

Wrestling With Worry – Week 2

Basic Principles

1. This subject is relevant for all of us.

2. Destigmatizing the issue... Anxiety is a description, not a diagnosis, and not an identity!

Everyday Anxiety vs Anxiety Disorder (Per Modern Psychology Standards)	
Everyday Anxiety	Anxiety Disorder
Worry about paying bills, landing a job, a romantic breakup, or other important life events	Constant and unsubstantiated worry that causes significant distress and interferes with daily life
Embarrassment or self-consciousness in an uncomfortable or awkward social situation	Avoiding social situations for fear of being judged, embarrassed, or humiliated
A case of nerves or sweating before a big test, business presentation, stage performance, or other significant event	Seemingly out-of-the-blue panic attacks and the preoccupation with fear or having another panic attack
Realistic fear of a dangerous object, place, or situation	Irrational fear or avoidance of an object, place, or situation that poses little or no threat or danger
Anxiety, sadness, or difficulty sleeping immediately after a traumatic event	Recurring nightmares, flashbacks, or emotional numbing related to a traumatic event that occurred in the past

Fear Defined: “Fear is the emotional response to a real or perceived imminent threat.”

Fear is not necessarily sinful, and it is sometimes necessary. Fear can become sinful if we are controlled by things we should not fear.

Anxiety Defined: “Anxiety is the emotional response to a potential future threat. Anxiety is typically accompanied by nervousness, uneasiness, and apprehension regarding an uncertain outcome”

- Feeling anxious is part of the human experience and is to be expected. It is not wrong in and of itself, and can be a part of loving concern/care for others (Phil 2:19-20, 1 Cor 12:25).

- Anxiety is an indicator that tells us what’s important to us... It may reveal sin in our priorities/allegiances.

Worry Defined: “The *activity* of worrying. Actively dwelling on and taking responsibility in one’s mind for matters outside of their control. The attempt to think/scheme in order to settle uncertainty.”

- The things we tend to worry about are most often the things that are important to us. The activity of worrying is the activity of trying to control something important to me.

- The Bible commands us not to worry...

Note: Anxiety is what you *feel*... Worry is what you *do*.

Read Matthew 6:19-34 (NIV) ... ²⁴ **“No one can serve two masters.** Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other... ²⁵ **“Therefore I tell you, do not worry...”**

Review

1. The issue beneath worry is an issue of heart-allegiances. Worrying is “serving two masters” (vs 19-24)
2. Worrying is an activity that we do and not something that passively happens to us (vs 25).
 - Jesus commands us “do not worry”, which makes the activity of worrying disobedience.
3. Jesus argues from greater to lesser. He goes for the big stuff: food, drink, clothing... essentials (vs 25).
 - This leaves no exceptions for your big stuff, and certainly includes all the small stuff.
4. Jesus argues from lesser to greater... If the Lord takes care of the birds, how much more people made in His image? How much more His elect whom He died to save? (vs 26)
5. Jesus argues that worry is unproductive and accomplishes nothing. (vs 27).
 - Why do you think we’re tempted to believe that worry is productive?
6. In v 28-29 Jesus draws our attention to the grass of the field...
 - What does He say about the grass?
 - What is His point?
7. What does Jesus mean when he says “O you of little faith”? (vs 30)
 - How does the activity worrying demonstrate “little faith”?
 - Based on what Jesus says, what is the alternative to worry?
8. In what way do the pagans “run after these things”?
9. What does Jesus tell us to seek first?
 - What does he promise will follow (vs 33)? What does he mean?
10. How does worrying about tomorrow (the future) add to the trouble of today? (v 34)
 - Can you think of other examples in scripture that teach us to “live by the day”?