

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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Four Problems With Worry

By "worry" I mean the debilitating, nagging sense of doom that (a) goes further than concern and sympathy, (b) does not involve any remedial activity to solve a real problem, and (c) is characterized by habitual, constant churning thoughts of despair. It is often unreasonable and a prelude to depression. Webster's Dictionary (1913, p.#1666) says: "to feel or express undue care and anxiety; to manifest disquietude or pain; to be fretful ..."

1. Worry is often out of proportion with reality. It becomes an emotion that is difficult to contain in proper, reasonable bounds. Illustration: Your teenage son is ten minutes later than the usual arrival time from school. Your first thoughts may be well within the range of possibility: traffic, he had some necessary task at school or someone needed a ride home. But as the clock ticks your thoughts move away from the probable toward the tragic or bizarre. A traffic accident ... he wrecked the car and it was his fault ... there is serious injury ... several are dead ... And as the delay goes on for a few more minutes, our imagination develops other images, even darker. This seems to be the nature of worry; it is so difficult to contain these negative thoughts of dread. A man once said, *"Don't tell me that worry doesn't do any good. I know better. The things I worry about don't ever happen!"* Isn't it so. A Swedish proverb says, *"Worry gives a small thing a big shadow."*

2. Worry is distracting. It is so hard to concentrate when you are worrying; it is troublesome to deal with people in a kind and friendly manner. Illustration: You are at a crisis point in your financial condition; bills are soon due, and the money isn't in the bank. As the due dates approach, you are less productive in your job and it is increasingly harder for your loved ones to deal with your negative mood. (Have you considered - worry over finances can lead to less responsibility; therefore, less money and more worry!!) Worry robs us of the energy we need to apply to all our life's responsibilities. But when some worrisome problem distracts you, the daily routine of duties continues. But there's more.

3. Worry keeps us from productive activity. While immersed in worry, we tend to let distraction introduce neglect of duty. Illustration: I read this somewhere many years ago, and I apologize for the absence of documentation. In spite of that oversight, I cannot resist using it: Worry has never paid a bill, or put a meal on the table. It has never cured a serious illness, but has caused many. Worry has never solved a marriage problem, or successfully raised a child. It has never prevented a church problem, or solved a personal conflict. Worry has never united a church, converted a sinner, or brought back an apostate. It has never repaired a car, fixed the plumbing or reversed the aging process. We might add, it has never added one cubit unto the measure of a man's life (**Matt. 6:27**).

4. Worry is a symptom of a lack of trust in God. This is the worse problem associated with worry. And in the passage quoted above (Matthew 6), Jesus not only teaches the futility of worry, He tells us not to do it: "Do not worry," (**Matt. 6:25, 31, 34**). He wants us to know, our heavenly Father knows what we need and our role is to put Him first (**Matt. 6:32-34**). Making God our first priority is an act of trust. Worry contradicts our claim of trust in God. {By the way, you also cannot read this text in Matthew 6 without seeing one of the basic

attachments that cause anxiety: MONEY! Surely we need to realize that money can be an excellent servant, but it is a horrible master. See **Psalms 127:2 & 39:6**.

The answer is trust in God, such as depicted in Psalms 37:5 where you "commit your way to the Lord," and "trust in Him, and He shall bring it to pass." This trust yields the confession: "I sought Jehovah, and He answered me, and from all my fears did deliver me," (**Psa. 34:4**).

Here are six things I have posted on a card on our refrigerator. Despair is not necessary because:

1. You can always pray (**Phil. 4:6, 7**).
2. In suffering, there is always the potential to grow, mature and learn (**Jas. 1:2-4; Rom. 5:1-4**).
3. There is value in having your faith tested (**1 Pet. 1:6, 7**).
4. Whatever the problem is, that problem will not make it into heaven (**Rev. 21:7**).
5. God is good, regardless of what happens on earth (**Jn. 10:11; Psa. 18:1-3**).
6. There are some things we can know (**2 Cor. 4:1-10, v.14**).

Friends, I know this works because my refrigerator doesn't worry about anything!

- Warren E. Berkley

Doors

Contained within the New Testament are several references to doors. Let us notice a few.

A Door On Which To Knock

In His Sermon on the Mount, the Savior said, "...knock, and it will be opened to you" (Matt. 7:7). The idea is that there is a door on which we must knock to have it opened and receive the blessings on the other side. That is, we must seek the righteousness of God. It requires action on our part. We cannot expect the Lord to enter our lives against our will. Rather, the Bible says, "...the Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' And let him who hears say, 'Come!' And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17). We can rejoice in the promise that when we knock, "it will be opened" (Matt. 7:8).

A Door To Open

Jesus said, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me" (Rev. 3:20). What a sweet thought it is that the Lord of Glory is seeking to enter our lives.

He is not just awaiting our action, but is Himself looking for a home in the hearts of men. He commissioned the proclamation of the gospel and through it He dwells in our hearts by faith (Matt. 28:19, 20; Eph. 3:17; Rom. 10:17). Let us open the door to the Master.

A Door To Enter

Jesus is the door of the sheep (Jn. 10:7, 9). It is through Him and by Him that one may enter the flock of God. Being a part of that flock entitles us to blessings that others in this world do not enjoy. For instance, we can

call on God as our Father (Gal. 4:6). The Son of God is the only way to go to the Father; to become His child (Jn. 14:6). There are not many doors—Buddha, Mohammed, Confucius, Joseph Smith—only One, Christ. “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

Will you knock, open, and enter?

- Steven F. Deaton

Be-Attitudes for Mothers

Blessed are the Mothers who love God, for their children shall not be ignorant of their Creator and His plans concerning them.

Blessed are the Mothers who love the word of God, for their children shall know of the way, the truth and the life.

Blessed are the Mothers who love the house of God, for their children shall enter there and sit with them in the presence of God.

Blessed are the Mothers who love to pray, for their children shall feel the power of prayer and many shall find salvation.

Blessed are the Mothers who love to give to the cause of Christ, for their children shall become supporters of the Kingdom of God.

Blessed are the Mothers who love the family altar, for they shall have their reward in this world and in the world to come.

Blessed are the Mothers who love to speak kind words to their neighbor's children, for thereby they shall win other boys and girls besides their own to Jesus Christ.

Blessed are the Mothers who love to be companions to their children, for they shall be called understanding Mothers.

Blessed are the Mothers who love to fight life's battles bravely with a strong and steadfast faith in God, for their children shall know where to find strength in time of need.

**Blessed are the Mothers who, when they are old and gray, can look back upon memory's wall with no regret and can say, "I brought my children up in the fear of the Lord."
Theirs are the mansions in glory.**

(Author Unknown)

THIS WEEK'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: *"They Know Not What They Do!"* (text: Luke 23:33-35); Sunday evening: *"Open My Eyes!"* (text: 2 Kings 6:15-18).