### **WE:**

Listen Friends... Today, it is my hope that each of us look in the mirror of our life and recognize areas of stress and worry...That we no longer remain in denial or burdened by the weight of worry but rather it...

Today, we are answering the question...How do I overcome anxiety and worry? And in Today’s passage Jesus gives us four main points in the passage with three applicable steps to release and overcome worry and anxiety in our daily lives...

Transition: So, come back with me to Matthew 6 as we begin with verse 25...

#### **GOD:**

**Read verse 25:** <sup>25</sup>“For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, *as to* what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, *as to* what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?”

Notice with me something...It is easy when you enter a text to be hasty and completely miss a very important phrase...**Notice with me the verse first phrase...**“For this reason, I say to you...” More literally in the Greek it is only four words “Διὰ τοῦτο λέγω ὑμῖν” which literally translates...“On this account, I say to you...”

So then, you must ask the question, “On what account?” Exegetically, this phrase is linking worry to the above section on the discipline and motivation Godliness...

So, What is Jesus saying with this phrase? **Point #1: Worry hinders our relationship with God...** Worry and Anxiety is a hindrance to Godliness to the pursuit of our Savior...

Listen Friends, in our pursuit of Christ, packing a bag full of worry will do nothing but exhaust us...Instead let us release the worry that is slowing us down and realize God is in control...

**Transition:** Yet How do we keep worry from hindering our pursuit of Jesus Christ? Look back at verse 25...

<sup>25</sup> “For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, *as to* what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, *as to* what you will put on. *Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?*

**Point #2: Realize Life is more than worrying...**In order to overcome stress, we must realize that That life is more than our immediate stresses...

Yet , So many times we get sooooo worried or sooooo stressed that the object of our stress can completely cloud our thoughts and vision...Worry can consume our thoughts sometimes sucking all of our focus and energy...

In effect, we can get so focused on stress that we take our eyes off the cross... Right? This happens to all of us...Often, the object of stress grows and grows and grows covering the entire windshield of our walk...

Friends watch this...Let us rather realize that Life is More than that the object of stress Life is more than food, clothing...Life is more than worrying about our children (hard to imagine), life is more than the giant project at work, life is more than all our doctor’s appointments and upcoming surgeries...

The Christian life is about pursuing our Savior...Don’t get crash off the road staring at worry...

**Transition:** But we still need to ask a question...There is still one unanswered question about stress and worry?

The question is...What is our stress, worry and anxiety rooted in? What is its root cause? I asked staff this question on Tuesday and they gave me a unanimous answer: CONTROL...Worry, Stress and Anxiety are all rooted in our desire to control...

And let’s take it one step further...if we worry, then what does it reveal about our view of God? That God is really not in control, right? That I can’t really trust God...That I can only trust myself... (expand on this in the application)

**Transition:** But then Jesus gives us two proofs or evidences to ease our worries...He gives us two examples one with birds and one with lilies to ease our stress in this life...

Look at verses 26-30 with me...

**Read verses 26-30,**

“<sup>26</sup> Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and *yet* your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? <sup>27</sup> And who of you by being worried can add a *single* hour to his life? <sup>28</sup> And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, <sup>29</sup> yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. <sup>30</sup> But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, *will He* not much more *clothe* you? You of little faith!”

### **Point #3: Realize if God Cares For Lowly then He cares For You...**

The first proof regarding God providing our food is that God provides food for the birds of the air...The birds of the air do not sow, do not reap and do not gather food...

Yet, their food is provided by God and they are only a small creature...Now, friends...Jesus is saying that If God provides food for a lowly creature then God will provide you food...That if God takes magnificent care for a small creature then He will certainly take care of The creature in all of creation that was created in His image...

**Transition:** So the first proof is regarding food...Now, let us look at the second proof...Let’s look at verses 28-30...

“<sup>28</sup> And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, <sup>29</sup> yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. <sup>30</sup> But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is *alive* today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, *will He* not much more *clothe* you? You of little faith!”

The second proof for God taking care of our needs is exemplified through the clothing of the lilies...Jesus’ point in this section is that if the lilies are so exquisitely clothed far beyond any man or even Solomon then God will provide and clothe you...

Don’t miss the small phrase in verse 30...Notice with me the phrase “You of little faith”

“You of little faith...” Listen... birds and plants or even the order of the universe should remind us that God is in control and He cares for our needs... And if we still doubt...If we still worry despite all the great evidence in all of creation for God’s control then what does that reveal about our faith?

If you notice with me the unique relationship between worry and faith...**Worry evidences faith...Worry evidences faith...**

If we worry, then we do not really trust God...If we worry then we ignore all the evidence, all the promises found in the Bible, all the truth poured into our lives through this great Book...

**But let’s be honest for a second:** Very few of us here today are really worried about food nor clothing...

Yet what do we here typically worry about? Typically, we worry about five main areas...

**#1: Our Children:** As a parent, we worry about our children's safety and choices... We fret over whether our children even grown children are safe and secure and whether they will make good decisions in life...

Yet Parents, we cannot control every aspect of our children's life...and often the tighter we squeeze often the more it burns...

Some of us stress over:

**#2 Our Work:** Many of us including myself tend to worry over work... We stress over our performance, we stress over a giant project, we can even stress over our daily decisions...

Some of us stress over...

**#3: Money:** I've heard it said that worry over money is the #1 cause of divorce in America... We stress over living paycheck to paycheck, or whether we have enough for retirement or even keeping up with the Joneses...

Listen friends, we serve a God is that is competent, capable and compassionate...He sees our needs and desires to meet them...

**#4 People's opinions:** Many of us can stress over other people's opinions...Many of us look back at our day nail biting over that snarky comment, sarcastic remark or the joke that was not taken well...Often while we obsess over another person's opinion little do we realize that our ship may be taking more water...Worry cannot change another but it can change us...

**#5: Our Health:** Many of us worry about our health...Many of us stress over whether our sickness or cancer will return...

But ultimately can you truly control every aspect of your health? No...I've known people that exercise more than Jane Fonda and have high blood pressure...God is not just in control over our needs but also even over our health...

So, when we look at this passage, we must walk away with a few points from this passage: **Point #1: Worry hinders Godliness, Point #2: Realize Life is more than worrying ...Point #3: Realize that if God Cares For Lowly then He cares For You...**

**Transition:** Then, let us look at the final point...

**Look at verses 31-34...**

**Read Matthew 6:31-34,** <sup>31</sup> Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' <sup>32</sup> For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. <sup>33</sup> But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.

<sup>34</sup>“So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

#### **Point #4: Seek God Not Worry...**

Because of the context, it seems best to understand the word “Gentile” as referring to any non-believing person...

So, what is Jesus saying in verse 32?

Don’t be like non-believers when it comes to worry: For non-believers have only themselves and their own devices, intellect to rely on...But rather we Christians must realize that the God we serve and we worship today will supply all of our needs...Instead of focusing on the immediate stress such as family, work, or money...Seek the kingdom of God...

This word “seek” here is the Greek word, “zateo” which is a Greek command...That laying aside worries and seeking the kingdom is not an option...That instead of focusing our attention on stress...We must get our eyes up and focus on God’s kingdom and righteousness..

But where the word “zateo” gets really interesting is its present tense and active voice...

**Present tense tells me that it is a continual choice...**That every day you wake up...That every time you are tempted to control and control...to squeeze worry, stress and anxiety tighter...That you must make a continual everyday choice to let it go and seek God about all...

The active voice here adds an additional element...The present tense tells me it is a continual choice to seek the kingdom and the action voice tells me it is a conscious choice to seek the kingdom...

The active voice is telling me here that I have to make a conscious decision...whether to worry or to seek God...I can’t do both...That God is not going to come out of heaven and control your mind to seek Him...

But rather we must make a conscious, continuous decision...not to get bogged down and burned with the weight of worry but rather make the conscious and continual choice to seek the kingdom of God and his righteous in the midst of the traps of stress and worry...

**Transition:** and what is the result if you let go of control and seek God?

**Look back at verse 33,** “and all these things will be added to you.”

If we make a conscious continuous decision to seek God and not tighten the grip of control then all these things will be added to you...

**What does it mean by all these things?** Specifically, here it is referring to your needs for clothing and food...but I believe Jesus is also referring to all our physical needs...That if God

cares for the physical needs of the bird then He will care for ours too...

But we must let go....And seek Him about all else...

**Transition:** Now, look how chapter 6 closes...Let us look at verse 34...

**Read Matthew 6:34**, ““So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

Now, the most important word in this whole verse is missing from our English translation...The word “so” carries a slight different connotation than the Greek word found here...The Greek word here is “oun” which literally means “therefore”...Which tells me that this verse is the conclusion of the passage....

**Based upon everything I just said...Therefore...**“Do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

**Therefore Since worry is** a hindrance to Godliness, since God is in control, since God loves you enough to care for your needs, **therefore do not worry...** Let go of your worry...Let go of control...let go of fear...

**Because friends...God is in control and He cares for you...**

**YOU:**

But I have to be honest here for a second...I struggle with worry and fear...So, when I was preparing this passage, I asked myself a question...So what...How does this work in my life?

Based on the passage I'd like to give you three practical steps to overcoming worry and anxiety...

**Step #1: Realize God is in control**, Realize God is in control...Wait, either God is in control or He isn't...And if He is in control why do I want to be in control?

Because the God who controls the universe has told me that I am created in His image...He has declared me as a Christian a co-heir with Christ...He has promised me that all things work together for the good to those who love God to those called according to His purpose...Yet I still want control...

And if God, I AM WHO I AM, is the maker of heaven and earth and is limitless never tiring wishing to give His children good things...If God is in control over the entire universe...If the God we serve it really in control over the entire universe...

Then He is in control over every aspect of my life...God is in control over your illness, over your finances, over your needs, over your children and even in control over your career...God is in control... Friends, God is in control...God is in control over the entire universe and in control over every aspect of your life...

Yet until we realize this we will never let go of worry...Step #1: in my opinion is the most crucial step... Because without a profound sense that God is really in control...Then we will never release control and worry...

### **Step #2: Release Control, Release Control...**

Once you recognize God is in control you must release control...Let's be honest, it is so exhausting and so draining trying to control every aspect of your life... It is so exhausting worrying over your children, your ministry, your church, your health, your money, your job...

There comes a point in time where you look in the mirror and realize something...That God is in control and I am not...And if God is in control and He is a God that keeps His promises and E firmly grasp that God is in control and we aren't...

Then you must let go...You must stop tightening your grip over worry and control and release your worry to God...Listen, friends, unless you make a conscious continual decision to release control and seek the kingdom of God then you will never know freedom...You will never know freedom from worry and stress...

Step #1 Realize that God is in control and Step #2: Release Control...

### **Step #3: Refocus on the Kingdom...**

The main command in this passage is to seek first and above all else His kingdom and His righteousness...

Friends, we must realize and release and once we release let it go and get your eyes off of fear and control and on to the face and character of God...Get our eyes off of our problems and onto the only true fixer of problems...

Once you let it go...let it go and don't look back...Focus on the kingdom...focus on growing in the Lord...focus on the past provisions of the Lord...Focus on how the Lord has blessed you...Once you realize and release then look to the kingdom and never look back...

It hard to run a race looking back the entire time...

Listen friends, we will never know peace until we Recognize, release and refocus...We will never feel the lifting of our the burden for shame and sin, the burden of worry and fear until we apply the scripture to our lives...

Because after all we cannot add one hour to our lives through worry but we can take away an hour...

**WE:**

There is only one way to peace in this world and that is through a relationship with Jesus Christ...If you want to know how to enter into fellowship with Him find me after the service today...

Friends, I want to close with a simple verse...It is rather well known but it summarizes things well...Philippians 4:6-7... “<sup>6</sup>Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Amen...

(Let us pray)

You may have noticed in your worship folder that today is a special day...Today there is a celebration of another life that believes in Jesus Christ as their Savior...Today, is a baptism Sunday...What is baptism? Baptism is essentially an outward sign of an inward change...It is outward expression of the change of life when someone believes in Jesus Christ...It is the sign that someone else is joining us in heaven...(Amen)...Now there is no power in that water...Baptism in no way saves you but faith in Jesus Christ alone is the only way to be justified before God...

Today we have David Knaup baptizing his youngest daughter Hannah...Now, before we proceed, I want to hear a loud uproarious of applause...Baptism is a great and powerful testimony...