



WORRY

Worry weighs your heart down (lack of concentration, depression) and is bad for your health (Luke 21:34). Worries rob you of joy and inner peace because you can't worry and be happy at the same time. Worries may shut down your spiritual life by choking out God's Word—making you unproductive (Matt. 13:22=Mark 4:19=Luke 8:14; cf. Luke 10:41). The Bible says don't worry about how long you will live or the necessities of life such as food and clothing (Matt. 6:25, 31). So what should you do when you find yourself worrying?

1. Remind yourself that God knows all about your problem (Matt. 6:32). Focus on His omniscience: "for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things" (Matt. 6:32 = Luke 12:30).
2. Have faith that God will solve your problem (Matt. 6:30). Focus on His omnipotence (He can do it!) and on His omniscience (He knows how to do it! He knows the answer to it!). The clause "will He not much more do so for you" is a promise that God will solve your problem.
3. Pray about your problem, asking God to help (Phil. 4:6). And don't forget to have an attitude of thanksgiving when you pray (1 Thess. 5:18a). Recognize that (1) God has allowed this problem (1 Thess. 5:18b), (2) it's fair, (3) it's not too big for you to handle (1 Cor. 10:13), (4) it will increase your faith and endurance (Rom. 5:3; James 1:2–3), and (5) it will work out for good (Rom. 8:28).
4. Cast all your cares on God (1 Peter 5:7). Transfer your worries to Him; separate them from yourself. How? The verb *epiporto* 'throw, cast' is a verb of transference. The disciples, for instance, threw their garments on the back of a donkey as a saddle for Jesus to ride on (Luke 19:35). The clothing was transferred from the disciples to the donkey's back. A separation took place! When you throw your worries on God's back, so to speak, you're no longer bothered by them. Your mind is free: it's no longer weighed down. You have joy and inner peace. Tell God, "Father, I'm not going to worry about this any more. It's your problem now. You work it out and I'll have faith and patiently wait for your answer." You may have to keep doing this for awhile until you can have faith—wait—rest.
5. Get your priorities straight (Matt. 6:33). God's Word must be first in your life. Worry about learning the Bible and pleasing God, not about the details of life.
6. Worry is a mental sin.

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:6–7).

The clause *meden merimnate* 'Worry about nothing!' or 'Don't worry about anything!' is a command (present active imperative of *merimnao*): to worry is disobedience and disobedience is a sin. 'Don't worry about anything!' suggests we have volitional control over worry: with faith, the fruit of the spirit (patience, self-control), and prayer we can successfully cast our cares on God. 'But' suggests an alternative to worrying: Pray about it! Tell your heavenly Father your concerns. Ask for His leading, answers, and will. You can pray about anything and everything—"in everything." But be sure you have a proper attitude when you pray—"with thanksgiving."

7. If you find yourself worrying about something, confess it immediately (1 John 1:9).