

Prayer:

Slide # 1

Theme: *Christ the King*

Outline:

Chps. 1-2 The Advent of the King. (Proving His LEGAL right to the throne by His genealogy.)

Chp. 3 The Forerunner of the King and the King’s baptism.

Chp. 4 The Test of the King. (Proving His MORAL right to the throne by not yielding to temptation; and exhibiting His kingdom resume.)

Chps. 5-7 The Pronouncements of the King. (Proving His JUDICIAL right to the throne as seen in the wisdom of His kingdom teaching.)

Chps. 8-10 The Power of the King. (Proving His PROPHETICAL right to the throne by fulfilling prophecy.)

Chps. 11-12 The Rejection of the King.

Chp. 13 The Parables of the King.

Chps. 14-16 The Revelations of the King.

Chps. 17-20 The Instructions of the King.

Chps. 21-23 Formal Rejection of the King.

Chps. 24-25 The Predictions of the King.

Chps. 26-27 The Passion of the King.

Chp. 28 The Resurrection of the King.

After emphasizing the way to the kingdom is through REPENTANCE Jesus explained in Matthew 5 what repentance is to then look like in the lives of His disciples. In chapter 6 Jesus compared the “showmanship religion” of the hypocrites with the genuineness that is to characterize His followers.

In so doing Jesus dealt with 3 areas of piety, namely almsgiving, praying, and fasting. And then finally at the end of the chapter He deals with the proper attitude towards money and materialism. He exhorts us to lay our treasures up in heaven and not on earth. There is a three-fold challenge here: 1) Where is my treasure? 2) where is my focus? and 3) who or what is my master? These are the great issues in life.

The danger of wealth is that one may become a slave to it to where you end up serving “mammon” (materialism) instead of God. On the other hand, if one does not have much of this world’s goods the temptation is to WORRY.

Wealth and worry are opposite problems, but they can be equally distracting to spiritual life. – **John Phillips**

Christ addressed the issue of wealth (or mammon) last time in 6:19-24 telling us this should not be the focus of our lives. But now He goes on to address the issue of WORRYING about not having enough in 6:25-34. Both hoarding and worry are sin. In both cases the issue is a lack of trust in God.

Matthew 6:25–34 (NKJV)

25 “Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?”

The word “therefore” ties with what Jesus has just said regarding having the proper attitude towards money/materialism. He has just addressed the issue of laying up treasure; now He goes on to address the issue of WORRYING about not having enough.

I mean if you are really going to focus on laying your treasure up in heaven, what about having enough to get by while you are still on earth? This is what Jesus here addresses.

Jesus said, “**do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on.**” The key word here is WORRY. Jesus is not encouraging irresponsibility, rather He is addressing the issue of sinful WORRY.

The word “**worry**” (Gk. merimnao) literally means “to be drawn in different directions”. Worry serves to tear us up. It is to be emotionally torn apart. Worry makes a mess out of you.

[Worry] is to become so fixed upon a concern that one’s thinking and energy are dominated, and a lack of trust in God’s provision is demonstrated. – **Ed Glasscock**

As you study the whole counsel of God you will find there is a difference between worry and proper concern; between worry and being properly responsible; between worry and proper planning. Jesus is here addressing the issue of sinful WORRY.

“Do not worry” is an imperative – meaning it is a command. Jesus is talking about the basic necessities of life related to food, drink, and clothing.

And here in verse 25 Jesus argues from the greater to the lesser saying, “Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?” Life has a greater purpose than food and clothing.

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This type of worry causes us to devote our finest energies to making sure we will have enough to live on. Then before we know it, our lives have passed, and we have missed the central purpose for which we were made. – **William MacDonald**

Life is not merely about preoccupation with food and clothing – with obtaining stuff. We were created for God. Our major preoccupation in life is to be with God and the things of God.

Years ago, we had an evangelist by the name of Sam Dalton come to our church. Sam told the story about a man in his home church who was always so busy making a living that he never had time to serve Christ, he never had time for church, he never had time to serve the body. Sam told him that he was going to work himself to death and that his family would feed better after he was gone. And then Sam told me, “That is exactly what happened.”

Yes, we need to make a living, but our LIFE should be for God. Yes, we need to make a living but life is more than food and clothing.

I have a brother who is an over-the-road truck driver. He has said to me, “You make a good living, but it is not much of a life.” Now take that and apply it spiritually: Many professing Christians make a good living but in the end before God it is not much of a life.

God gives the greater gifts (life and one’s body) and will supply the lesser ones (food and clothing). – **The Moody Bible Commentary**

Jesus then points to nature to illustrate the emphasis that He is making.

26 Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?

Here is an illustration of God's providential care. If anything in this world is a picture of "carefree" it is the birds of the air. They fly about here and there seemingly without a care in the world.

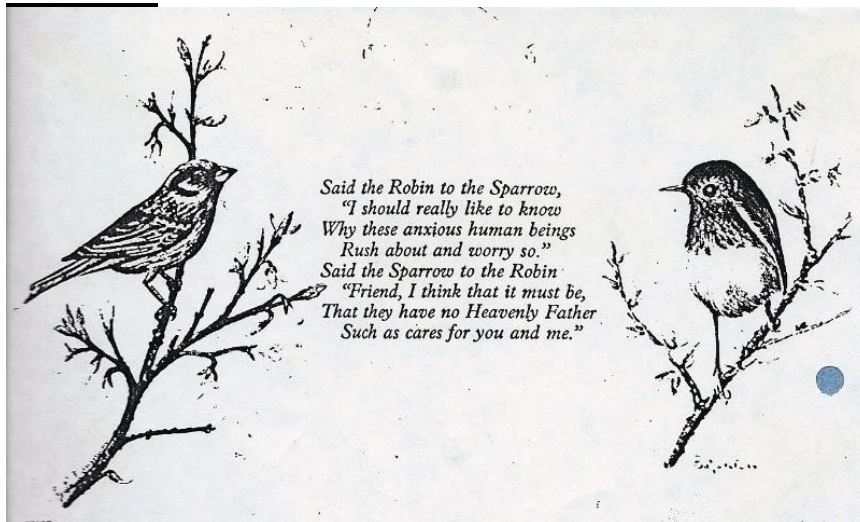
Birds are completely dependent upon God's providential care. They don't sow nor harvest, yet our heavenly Father feeds them. God takes care of the birds. They are reliant upon Him for their food.

Yet, it is pointed out that even the birds do have to work for their food. God's doesn't throw worms up into their nests. We often say, "the early bird gets the worm". God provides but He often does it through the means of hard work.

However, Christ's point here is that God providentially takes care of the birds. And then He rhetorically asks, "Are you not of more value than they?"

And the expected answer is: Of course, we are much more value to God than birds because we are created in the very image of God. Mankind is the crowning work of God's creation – of the greatest value before Him.

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We need to remember who it is that feeds us. In truth it is our heavenly Father. How Christ taught us to pray is a continual reminder of this: "Give us this day our daily bread." (Mt. 6:11).

And the birds remind us that it normally is a providential care – meaning God does it in the normal course of life through sovereignly controlling all the circumstances of life.

Here Jesus emphasizes that if the lesser thing (feeding birds) is true; assuredly God will also accomplish the greater thing (feeding us).

27 Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

The language here is a little bit ambiguous because of the word “cubit” (Gk. pechus) and the word “stature” (Gk. helikia). However, “stature” can also be used in reference to life span as seen in John 9:21.

A cubit is 18 inches in length. It seems a little absurd to even to even think about let alone worry about adding 18 inches to your height unless of course you are 12 years old. Most commentators think the flow of thought related to quality of life here relates better to lifespan.

Most likely the linear measure is being used in a metaphorical sense (cf. “add one cubit to his span of life” [RSV], akin to “passing a milestone” at one’s birthday. – **D.A. Carson**)

Worry never changes anything for the better. It can’t improve your circumstances or add time to your life, but it might make it shorter.

Worry affects the circulation, the heart, the glands and the whole nervous system. I have never met a man or known a man to die of overwork, but I have known a lot who died of worry.

– **Dr. Charles Mayo** (of the famous Mayo Clinic)

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28 “So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;

Jesus continues to emphasize God’s providential care as seen in nature. God provides food for the birds and He provides clothing for the flowers of the field. Jesus probably spoke of the wildflowers that grow quickly in the holy land after the spring rains. These flowers don’t toil (that is labor) or spin (that is spin a design as one might do with thread).

And yet God clothes them in a most beautiful fashion.

29 and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

Solomon the wealthiest and most decorated king in the history of Israel – in all his glory was not arrayed like a single one of these beautiful wild flowers.

Slide # 5 – Wild Flowers in Israel



Slide # 6



30 Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

We are much more value than birds, and the birds are a higher form of life than grass, so how much must God care about us. Even the insignificant grass of the field which today is, and then tomorrow is cast into the oven is clothed by God.

The practice of the Jews was to collect these wild flowers and dry them out and then use them for fuel for heating and cooking. They had no lasting value, but even these relatively insignificant flowers served a purpose and were clothed in great beauty by God.

How much more can we then expect God to cloth us? And then Jesus applies a mild rebuke saying, “O you of little faith”. This is a FAITH issue.

Before God life is essentially a faith issue. Without faith it is impossible to please God. We come into a saving relationship with God through faith, but then after we are saved, He wants us to walk by faith – trusting Him to meet our needs.

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Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV)

6 But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

Romans 5:1 (NKJV)

1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Colossians 2:6 (NKJV)

6 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him,

Faith in the Bible is taking God at His Word. It trusts in His character to do what He says. Faith in the Bible is always connected to the Word of God and what He says. Faith is not attached to my ideas, but rather to the Word of God.

Slide # 8**Genesis 15:4–6 (NKJV)**

4 And behold, the **word of the LORD** came to him, saying, “This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir.”

5 Then He brought him outside and said, “Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.” And **He said** to him, “So shall your descendants be.”

6 And **he believed in the LORD**, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

Abram believed in the LORD in the sense that He believed God could and would bring to pass what He had promised. To believe in the Word of God is to believe in His character – His power – His faithfulness.

Here in Matt. 6 Jesus revealed that the cause for sinful anxiety and worry is a LACK OF FAITH. Worry shows we doubt the promise of God or we don't believe He is able to do what He says. That is an insult to the Almighty!

He can take care of us! The culture is a mess, but God is still our Father. Politics is a mess, but God is still our Father. We see concerns all around, but the birds are still eating and the flowers are still looking good – how much more is our heavenly Father still able to take care of us?

If you are dealing with anxiety let me encourage you to just get away from it all and go out and look at the birds for a while. Let them teach some sound theology. Are you worried, check out the flowers. They are not there by accident in all their glory. God clothes them in this way, and He is able to take care of you too!

The antidote to worry is to check out the birds and flowers and then realize that you are much more valuable to your heavenly Father than any of these. He will take care of you! You can trust Him! That's the point!

“Little faith” implies a deficiency of faith and not a total absence of it. Remember Jesus is addressing His followers who already know God as their Father – meaning that they are people of faith.

But you can be a person of faith and yet have “little faith”. Jesus wants us to become people of great faith – trusting Him for everything.

This expression “little faith” is used 4 times in the gospel of Matthew as a means of gently chastising His disciples and a reproof of their need to grow in faith (cf. Mt. 8:26; 14:31; 16:8; 17:20).

31 “Therefore do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’

The conclusion of the matter is clear, “Therefore do not worry about what to eat, drink, or wear. It is pretty clear that Jesus does not want His people to worry. We want to be wise, but not worry.

If someone is struggling we don’t say, “I will be worrying for you.” No, we know that isn’t right. Instead we say, “I will be praying for you.” That is the right response – not worry but prayer.

We have the incredible privilege of praying. And God clearly instructs us that instead of worrying we should pray.

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Philippians 4:6–7 (NKJV)

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

1 Peter 5:7 (NKJV)

7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

We should note that there is a difference between sinful worrying and being troubled. Being human there are times when we will be troubled in our soul about various things. That is not necessarily sin.

In 2 Cor. 7 Paul spoke of a time when he had no rest and being troubled on every side – “Outside were conflicts, inside were fears.” (2 Cor. 7:5) At different times Jesus was troubled but He never sinned. In the face of the cross Jesus said, “Now My soul is troubled...” (Jn. 12:27).

Being human we will at times be troubled. It’s kind of like, “Be angry, and do not sin”. There is a time for proper anger, but we must not let it lead to sin. There is a time when it is understandable that we are troubled but we must not let it lead to the sin of worry.

In the garden of the Gethsemane (literally meaning “oil press”) - the place of the press of the soul Jesus said, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death.” (Mt. 26:36). But what did Jesus do about it? He went to prayer! He bathed His soul in intense prayer. And then as the betrayer and regiment came to arrest Him, Jesus went forth with great power and peace.

The issue is not that we are never troubled, not that we don't face anxiety. The issue is how do we deal with it. And the God-given answer is that instead of being anxious we are to handle everything with PRAYER.

Prayer is the antidote for worry! We find our peace in God – in taking everything to Him. The night before He was crucified Jesus said to His disciples, “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.” (Jn. 14:1). And He went on to say, “Peace I leave with you” (Jn. 14:27). The cure for a troubled heart is faith and faith is expressed in prayer – in dependence upon God. And if struggling ask Him to help you!

32 For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

The “Gentiles” represent those who don't know God – those who are not in covenant relationship with Him. Since they don't know God, they give their whole life seeking to provide for themselves.

And they are always worried about it. They worry about the economy. They worry about their job. They worry about the news which would scare anyone in their right mind.

But Christ is really dealing with an attitude – a matter of the heart – the issue of faith.

Christ tells His people not to worry and obsess over the basic necessities of life because our heavenly Father KNOWS that we need all these things.

God KNOWS and He CARES! That changes everything. In reality we are not really providing for ourselves. God provides for us just like He does the birds. Yes, we still have to work but beyond our working is the fact that God is at work. Our work is a reality of His work.

Knowing this changes everything – at least it should in terms of our whole disposition toward worry. We KNOW that as we ask God for our daily bread that He already KNOWS what we need. As believers we are to have confidence in our all-powerful and all-caring heavenly Father.

This puts our mind at ease. You can rest in the fact that God is your Father and He truly cares for you. You are not on your own to make it happen. God is behind you. He is supporting you. He is helping you.

Just think what it means to be able to call God “Father”. As the heavenly Father He is sovereignly ABLE to help you, and as your Father He LOVINGLY wants to provide for you.

But let me ask you this: If God already KNOWS what we need WHY do we need to ask Him? Well, the reason is prayer expresses DEPENDENCE upon God. God knows but He wants us to recognize our dependence upon Him in prayer and as we do so He answers prayer. As we see God answer our prayers it makes us realize that He is the living/moving God Who is at work on our behalf and it causes us to praise and glorify Him.

33 But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

In contrast to the unsaved Gentiles who are preoccupied with making a living as if that is their ultimate purpose; in contrast we as God’s people are to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

This is a matter of FIRST PRIORITY. Keep God first! The kingdom is to be top priority. The emphasis here is living in light of eternity. Ultimately, we are headed for the kingdom and should therefore live accordingly. It is kingdom truth that will endure forever.

There is really only two things that you take with you (so to speak) into the kingdom. Souls that are won are going to go with you into the kingdom. Why did Jesus come? To save souls who can live forever in the kingdom. What is our mission? To see souls saved who will live forever in the kingdom.

Seeking the KINGDOM FIRST means making God’s kingdom priority of souls your priority.

The other thing you can take with you is your reward for faithful righteous living. This is the treasure Christ spoke about laying up in heaven in verse 20. The righteousness in view here is ethical righteousness related to right living (Rom. 14:17).

Romans 14:17–18 (NKJV)

17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

18 For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by men.

In salvation there is POSITIONAL righteousness acquired at the moment of saving faith, and there is PRACTICAL righteousness which relates to our walk.

Slide # 10

POSITIONAL RIGHTEOUSNESS...

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV)

21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Romans 4:4–5 (NKJV)

4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.

5 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,

Slide # 11

PRACTICAL RIGHTEOUSNESS

1 Timothy 6:11 (NKJV)

11 But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.

1 Peter 1:15 (NKJV)

15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,

In view here in Matt. 6:33 is practical righteousness. We are to ever to be seeking to apply God's righteousness to our life.

As fishers of men seeking the kingdom first means as a PRIORITY seeking to win souls for the kingdom, and seeking to lay up kingdom treasure by way of righteous living.

A Spirit-filled Christian works hard to make a living, but in the process His heart is really sold out to God and His purposes. He makes a living, but it is not his life. He doesn't live for it – he lives for God! The difference is found in the HEART!

I have a friend who is a worker in a closed country. He has a job that serves as a cover for him. One day one of the natives told him, ***“I know that you sell this stuff, but really your heart is about serving God.”*** Now my friend had never told him this, but as this native observed him, he came to see where the real passion of his heart was at.

This is the heart (pun intended) of the matter. What is the passion of your life? What is the priority of your life? God wants it to be His kingdom and His righteousness.

And the exhortation to seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness first comes with a promise. Jesus says as we do this “all these things shall be added to you.” “All these things” are the necessities of life.

As you make God your priority, He will take care of your needs in keeping with His will and purpose for your life.

Notice, contrary to what prosperity gospel teachers claim, Jesus does not say God will provide luxury items. He doesn't promise you wealth, but rather to meet your basic NEEDS. What we eat, drink, and wear applies to the basic necessities of life – the basic essentials.

In the end, just as there are only two kinds of piety, the self-centered and the God-centered, so there are only two kinds of ambition: one can be ambitious either for oneself or for God. – ***D.A. Carson***

Here is the MAIN point in this section. Jesus calls for His disciples to seek God FIRST in their lives. God is to be our number ONE PRIORITY.

34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

This is the third “***therefore***” in this section as seen in verses 25, 31, and 34. This threefold series of “therefores” serves to develop the main point that Christ is emphasizing.

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v. 25 **Therefore** consistent with the admonition to focus on things above don't worry about the necessities of life.

v. 31 **Therefore** in light of the reality of God's care don't worry about the necessities of life.

v. 34 **Therefore** in view of the fact that God knows your needs and has promised to provide if you seek Him first – take one day at a time.

Verse 34 is stated in the style of a proverb. Jesus says not to worry about tomorrow. This is now the third time in this section that Jesus has said, “***do not worry***” as seen in verse 25, 31, and 34. He has clearly made His point.

And the focus here is not to worry about tomorrow. And doesn't this really hit us right where we live. Most of what we worry about involves the future. We worry about what is going to happen. And the mind has the tendency to think the worst.

We had a men's round table the other night and we were discussing what to do if the gov't says we have to turn in all our guns. Oh, we were giving it some serious thought – no worries of course. And then someone spoke up and said, “We don't really have to concern ourselves with this right now because we aren't facing this right at this moment.” That is some real wisdom – straight out of Matt. 6:34.

Don't worry and fret about what tomorrow may bring – just take one day at a time. Isn't that good of God to give us just one day at a time to deal with.

And this teaches us that God's grace is dispensed as daily grace. He gives us grace day by day. He doesn't give us a months' worth of grace for today, but rather just enough for this today.

James says we don't even know if we are going to be alive tomorrow (cf. Ja. 4:13-15). Stop fretting and being all worried about tomorrow. Just focus on today. Just take one day at a time. That is great wisdom to live by.

Can you trust God for your eternity? Can you trust Him for tomorrow? Yes, of course, so just do as He says and deal with today and leave tomorrow for tomorrow.

Now again, Jesus is dealing with WORRY. As we study the whole counsel of God there is a place for planning. Paul made travel plans – and in that sense he was thinking about tomorrow.

Jesus said, “***do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own thing. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.***” And all God’s people said....

In this Jesus recognizes that we will have troubles (cf. Jn. 16:33). Jesus didn’t promise a “trouble free” experience, rather He tells us to deal with the troubles of life one day at a time. Don’t borrow from tomorrow’s trouble – should there even be a tomorrow. No, that is too much. Just deal with today’s issues today. Leave tomorrow to tomorrow!

He is implicitly teaching that even for His disciples today’s grace is sufficient only for today and should not be wasted on tomorrow. If tomorrow does bring new trouble, there will be new grace to meet it.

– ***D.A. Carson***

They do studies on everything, but I have read about studies where they found that a high percentage of what people worry about NEVER comes to pass. Here they spend all this time worrying about something that turns out to be a total non-issue. That is folly! It is counterproductive.

Someone has said that the average person is crucifying himself between two thieves: the regrets of yesterday and the worries of tomorrow. It is right to plan for the future and even to save for the future (2 Cor. 12:14; 1 Tim. 5:8). But it is sin to worry about the future and permit tomorrow to rob today of its blessings. – ***Warren Wiersbe***

What a great time for this study. The whole country seems to be going to hell in a handbasket. Listen to some of the worrisome headlines from just this week:

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Sample Headlines....

- Biden Eyeing Tax Rate as High as 43.4%.
- The Federal Government Flexes Its Coercive Powers Against a Christian University

- Iranian Mullahs ‘Desperate’ for deal, Biden team looks too eager to make concessions
- Variants will ‘gradually erode’ immunity

If you spend more time listening to the “news” than you do listening to God you are probably going to be full of WORRY. Turn off the news and turn on to God.

Listen to what Jesus says in our text today... Let me summarize.

Slide # 14

- Don’t worry.
- Your Father God providentially cares for birds and flowers and you are much more valuable to Him than they are.
- Worry can’t bring about any positive changes.
- Worry shows a lack of faith.
- God knows what you need.
- Seek God first and He will take care of your needs.
- Take one day at a time.

The Bible says to, “***Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.***” (Col. 3:2). That is spiritually and mentally healthy.

Right after telling us not to worry about anything but instead to pray about everything – right after that in the immediate context Paul said this:

Slide # 15

Philippians 4:8 (NKJV)

8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

A Christian lady called herself a “***professional worrier***”. One day she was facing a medical test that caused her to be frantic with fear. She decided that during the test she would focus on the first five words of Psalm 23 – “***The LORD is my shepherd***”. She testified what a calming effect that was.

Worry is thinking about a problem over and over in your mind to where it consumes you. If you know how to worry you already know how to meditate. You are just meditating on the wrong thing.

God wants us to meditate on Him and His Word. Ruth Graham said, "Quit studying the problems and start studying the promises."

Focus on God. Pray and set your mind on things above! Keep the focus:
"The LORD is my shepherd"!

God is BIGGER than all our worries. We can TRUST Him with everything!

God help us to do it!