**VICTORIOUS LIFE CHURCH BIBLE STUDY:PASTOR WILLIAM A. LEE,JR.**

**SERIES: SILENT KILLERS, TITLE: WORRY**

**SUB-TITLE: “FROM WORRY WARRIOR TO PRAYER WARRIOR”**

**TEXT: MATTHEW 6:25-34**

**25 “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? 27 Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life[?28 “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. 29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? 31 So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ 32 For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. 34 Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. (NIV)**

**INTRODUCTION**: There once lived a man by the name of Howard Hughes. Hughes was a big-time businessman who dabbled in oil, entertainment, and the aviation industry. These pursuits served to make him billions of dollars. Now, you would think that anyone with this type of money would be the picture of ease and tranquility. You would imagine this person sitting by the pool, sipping drinks with little umbrellas sticking out of them, going on vacations and living his best life. However, this would not be the case with Howard Hughes because the last twenty-five or so years of his life, this billionaire became the poster child for worry and anxiety. He literally became overwhelmed by an unsubstantiated fear that people were out to get him. Because of his paranoia, he spent his last decades living in hotels, where he would rent out the entire floor. Those closest to him say he was so overwhelmed by worry and fear that he sat in a pitch-black room in total darkness for long stretches of time refusing to allow anyone to come in to see him. If you had to communicate with Mr. Hughes, specific instructions were provided. You had to take several tissues, cover the door knob with them, knock, and open the door ever-so-slightly because he was exceptionally fearful of germs. His worry led to severe stomach problems, causing him to sit in the bathroom for hours at a time. In fact, one aide notes that Hughes once sat in the bathroom for 27 straight hours. On the rare occasion that Hughes would venture out of the hotel, he gave specific instructions to his driver to only drive on smooth roads and the driver was never to exceed 35 miles per hour. On the chance that they had to cross railroad tracks or some uneven part of the road, the driver was to slow down to 2 miles per hour because Howard was that nervous about getting in an accident. For a man who seemingly had it all, worry and anxiety dominated his life and the overwhelming paradox of Hughes was that the more successful he became—the more money he accrued—the more that worry and anxiety festered in his soul.

 We live in a world in which there is no lack of things to worry about. We encounter family issues, financial struggles, health challenges, relationship difficulties, pandemics, and political polarization, just to name a few. We also internally wrestle with questions, such as “Who am I?” “What am I to do?” “How am I to be loved?” and “How can I become all that God intended me to be?” And each of these circumstances creates within us a level of uncertainty, and often our instinctive response is to engage in worry. While everyone worries about something at one time or another, when that worry or those worries take over our daily lives it enters a stage in which it becomes harmful to the worrier.

**WORRYING CAN BE HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH.** In a recent study on worry, researchers concluded that Chronic worrying can affect our daily lives so much that it may interfere with our appetites, our lifestyle habits, relationships, sleep, and job performance. According to a [Princeton study](https://www.inc.com/marla-tabaka/never-enough-money-heres-why-and-it-has-nothing-to-do-with-economy.html), a person who is preoccupied with financial worry sees, on average, a drop in cognitive function that is equal to 13 points off our IQ. They say this is equal to the effects of losing a whole night's sleep. Many people who worry excessively are so anxiety-ridden that they seek relief in harmful lifestyle habits such as overeating, cigarette smoking, or using alcohol and drugs. Indeed worry is a silent killer that possesses the power to impact our lives in many negative and devastating ways. The word itself, is a negative word. According to the Oxford Dictionary, worry is defined as anxiety, it is dwelling on difficulties, and even getting ourselves into a panicky emotion. It is uncertainty, anguish, uneasiness and apprehension. Understand, that the type of worry I’m addressing here is not the kind that pertains to conditions such as clinical anxiety or panic disorders, which are serious issues that require professional treatment. But the kind of worry that I am addressing is the kind of worry that Jesus spoke to us about as we come to our text in the gospel according to St. Matthew chapter six.

 This chapter is actually a continuation of the famous Sermon on the Mount in which Jesus addressed some of the major yet practical issues involved in being His disciples. In these two chapters He has dealt with the Character of Kingdom Citizens in the Beatitude’s, the importance of His followers making a difference on the world by being salt, light and a city set upon a hill. He speaks of His relationship to the Law of Moses, our need to avoid hypocrisy, the believers relationship to money and now he approaches this silent killer in which we are dealing with today that is known as worry. Because Jesus understands that worry is a universal human struggle, he is emphatic when he tells us not to worry. In the original Greek, his statement against worry is couched as an imperative or a command—and three times he offers this command! But why is Jesus so passionate about getting us not to worry? Looking at this text we are going to examine two major reasons.

**I. WORRY IS AN INDICATION OF FORGOTTEN VALUE**

**GOD VALUES US- God sees us as important and priceless. Biblical Identity and Value Is Important Throughout Scripture The people of God Got into Trouble when they forgot who they are and whose they are.**

**\* In the Garden of Eden**

**4 And the serpent said unto the woman, “Ye shall not surely die; 5 for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.”(Genesis 3:4-5)**

\* In the Wilderness: They murmured and complained, rebelled against God, Moses and Aaron and Worshipped a Golden Calf because they thought God had forgotten about them and His Promises.

\* Before Being Taken into Babylonian Captivity- They turned away from God to worshipping Idols thinking that somehow theses visible false gods would affirm them more than the God of Israel.

When We Forget Who we are in God it leads to Sin, a lack of Faith, Idol Worship in different forms and a failure walk in the Promises of God.

 A Lack of Biblical Identity is Often the Source of Much of Our Worry. Often in Our Relationship With God We Miss Basic Fundamentals Regarding Who we Are In God.

**10 He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. 11 He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. 12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— 13 children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God. (John 1:10-13)**

**Romans 8:14-16**

**14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, “Abba! Father!” 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God;**

 **WE ARE THE CHILDREN OF GOD.**

**REFLECTION**: Speaking from a personal standpoint, in what ways and situations do you forget who you are in God and allow worry to enter in?

Jesus Speaks on Worry

**25 “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? 26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?**

Jesus Speaks Here Dealing with three areas of basic Human need- Food, Future and Fashion. He Said Don’t worry about what you will eat Don’t Worry about your future. Don’t worry about fashion, what you are going to wear. In verse 26-30, Jesus employs a particular kind of argument called a fortiori—an argument that moved from lesser to greater. Jesus begins with the lesser when he says that our heavenly Father takes care of birds and grass. Then he moves to the greater when he says our heavenly Father takes care of us. His point is clear: do not worry because if God takes care of lesser creatures like birds or smaller parts of creation like flowers, how much more is He going to take care of the ones made in his image. Look at the FOWLS OF THE AIR: There are over 8,000 species of birds? Who feeds them? God!

**Job 38:41**

**Who provides food for the raven when its young cry out to God and wander about for lack of food?**

**Psalm 147:9**

**He provides food for the cattle and for the young ravens when they call.**

Look at the Flowers of the Field

**28 “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. 29 Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. 30 If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? 31 So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’**

Yet for all their beauty and diversity, Christ did not die for a single bird. He died for you. Will He not then take care of you? Are you not much better than a bird or a flower?

 Notice how Jesus refers to God throughout the text—as our heavenly Father. The image casts us as God's children. Children aren't prone to worry, because they assume their parents will take care of them.

**Example**: No child thinks, How is the mortgage going to get paid today? They give no thought to whether or not they are going to eat or how the mortgage or car payments are going to be paid. They trust that their parents are going to take care of it. Jesus says: Your heavenly Father knows your needs. Do you think the layoff at work was a surprise? He knows your needs. Do you think the health scare caught him off guard? He knows your needs. Trust him!

**Psalm 8:1-5 New International Version**

**Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!**

**You have set your glory in the heavens. Through the praise of children and infants you have established a stronghold against your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger. 3 When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, 4 what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them? 5 You have made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honor.**

**IF GOD WILL TAKE CARE OF THEM HE WILL SURELY TAKE CARE OF ME. I DON’T HAVE TO WORRY WHEN I KNOW WHO I AM.**

**Ambassadors For Christ, Accepted in the Beloved, Branches in Christ the Vine, Citizens of heaven, Disciple of Christ , Elect ones of God, Friends of Christ, His Garden and His Glory**

**Heirs of God and Joint heirs with Christ His Instruments “Sanctified and meet for the Master’s use,” His Precious Jewels priceless to Him, Kings, Queens and Priest, His Lights in a Dark World, Members of Christ’s body, New Creatures in Christ Jesus, Pilgrims and strangers, Redeemed ones, The Temple of God, Undefiled, Vessels of mercy, Worshippers.**

**1 Peter 2:9**

**9 But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light;**

**Exercise:** Peruse the list of names that the Bible identifies as ours and share which names being you the most comfort.

**II. WORRY IS USELESS**

There is an important difference between worry and constructive concern. Between Worry and Concern- (Less we get the impression that we should float through life with no concerns) For example, We should be constructively concerned to maintain our physical health but not worry about it. The following contrasting attitudes help illustrate the difference between these:

* Worry paralyzes, while concern motivates
* Worry prevents initiative, while concern promotes initiative
* Worry results in anxious fretting, while concern results in calm focusing
* Worry fears the worst, while concern hopes for the best.

 The New Testament word for worry is translated by the phrase to take thought or to be careful. The word comes from a Greek word which means to have a divided mind. So to be a worrier is to have our mind divided between **legitimate** thoughts and thoughts which are not legitimate, thoughts which we shouldn't be thinking. As Common as Worry is it is a Pure Waste of Time

**v. 27 “Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life.?”**

**“Worrying is like sitting in a rocking chair. It gives you something to do but it doesn’t get you anywhere.”**

**“Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, it empties today of its strength.” ― Corrie Ten Boom**

**Worry is interest paid on trouble before it comes due. (William Inge)**

In essence, worry itself is concern over the future. A person who worries dwells on the future, and the problem with that is twofold.

 1. Number one, the future is not here

 2. The future is not ours. We can't do anything about it and there's not one thing that worrying does that will change that.

The worrier cannot control the future. He does not know what it's going to look like. Only God sees the shape of it and according to the Bible, worry is concern over the unknown and the uncontrollable future.

 The following statistics on worry demonstrate its futility:

* Forty percent of what we worry about never comes to pass.
* Thirty percent of what we worry about happened in the past and can't be changed.
* Ten percent of what we worry about relates to health. (What's both funny and sad is that researchers have proven that worry actually makes your health worse not better!)
* Eight percent of worry is legitimate, but even then, your worrying about it won't change it!

 Our worry will not make the loan go through. Worry never paid a bill. Worry will not make you pregnant or “unpregnant. worry will not get rid of the sickness. Jesus is telling us in this passage that our worry is useless

**ILLUSTRATION**: For several years a woman had been having trouble getting to sleep at night because she feared burglars. One night her husband heard a noise in the house, so he went downstairs to investigate. When he got there, he did find a burglar. "Good evening," said the man of the house. "I am pleased to see you. Come upstairs and meet my wife. She has been waiting 10 years to meet you."

**REFLECTION:** Have we ever sat and considered how futile worry really is or is this reality something we never think about because worry seems like such a natural response?

**IF I CHOSE TO BE A WORRY WARRIOR I AM A FIGHTER WITHOUT A CAUSE. BUT WHEN I AM A PRAYER WARRIOR!! I AM FIGHTING FOR MY SANITY, MY CHILDREN, MY INHERITANCE**

**Jeremiah 17:7, “But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream.”**

**Philippians 4:5-7**

**5 Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. 6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**

**1 Peter 5:7**

**7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.**

**When I can’t sleep instead of counting sheep I talk to the sheperd**

 **LEAVE THE WORRY FOR THE PAGANS**

**V. 32 ”For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them."**

Worry is symptomatic of how unbelievers act. Jesus is saying that the lives of those who couldn't care less about him are dominated by earthly treasure and therefore worry. When we worry about our jobs, our health, our money, our mortgage loans, our kids' schools, our cars, and our clothes, we're acting like the world. To be dominated by worry is essentially to show is that our ultimate hope is not in a loving, caring Father, but in the things of this world.

**The Story Behind His Eye is on the Sparrow**

Civilla Martin was born in Nova Scotia in 1866. Her husband was an evangelist who traveled all over the United States. She accompanied him and they worked together on most of the musical arrangements that were sung. In 1904 Civilla was visiting an ill, bedridden friend. Although discouraged and sick, her friend remembered that God, her Heavenly Father, was watching over each little sparrow and would certainly watch after her. Matthew 10:29-31: "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.” Mrs. Martin was a poet and thought this would be a perfect idea for a poem. She jotted down the idea and by the end of the day, had completed "His Eye is On The Sparrow”.The entire poem was sent to a well-known composer of that day, Charles Gabriel. His lovely music has carried it all around the world in small churches and great crusades.

 **His Eye is on the Sparrow Lyrics**

His Eye is On The Why should I feel discouraged, why should the shadows come, Why should my heart be lonely, and long for heaven and home,
When Jesus is my portion? My constant friend is He: His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me;

I sing because I’m happy, I sing because I’m free, For His eye is on the sparrow, And I know He watches me.

“Let not your heart be troubled,” His tender word I hear, And resting on His goodness, I lose my doubts and fears; Though by the path He leadeth, but one step I may see;
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me;

Whenever I am tempted, whenever clouds arise,
When songs give place to sighing, when hope within me dies,
I draw the closer to Him, from care He sets me free;
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me;
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.

I sing because I’m happy, I sing because I’m free, For His eye is on the sparrow, And I know He watches me.