

Give God Your Worry and He'll Give You His Peace

The Gift Exchange, Week One

We're starting a new, three-part message series today called **The Gift Exchange**. It's all about the exchanges that take place in our relationship with God. In particular...

- Week One - Give God your worry and he'll give you peace.
- Week Two - Give God your hurts and he'll give you healing.
- Week Three - Give God your grief and he'll give you joy.

It's the most wonderful time of the year... **and the most stressful.**

- We are busy, so we ask, *how am I going to fit it all in?*
- We are overextended so we ask, *how am I going to pay for it all?*
- We are reminded of our deepest hurts so we ask, *how can I just get through?*

Jesus addresses **worry** head on in one of the most important sermons ever preached - The Sermon on the Mount - so it must be an important topic when it comes to our relationship with God.

Clarification: There is a difference between worry and caution. We *should* be wary of dangerous situations. There is also a difference between worry and wisdom. Being conservative in your decision-making doesn't mean you're worrying. It might just mean you're wise.

Another clarification: We're also not talking about certain kinds of anxiety that have to do with the trauma that you've been through, or perhaps a struggle with depression. We're talking about a kind of worry that we could avoid.

Let's define worry...

Worry is allowing your mind to dwell on potentially negative outcomes beyond our actual control.

And Jesus addressed it this way...

Matthew 6:25-34 NLT

²⁵ That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn't life more than food, and your body more than clothing? ²⁶ 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? ²⁷ Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?

²⁸ "And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing, ²⁹ yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. ³⁰ And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?

³¹ "So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' ³² These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. ³³ Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

³⁴ "So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today.

Jesus says several things about worry...

- Worry is unnatural - nature doesn't worry.
- Worry is unhelpful - it doesn't actually change anything.
- Worry is unchristian - it reflects a lack of faith.

How to Give God Your Worry and Experience His Peace

1. Let Jesus be King.

Ask yourself this question...

What deserves the most prominence in my thought life?

Hint: It's Jesus.

And when you put his kingdom first and make **God's kingdom purposes** your primary concern, you don't have to worry about a lot of other things in your life.

2. Live a day at a time.

God gives you enough power and strength for today, but not for tomorrow. He doesn't equip you to prevent all the future situations you're going to go through. He gives you the strength to deal with what comes today.

3. Lean on the faithfulness of God.

That is, **talk to God about it** and let him remind you of his promises. Which of course means, studying his promises regularly.

Philippians 4:6 NLT

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.

There are two things Paul says to do with worry...

- 1. Tell God about it - take it to him in prayer.**
- 2. Thank God for what he has done.**

Gratitude re-focuses our minds on the goodness and the gifts of God rather than the problems around us.

Philippians 4:7 NLT

Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

You can dwell on your problems, or you can dwell on God's promises.

When you let Jesus be king, live a day at a time, and lean on God's faithfulness, he will guard your heart and your mind with his peace.