

# ANXIETY & WORRY

## Introduction

How many of you would say that you often have a general sense of anxiety & worry in your life?  
What is it that you worry the most about?

(For me, it is often that I am going to perform okay so that people don't think I'm incompetent and therefore, reject me)

Tell story of not sleeping well because of worrying on my trip to Europe.

### I. Definitions

- A. Concern – a legitimate emotion which helps us to focus on a problem.
  - 1. We should have a proper care that causes us to attend to business in a responsible way. (1 Cor 12:25, 2 Cor 11:28)
- B. Worry & Anxiety – this is an excessive concern about the future and about earthly circumstances that distract you from God.

### II. The Bible calls anxiety & worry sin. Why?

- A. It expresses a heart of idolatry. (Matthew 6:19-24)
  - 1. The need expresses something we value highly, and worry or fear expresses that we love that thing and cannot do without it. (Matthew 6:24)
  - 2. It is saying that you need something other than God.
  - 3. Is there something that you possess that you worry about because you are afraid you are going to lose it?
  - 4. It may be a physical thing like a brand new computer, but it may also be something intangible like being the best player on your team.
  - 5. Summary: worry/anxiety is sinful because it expresses that you feel like you have to have something other than God to be okay.
- B. It expresses a heart of unbelief. (Matthew 6:25-34)
  - 1. Expresses doubt that God will provide for you.
  - 2. What were the people worrying about & afraid that God wouldn't provide? Read Matthew 6:25. (food/drink, clothing)
  - 3. How did Jesus answer their concerns?
    - a. Look at the birds. (Matthew 6:26-27)
      - 1. What is His point?
      - 2. If God feeds the birds and He cares a lot more about you than them (Jesus didn't die for birds), don't you think He'll take care of you?
    - b. Look at the lilies. (wild flowers)
      - 1. What is His point?

2. If the flowers are beautifully clothed and they only last for a day, don't you think God can clothe you, you who are eternal?

4. Expresses doubt that God takes care of those who belong to Him.  
(6:31-32)

C. It expresses a lack of acceptance of God's providence in our lives. (That is that God is in control of what's going on in our lives.)

1. God's providence means that God orchestrates all the circumstances & events in His Universe for His glory & our ultimate good.  
(Romans 8:28)

2. Anxiety comes when we are unwilling to accept God's agenda for our lives.

III. So what's the remedy?

A. For the worry caused by idolatry because you think you need something other than God & afraid of losing it:

1. You need to repent – admit this as sin.

2. Replace it with obedience to God's Word.

3. So for the guy on the sports team who is afraid someone may come who's better, he needs to repent of his pride, thank God for his abilities and acknowledge his abilities don't define him, God does.

B. For the worry caused by unbelief because you think that God isn't going to take care of you:

1. You need to exercise faith. (6:30b)

2. Faith is believing what God says and acting accordingly.

a. So when you are anxious and you are afraid you need to ask yourself, "Am I going to let my feelings be in charge or am I going to let what I know about God be in charge?"

b. What are you going to believe?

c. If you allow your feelings to be in charge, you are not exercising faith and believing what God says. You will continue to be anxious.

3. What has God promised? (6:33)

Read Matthew 6:33.

When we put our focus on God & His Kingdom and not on us & our kingdom, our fears begin to fade.

4. What are the character qualities of God that we need to focus on to help us overcome our anxiety?

1. God's all powerful. He is more than able to help us.

2. God loves us unconditionally. He wants what's best for us.

3. God is wise. He not only wants what's best for us, He knows what that plan looks like.

C. For the worry caused by our lack of acceptance of God's plan:

1. We need to surrender to God.

- a. Will you trust God with your life?
  - b. The crazy thing is we often believe that if we don't surrender to God that means He has to let us alone. That is so untrue. When we don't surrender to God, we are just saying I want to try to live my life on my own without God's help.
2. Our surrender needs to be expressed with thanksgiving.
    - a. Are there things going on in your life that you can't thank God for? They are most likely causing you anxiety.
    - b. Phil. 4:6 tells us not to be anxious; instead, take it to God in prayer and thank Him for it. Then Phil. 4:7 says you will experience peace.

### Conclusion

Are you anxious? Do you have worries that are causing you to lose sleep?

When God is big, our problems will become small, and we won't be anxious.

### Application

1. If your anxiety is caused by idolatry (a fear of losing something you have to have):
  - repent
  - tell God He is enough
2. If your anxiety is caused by unbelief (a fear He won't provide):
  - repent
  - exercise faith – trust God and act accordingly, even if you don't feel like it.
3. If your anxiety is caused by a fear that God's not in control:
  - repent
  - surrender and begin to thank God for what's going on in your life trusting He will use it for good.