

The Heart of Worry (3)

Matthew 6:25-34

A. Worry is an affront to God.

An *affront* is “a personally offensive act or word; a deliberate act or display of disrespect.”

- a. Look at how many times the pronoun *you* is used in 6:25. How does this indicate that the person worrying is wanting to determine his or her own future?
- b. It was suggested that most Americans believe that enjoying yourself is the highest goal of life. How does this way of thinking reveal a set of values that is self-determined or independent of God? How have you been influenced by our culture to think this way?
- c. Why will worry continue to be an ongoing struggle for a person whose highest goals in life are self-determined? Why is self-determination an affront to God?
- d. What do you see in verses 27 and 31 that suggests that worrying reveals a desire to control your future? Why would this be “offensive” to God?
- e. Why does worry reveal a distrust in God’s sovereignty and/or His goodness? In what ways in the text does Jesus suggest that worry is an issue of doubt?
- f. Look for all the times Jesus uses the phrase “more than”. What is Jesus saying about people in comparison to all other creation?
- g. Why does worrying about the temporary things of this life, especially those things associated with wealth (mammon), suggest a cheapened view of yourself?

B. How can you fight the temptation to worry?

- a. You must first repent and confess your worry as sin.
 - i. Do you struggle to see worry as sinful behavior? Why?
 - ii. What commands does Jesus give in this text that make it clear that worry is sin? (cf. also Psalm 139:23; Philippians 4:6).
 - iii. Why will your battle against the temptation to worry be derailed if you do not treat worry as sin that needs to be confessed?

- b. You need to get to know your God well.
 - i. What does Jesus tell you to look at? What does He most want you to see?
 - ii. What does Jesus tell you to observe? What does He most want you to learn?
 - iii. What is revealed about God's character by looking at birds and observing lilies?
 - iv. What will it take for you to get to know God better (Psalm 119:104-105, etc.)?
 - v. What keeps you from "studying" God?
- c. You must learn to redirect your thoughts to truth.
 - i. Why do Jesus' commands to "look" and "observe" indicate that you have control over your thoughts?
 - ii. Why do the dozens of commands to "remember" (cf. Ps. 63:6-8; 105:5; 2 Tim. 2:8) teach us that we can control our thoughts?
 - iii. Worry is primarily a "thinking" sin. Do you believe that you can learn to redirect your thinking when you worry? Why or why not?
- d. You must reorder your values and mission in life.
 - i. Discuss the ways in which personal comfort or enjoyment have become controlling desires in your life.
 - ii. Jesus links the sets of twos found in verses 19-24 to the command not to worry (cf. v 25 "For this reason" or "Therefore"). What is the relationship between worry and your treasures, your visions or dreams, and your master?
 - iii. What treasures do you need to reconsider? What dreams or goals do you need to refocus? Do you need to remember that Jesus is your Master?
 - iv. Jesus commands us to "seek first His kingdom and His righteousness". Why will doing this eliminate worry?
 - v. What does this command say about your mission in life? Why will a focus on this mission help you to fight off the temptation to worry?