



## Root Of Worry

We all know that we shouldn't worry. Worry causes us to lose sleep and age faster. It can interfere with our appetite and relationships. Worry leads to anxiety and can cause us to be physically sick.

Webster's defines worry like this: *to harass by tearing, biting, or snapping especially at the throat; to touch or disturb something repeatedly; to change the position of or adjust by repeated pushing or hauling; to afflict with mental distress or agitation.*

Usually we associate the word worry with the latter, mental distress or agitation, but I think the other vivid definitions paint a pretty clear picture of what happens to us when we get stuck in cycles of worry. Our thoughts harass us by tearing at our peace, snapping at the truth of God's Word, like a terrier snaps and tears at a rat. Instead of casting our cares on the Lord and leaving them there, worry causes us to disturb or touch those cares over and over again. Worry changes our position by repeated pushing. We can be singing "On Christ the Solid Rock I Stand" one moment and then pushed into sinking sand by worry the next.

Worry is not cute. Worry is not our friend. Worry is not to be embraced or excused.

I love this red-letter wake-up call brought to us by Jesus in Matthew 6:25:

*Therefore I tell you, **stop** being perpetually uneasy (anxious and worried) about your life...*

***Put an end to your worrying! Make it stop, Jesus says! You're wasting your time. I've got too much for you to do, too high of a call on your life, for you to let worry take up space in your heart and mind. Stop it!***

Okay, Lord. We got it. Stop worrying. But how? It's not like we have a stop/start button which we can push to make worry magically disappear from our lives. So how do we obey this command to stop worrying, so we may start fully living?

I believe the key is found in verse 26. After Jesus tells us to stop being perpetually uneasy, He goes on to say:

***Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are?***

Aren't you far more valuable to Him than they are?

**When is the last time you sat down and really thought about how valuable you are to Jesus?** When is the last time you let wonder and awe fill your heart as you let the love of God wash over you? I love the worship song "Since Your Love" by United Pursuit. There's a line which says, "Since your love got a hold of me, I'm a new creation." **God's love wants to get a hold of us, but in order for that to happen, we have to slow down long enough for it to catch us.**

I think women tend to struggle with worry more than men, because we are always moving from one thing to the next. We pour out, we give out, then we wake up and do it all over again. Even in our quiet times, we pour out our love on Jesus, but we pack up and move on before He can pour His love out on us.

**When we find ourselves dealing with worry, the issue at hand isn't really worry, the issue is an underestimation of how greatly God values us.**

Too often, we let unreliable sources determine our value. We measure our worth based on how many likes we get on Instagram, how quickly a friend responds to a text, whether or not our husband tells us we look pretty, whether or not we get the promotion at work, if we accomplish our to-do lists, or if we've been good Christian girls who've read their Bibles, prayed, and paid their tithes. **We try and let our friends, spouses, employers, kids, or our Christian activities determine our worth, but there's a much more reliable way to discover your value.**

The value of an item, like a painting for instance, is revealed by the price someone is willing to pay for it. The value of that painting goes up if someone important like the queen owned it.

So you could say that the two questions which must be answered to determine our value are 1) *What was paid for me?* and 2) *Who owns me?*

Jesus paid for you with His own life. You were bought and paid for by Christ, you belong to Him.

**The cross states your value and the cross has the final word.** Jesus loves you and values you!

We know it, most of us have been singing it since we were tiny: "Jesus loves me this I know, for the Bible tells me so." But why don't we always buy in?

When we first moved to Oklahoma City I went to get my hair trimmed. I made the mistake of going to a training center for hair stylists because I figured anyone could handle a trim, and I was right, they trimmed my hair just fine. But it took four hours for the stylist-in-training to wash, dry, and trim my hair. Four. Hours. Not even kidding. When I first sat down in the chair the owner of the school came over and started running his fingers through my hair and telling me how beautiful and healthy and strong it was. I was feeling pretty good about my hair at that point. But as time went on, hour after hour of sitting through the world's slowest hair trim ever, I observed the owner tell four or five other ladies the exact same things about their hair. He told every client who came in what nice hair they had. He was just schmoozing customers. He didn't really mean it and his words lost their value.

Sometimes, because we've not only heard that Jesus loves us a million times, but have also heard that He loves everyone else a million times, **those words lose their value, and when that happens, we lose our value and worry becomes a comfort zone.**

After Jesus shares about the birds and the lilies he asks a sobering question: **why do you have so little faith?**

In other words, why do you doubt how valuable you are to me? Why do you insult me by worrying?

The Holy Spirit is asking the same question to us today. Why do you have so little faith? Why don't you believe God really, truly, passionately loves you and values you more than a little bird or a wildflower? **What's happened to cause you to doubt how valuable you are to Him?** What makes His love for you seem more like an illusion than reality?

To stop worry we must give our entire attention, devotion, and affection to God and allow Him to give us His attention, devotion, and affection in return. **We must stop worrying about how to stop worrying and start convincing ourselves that the Word of God is true.**

*Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.*



## CONVERSATION STARTERS

1. What things do you worry about the most?
2. How do you spend time letting God's love wash over you? Do you ever stop and think about how loved and valued you are?
3. Jesus asked those listening to his talk about the birds and the wildflowers why they had such little faith. What things have happened in your past to cause you to lose faith in the fact that God loves and cares for you, things which have caused you to forget that you don't need to worry?
4. We are going to take two minutes and ask the Lord to show us something that He values about us. He wants to speak to the secrets of your heart and show you how well He knows you. Get quiet and listen, and write down whatever the Lord reveals to you. Share what the Lord showed you if you are comfortable doing so.



## HIS HEART WORK

**Study:** Do a Google search for scriptures on God's love for us. Read through the many scriptures listed and choose one or two to memorize. When worry comes against you, begin to remind yourself of God's love by quoting scripture.

**Act:** Spend time each day not just pouring your love out on the Lord, but allowing Him time to pour His love on you. Set aside five minutes of your quiet time, where you get quiet and still and let Him come and remind you of how much you mean to Him.



## PRAYER NEEDS

Write down the prayer requests of your group members, and pray fervently for them! Let your group members know when you are praying for them, if you have any scriptures or encouraging words for them, etc.