



VILLAGE BIBLE CHURCH
SUGAR GROVE CAMPUS



Don't Worry... Trust Jesus

Tim Badal | March 30, 2014 | Matthew 6:25-34

The Upside-down Kingdom Series, Lessons Learned from the Sermon on the Mount, Part 24

Let's continue our four-part series entitled "Upside-down Aspirations." We've been studying the Sermon on the Mount and looking at how Jesus has been teaching us to turn our lives upside-down for Him and for His glory. This three-chapter sermon is one of the greatest sermons ever preached because it's preached by Jesus. Jesus has been teaching us about a myriad of issues, topics and subject matters. All of them encompass a totality of who we are as human beings in our human existence.

Jesus has taught us about our relationship with God and how we are to relate to Him as our Father in Heaven. He's taught us how we are to relate to one another and show humility, love and compassion. We will continue to learn more about the importance of serving and loving others as we ourselves would want to be loved. He also has taught us about our relationship with ourselves. As we look at our aspirations in this fourth part of the series, we see Jesus focusing on this relationship with ourselves. He teaches us about the things we long for and desire.

Here's the problem with our relationship with ourselves: we are quick to deceive ourselves and it is very easily done. Many of us think we're doing quite well as followers of Jesus Christ. We think we are meeting the mark of righteousness that Christ has called us to when in fact we're missing it. At the end of chapter six and into chapter seven, Jesus repeatedly reminds us that we are in fact missing the mark. He does so by reminding us of our aspirations. Jesus asks, "Who is first place—number one—in your life?"

We learned last week that money can't be it. The stuff of this world can't be on that gold-medal stand—it has to be Christ; it has to be Him and His kingdom and His righteousness. Last week we learned about money and the stuff of this world. This week we're going to learn about the issue of worry and anxiety, how that is a litmus test to what is truly leading us and guiding us.

We learned last time that our treasure tells us where our hearts are. Today we're looking at how a spirit of worry and anxiety in the believer testifies to the lack of faith and trust in the God Whom you profess. Maybe you already have sung the praises of God saying, "He is greater and more powerful than all things." Maybe you sang about how He is the One Who has taken care of our sins in the past and one glorious day will bring everything under His feet. We may pronounce these things but if worry and anxiety are part of our lives it nullifies the singing of those songs because we are not living out those truths in our hearts.

Our text today repeatedly articulates this truth as followers of Jesus Christ: don't worry or be anxious; trust Jesus. I know there are many things to worry about; we could spend an hour just going around to everyone and talking about the things that are bothering us.

Right now, some of you are just looking at the clock knowing that tomorrow is coming and bringing with it that deadline, issue, struggle or other thing that continues to bother you. Where are you going to come up with the money? Where are you going to come up with the time and energy to address it? It's driving you crazy. Today God wants us to hear Him say, "Don't worry. Trust me."

Let's look at God's Word. We are in Matthew 6:25-34. Let's hear what Christ has to say to us in this passage:

²⁵ "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? ²⁸ And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, ²⁹ yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰ But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? ³¹ Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³² For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. ³⁴ "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Father God, we pray Your blessing on the reading, preaching, hearing and applying of Your Word. Empower the preacher and the hearers for we come to a text that is true for far too many of us. Let us cast our anxieties on You because You care for us, knowing that You are the One Who provides and the One Who gives all that we need. Let us be content with that as we look to creation and are reminded of Your providential care. Let us place ourselves in Your hands and turn away this enemy of worry. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

There are three points I want to look at as we examine this issue of anxiety and worry:

We Must Identify Our Foe

We Must Encounter Worry Face-to-Face

We Must Fight Worry to Prevent Failure

1. We Must Identify Our Foe

Upon entering the ring, a good boxer takes a moment to size up his opponent. When he looks across the ring, it causes nothing but anxiety and worry! A massive foe is before him.

As we enter the ring in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, He brings before us an opponent—a competitor or enemy—who cannot possibly be viewed as small. Worry is not unique to any one of us in particular. It is a universal trait. Worry and anxiety affect all of us whether we're young or old, male or female, rich or poor, healthy or unhealthy. Surveys tell us more about this issue concerning anxiety and worry. Doctors tell us that half of America's hospitalized people are there because of worry or concern. Forty-three percent of all adults suffer from health problems due to worry and stress. These include problems such as heart disease, cancer, lung ailments, accidents, cirrhosis and even suicide.

On a lesser level, worry and anxiety affect our job performances. An estimated one million Americans will be absent from work tomorrow because of worry-related complaints. It is said that worry is responsible for more than half—that's 275 million—work days that are lost annually in America because of absenteeism. Forty-three percent of all employee turnovers are related to anxiety and worry in the job.

Who can forget the mental distress caused by worry? Add to the list mental fatigue from nights without sleep or days without peace and you get a glimpse of the havoc worry and anxiety play in destroying the quality and length of our lives.

The sad reality is that far too many Christians are trapped in this mindset of worry and anxiety. This is not good for the people of God, for children of the King. You would think Jesus would just yell at us, "Stop doing this!" But here's what Jesus does: He lovingly calls us to stop living life the way the world does. He asks, calls and commands us to start living in light of Who He is and what He has done for us.

We may know these truths in our heads, but they have not been embraced by our entire being. We need to understand a few things as we approach these issues of worry and anxiety:

1. The definition – Webster defines worry as "the state of anxiety or uncertainty over actual or potential problems." That's a good definition. But the Bible gives us a deeper and more robust understanding of this enemy. The Bible reminds us that worry (*merimnaō*) literally means "to take thought of, to consider." That sounds benign and not too bad. But it goes further than that because it speaks of considering two things at the same time. That means worry is always a double-minded thought or attitude.
2. Its double-minded nature – If we are double-minded because we are worrying, then we are living in contradiction to the Word of God. Jesus just told us in the last passage that we can't serve two masters. Worrying focuses on the uncontrollable and unknown instead of dealing with the things that are right before you. So you find yourself divided. Jesus says, "You can't do that. You're either going to serve the master of worry or you're going to serve Me."

James 1:7-8 tells us that the double-minded man is unstable in all he does. Think back to the last time you were anxious or worried about something. How unstable were you that the circumstances of life could take away your joy, rob you of your peace and destroy your hope?

When we worry, we try to live in the future, which is impossible because it is not here and it is not ours. We're trying to deal with something that isn't here right now. We can't grab hold of the future. Jesus makes this clear. Nobody knows what a day might bring. And the future isn't ours. God has not given us ownership of the future.

So when we worry, we're dealing with two things we can't touch. When Jesus tells us not to worry, He is saying there is nothing that any amount of worrying will do to affect what's concerning you at this moment. There's nothing. You can't change it; you can't fix it. It's in the future. Jesus is reminding us that the future is both unknown and uncontrollable for human beings. So we have a choice: either we can worry or we can trust Jesus.

This passage tells us that the Gentiles—the unbelievers—have made their choice. They're going to worry. They're going to allow their hairs to grow white or to fall out of their heads. But that's not the right choice for the believer. The believer must choose to trust Jesus.

Vance Havner—in his own unique wit—once said that worrying is like a rocking chair: it always gives you something to do but you never get anywhere. That's true. Do you remember the story of Corrie ten Boom and her family? They had much to worry about as they were pursued by the S.S. troops in Nazi Germany. She said, "Worry is an old man who's carrying around a load of feathers thinking they are lead." What feathers have you allowed to become lead in your life? What issues? What struggles? What concerns have you allowed to go from a healthy place to an unhealthy one? Worry goes from being a normal experience in life to something that interferes with all areas of our lives.

Worry becomes a fog in our lives and we can't get a handle on it. We can't figure it out. We can't bring understanding, logic or rational thought around it. The devil absolutely loves it when you're worried. He wants you to become disoriented. He wants you to become lost in your own thoughts of anxiety and worry.

But God has called us not to live that way. He's called us to be victorious. He's called us to be active in our ministry for Him. So as we look to God's Word, we need pray that He would open our eyes to the worries that we have. We need to name them, set them out and say, "This is a worry that I have. This is an anxiety I struggle with and I'm not going to worry about it anymore." When we give that over to God, we'll be able to do what God has called us to do: seek first His kingdom and pursue it first in our lives.

In order to understand what we need to get rid of and what we are to keep, we need to look at some disclaimers. We have to rule some things out as we look at the foe of worry and anxiety.

Worry Doesn't Involve Contemplation

We see the phrase, "*Do not be anxious*," three times in our text. What does God mean? Does that mean we can't have any concerns for the future? Does that mean we should do no planning or thinking about what we are going to do?

Many people have assumed that is what this passage was saying. One reason why is because the King James Version translates verse 34 this way, "*Take therefore no thought for the morrow*." Because of that some preachers say, "Any thoughts or plans about tomorrow are unspiritual and unbiblical."

But as we look through Scripture, we find out that the God Whom we've come to know has planned all things from the beginning of creation to the very end of human history and all of eternity. God has those things all planned.

Jesus spent His entire ministry living out the plans of His Father in Heaven. His crucifixion, burial, resurrection and even His ascension were all according to the plans prepared by God the Father. We also know that Jesus prepared and planned for His disciples eventually to take over the ministry He would give them.

In [Luke 14:28-33](#) Jesus speaks of the wisdom that comes when a man who is building a tower or a king who is going into battle plans accordingly and is ready for all contingencies. He likens that to our own thoughtful and careful understanding and pursuit of discipleship as we follow Him.

So as we approach this issue of worry and anxiety it's not speaking against planning. It's not a sin to have insurance, to plan for retirement or to have hopes and dreams. So what is it?

Worry Doesn't Involve Being Concerned

Let's look at something else worry is not. It doesn't mean we don't have concerns. It's very good for us to be concerned about things like our families, our well-being or what is happening in the world. It is good to stop and take pause. It's even okay for us to allow those concerns to help guide our decisions about tomorrow. In fact I would say there is a real lack of concern in our life for the world evangelically. In America, we tend to think that we are guaranteed a tomorrow just like today with the same job, health, family and comforts. Yet Jesus tells us repeatedly that we don't know what tomorrow might bring.

There is a difference between healthy concern and unhealthy worry and anxiety. Jesus Himself showed concern when He was on the cross. He was concerned for His mother's well-being. While hanging on the cross, Jesus looked down at John and [said](#), "Behold your mother and mother behold your son." Jesus was concerned about His mother's well-being. As a good son He wanted to make sure his mother was ministered to, nurtured and cared for as she advanced in years. So he told one of His youngest disciples to take care of her, minister to her and be her provider.

Jesus showed care and concern. He was not going against His words about worry. He wasn't anxious; He was concerned.

Worry Involves Being Conflicted

So then what do we know about this issue of worry and anxiety? It begins by being conflicted. [James 1:6](#) tells us that when we are double-minded we are like a wave driven and tossed by the wind. That begs the question, "Are the things that you're concerned about what is driving you?" Are they tossing you back and forth? Are they playing with your emotions? Are those worries bringing thoughts of great anxiety into your life? Are you using godly sense and Scripture? Or are the circumstances of life what are leading you in this world? Worry causes us to be conflicted.

Worry Can Lead to Being Consumed

Here's the thing: worry and anxiety don't just stay in a conflicted spot. You cannot serve two masters so you cannot go back and forth from one to the other. No, you'll hate the one and love the other. When we give ourselves to worry and anxiety it causes us to be consumed. Whatever you're facing—whatever plans

or things you're concerned about—when that begins to consume your thoughts you have fallen into the sin of worry. It doesn't matter how noble, grand or spiritual they may be.

Worry is a failure to understand God's provision and protection for us and His promise for us as His children. For the Christian worry takes away our hope, steals our joy and destroys our peace.

2. We Must Encounter Worry Face-to-Face

Did you know the Bible talks about worry and anxiety 22 different times? In every one of those instances it's never in a good light. You cannot worry and honor God. You cannot be anxious and please the God Whom you serve.

So then the question we must ask is, "How do we deal with it?" The answer is we must encounter this enemy of worry face-to-face. Once we've brought worry into focus we need to step up and ask the question, "What can worry do to the life of the believer?" If we don't deal with anxiety and worry we'll suffer loss. Jesus tells us three things that will happen when worry and anxiety lead us and guide us.

Worry Causes Us to Be Unfaithful to Our Focus

So we've seen Jesus say three times in our text, *"Do not be anxious."* Why is that? Because anxiety or worry causes us to be unfaithful to our focus. Notice what Jesus says in verse 25, *"Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?"*

Jesus is reminding us of a truth we learned from our last passage. Let's go back and look at what Jesus says in verses 19-21:

"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Jesus is telling us, "If you're worried about what you eat, drink or wear then you're worried about earthly treasures. You're concerned about things that can be destroyed or taken away from you." That's not what our focus should be! That's not our purpose in life. We were not brought here to worry about such things. No, we were brought here for something greater than worrying about day-to-day provisions: we are here to pursue the kingdom of God.

We're not to store up treasures on earth but treasures in heaven. That's what we are here for: the eternal not the temporal. Jesus says, "If you're worried about the day in and day out circumstances of life, then you have built your life around treasures on earth not treasures in heaven."

Maybe you're thinking, "Why do you keep going back to the past passage?" It is because Jesus begins this passage with the word *"therefore."* We have to connect this passage to what it was there for; we have to connect back to the preceding passage.

Jesus is saying, "If you want to know whether you're pursuing earthly treasures or eternal treasures, then ask yourself, 'Who's your master? Who or what are you worried about?'" A spiritually minded person is worried about his God in Heaven. An earthly minded person is worried about the circumstances here on earth. So what worries you the most? What gives you the most anxiety? If it's things of this world then your master is this world. If it's the things of God then your Master is God in Heaven. We're going to choose one or the other. Worry is a great reminder which one we have chosen.

Now you may say, "Tim, my worries are small. They don't happen very often. They're only the small things of life." But notice what Jesus says, "*Do not be anxious about your life.*" The Greek word for life is *psychē*. It gives a picture of the all-inclusive everything of life. So Jesus is saying that you can't worry about anything in this world. Nothing. Stop being anxious about anything this world may have. If you are thinking, "That's a bit harsh, isn't it?" then maybe you are seeing the things of this world as more important than the things of God.

God wants us to do what Christ is teaching us here. He's saying, "Take your focus off the earthly things. Stop that. Don't go there. Put your focus on My kingdom and My righteousness." Brothers and sisters, you're going to have to choose between those. You're going to have to choose, "Am I going to worry about my life, work, marriage, job and money or am I going to worry about the kingdom of God and put my attention and focus there?"

How ironic that our word for anxiety or worry comes from an old Latin term that literally means to strangle or to choke. Many of us are being strangled in our seeking of the kingdom of God because we're worried about the things of this world. We're worried and anxious about what will come. Many of us have given up our service to God in service to our worries.

Here's what it comes down to: who is your master? Who is your lord? Are you going to serve your worries? Because when you worry, you kick Jesus off the throne and put yourself on the throne. You say, "God, You can't deal with it so I will." We need to spend much more time in the church teaching about the Lordship of Jesus Christ. He's in charge.

I have struggled with worry. As a younger man I was a perpetual worrier. There was much to worry about: I was a new husband, a new father, a new business manager and a new church leader and pastor. Now you know why I'm bald today and the very few hairs I have left are gray. I had a lot on my mind. I used to lay awake at night thinking, "What if this or that happens? What are we going to do if this or that takes place?" The "what ifs" absolutely killed me as a young man.

One time in the middle of the night I was just filled with anxiety, concern and worry. I began flipping through Scripture and I came upon 1 Chronicles 29:11-15. I will never forget the truths I learned from this passage and how it changed me. Let me read it to you and then I will go back to different points and tell you what I've learned about my worry. Here's what 1 Chronicles 29:11-15 says:

Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In

your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all. And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name.

“But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you. For we are strangers before you and sojourners, as all our fathers were. Our days on the earth are like a shadow, and there is no abiding.

Here are three things I learned from this passage:

1. God is the Owner of all things. Look at verse 11, *“Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours.”* I don’t have to be a Hebrew scholar to understand that means God is the Owner of all things. Everything in Heaven and on earth is God’s. So if He owns it then it’s His responsibility. It’s His issue, His struggle. He’s the One Who has to deal with it.

Last summer I had to talk with one of my employees about how he was doing his job. It was really bothering me that I had to talk with him because he was actually doing a good job—too good of a job. He was trying to do my job. He was worrying about the things that I needed to deal with instead of concerning himself with what he needed to do.

Some of us have forgotten that God is the Owner. We’ve given in to the thought that we have to do and worry about things that are His concern. When we worry about the future, about other people and about circumstances that are out of our control, we kick God out of His throne and say, “I’ll deal with it.”

But God says, “Hey, I’m the Owner. I’m the One Who owns Heaven, earth and everything in it so stop doing my job. There’s a reason why I’m God and you’re not.” When we try to do God’s job we will never do our job. Many of us are not seeking the kingdom of God and His righteousness because we’re trying to do His job.

2. God is the Ruler of all things. The passage goes on, *“Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all. Both riches and honor come from you, and you rule over all. In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and to give strength to all.”* I learned that not only is God the Owner of all things but the Ruler as well. He’s in charge. He’s going to do things as He wills, so I need to stop worrying. If God’s in charge and owns everything then I just need to focus on my purpose: seeking the greatness of God, exalting Him, worshipping Him day and night and not worrying.
3. God is the Provider of all things. The passage continues, *“And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name [Our job is to seek first the kingdom]. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly?”* How is it that I can seek His kingdom and righteousness? Because everything comes from His hands and we have given Him only that what comes from His hand.

God is the Owner, the Ruler and the Provider. When we worry we show contempt for the idea that God is each of these things. So God asks us, "Why do you worry? I own it all, I rule it all and I've given you everything that you need."

That night I began asking the question, "Then what in the world is there to worry about?" If this is my God then the only thing I am called to do is honor and exalt His holy name. When I worry I cannot do that.

Worry Is Unnecessary because of Our Father

As we get into the text, Jesus gives some examples that should make it very clear to us how unnecessary worry is. My children understand these examples and yet we miss them all the time. Notice what Jesus says in [verses 26-32](#):

Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all."

Jesus uses examples that are greater to lesser and lesser to greater. He is saying, "You're more important to me than the birds of the air." I wonder if Jesus looked up and saw some birds in the air when He was preaching this part of the passage. Birds were small in the grand economy of Jesus' day. You could buy five birds for two coins. That's rather inconsequential.

Then Jesus moved on to the lilies of the field. Maybe He pointed out to the valley or the side of the mountain where they were sitting and said, "Look at the lilies! Look how beautiful they are. These small things—the lilies and the birds—don't worry or have anxiety. Why don't they? Because they know God is the Owner, Ruler and Provider."

Jesus goes on to tell us, "And here you are, mankind: the king of creation. God has indwelt you with His Spirit. He's given you knowledge. He's given you emotion. He's given you all of this. You are far grander than the lilies of the field or the birds of the air and yet you worry. Don't you see the things I give these lesser creatures? I don't love them an ounce in comparison with how much I love you or provide for you."

When we worry and are anxious we are an affront to our Father. Let me illustrate this. My eight-year-old son Joshua has some sort of hunger-related blood sugar issue. We haven't figured out yet what to do about it; no doctor will prescribe a medicine for it and we wish they'd come up with something. But when Joshua is hungry, it becomes an issue of "I will pour out my wrath and indignation on all around me." That's his issue.

This last week, we were riding in the car and it was lunchtime. Joshua announced, "Dad, I'm hungry."

I answered, "Son, I know. We're going to find a place to eat."

He said, "But Dad, I'm hungry now."

I replied, "Yes, I understand son. I know it is lunchtime. We will get something to eat."

Joshua said, "But don't you care about me, Dad? Don't you know how hungry I am? I've never been this hungry in my entire life!"

Here's the thing: he's telling the truth. That's how hungry the kid is. He said, "Dad, it's been so long since we ate breakfast and it wasn't even that good of a breakfast."

I said, "Son, your father knows. I get it. I've heard you. I know what time it is. I know how long it's been since breakfast."

He said, "But Dad, you're not doing anything about it."

Then I reminded him, "Son, have you ever gone hungry?"

He responded, "Never before today."

Here's the foolishness of my son's arguments. He knows he's going to eat. If he would just look back on previous experiences, he would know that his father has provided food and drink for him. He's never gone hungry. He's been clothed. He has everything he needs. When we choose to worry and be anxious, we forget the goodness of God in our lives.

On my trip I had to learn how to receive. We went to visit my uncle. My uncle is an incredibly generous man. We used some reward miles to travel down there. But when we got down there my uncle said, "Put your wallet away. I don't want to see it out again." My uncle took us to wonderful places to eat. He has his own family to provide for as well, but every time the bill came I'd pull out my wallet and he'd get offended with me, "Put your wallet away. I'm hosting you."

As time went on, I was worried because I was thinking, "Man, this is what I owe my uncle. I have to figure out how to take care of this debt."

Then my uncle said, "You're in my state now. It's all on me. Your job here is to relax and enjoy." Like my own son in the backseat of the car, I had to remember that I was in someone else's care.

We're on God's planet and He has taken the responsibility on Himself to take care of all our needs. We need to stop worrying about how we're going to figure it out or take care of it in the end. God is saying, "Hey, you're on my planet. You're on my clock. You're on my time. I have one thing for you. Your job is to seek My kingdom and My righteousness. Don't worry about anything else."

That's why it's unnecessary for us to worry. We have a Father Who loves us, provides for us and wants to take care of us. We have nothing to worry about because of our Father in Heaven.

Worry Is Unreasonable because of Our Faith

Verses 30-32 say that the Gentiles—everybody who doesn't trust in Christ—have much about which to worry. Did you know your neighbors have much to worry them? They have to endure this life without having a relationship with our Father in Heaven. That means they have many worries. What will happen when they take their last breath? We have the solace that absent from the body we are present with our Lord. There is no need for us to worry. What can man do to us if God is with us? If God is for us then who in the world can be against us?

In verses 30-32, Jesus is saying that it is unnecessary, unfaithful and absolutely unreasonable for us to worry because of the God Whom we serve. We will never be able to evangelize in our world if we're worried about things. The gospel is that which takes away all our worries. So when people see Christians they should not hear, "I'm really worried about this. What's going to happen here and there? Oh my, what are we going to do?" Why not? Because we have a big God Who takes care of all that. He's the God Who says, "I want you to hurl your anxieties and worries onto me because I care for you."

What care do you have that you're unwilling to give to Jesus? Give it to Him and rejoice in the fact that you have a God Who knows you, loves you and provides for you. That is what makes us different from the world around us. We have Someone Who is on our side and says, "You don't need to worry."

3. We Must Fight Worry to Prevent Failure

So how do we do fight this enemy? We have to fight worry to prevent failure. If you don't get this down you will fail in this life because you will be more concerned about your worries than about honoring God. So what do you need to do?

Declare a System of Priorities

It begins by declaring, "I'm going to do what verse 33 says and seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness." When worry comes, my only goal is to say, "God, I'm not going to worry about that. I'm just going to serve and honor You. I'm going to give You my life and live according to that. You give and You take away. Blessed be the name of the Lord! I am not going to worry about it."

Christ teaches us that when we put Him and His kingdom first, He doesn't abandon us to our concerns. He doesn't say, "Just don't worry about your silly concerns. Just try to think good thoughts and then you won't have any worries." No. He says, "When you put Me in the right spot I'll take care of the rest." So the only thing we need to be worried about is honoring God.

When we honor God we won't need to worry about anything else. When you serve your master well you don't need to be concerned. You have one job to do.

I always tell my children, "Kids, you have one job: obey Mom and Dad. The rest is taken care of—just obey Mom and Dad. If you do that, then your first 18 years are going to go really well for you. If you don't, then it's going to be really hard for you."

Christians, the only thing we have to worry about is honoring God and putting Christ first. First, first and first. When we do that God says, "I'll take care of the rest." But we have to be willing to set up that system of priorities in our lives. Until you do so, you'll be dealing with these worries on your own.

Develop a Strategic Program

Verse 34 says, *"Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."* So how do we set up a strategic program? It's not enough just to say, "God, You're going to be number one." How do we begin to do that?

1. Don't dwell on tomorrow's stress. Some of you are worried about tomorrow. You're worried about that test, that deadline or that check that's going to go though and there's not enough money to cover it. You're worried about all of those things. But you can't dwell on that.
2. Don't dwell on yesterday's mess. Some of you are looking back at last week's garbage and you're dwelling on that. It's in the past. That which is in the past is in the past and that which is in the future is in the future.

So what in the world do we as Christians do? Here is the main point of the program that you need to understand. It is simple: worry about nothing; pray about everything.

You might ask, "Tim, where did you get that?" My friend Paul told me, "Don't be anxious about anything." What falls under the word "anything"? Anything and everything; it's all-inclusive. It means whatever's bothering you, concerning you, vexing you or causing you pain and sorrow. Stop being anxious about it; stop worrying about it.

So then what am I supposed to do with those concerns? Pray about them. Paul says in Philippians 4:6, *"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."*

If you're worried about something then you aren't praying about it. If you want to get rid of worry, you need to start praying. Maybe you're thinking, "That's too hard." Well, you need to choose. You can die in your worries or give it to God.

What does God promise in that famous Philippian passage? Paul says, *"And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."*

When we worry, we need to find peace. That is when worries will go away. We don't have to wait for things to turn out "okay" for our worries to go away. God says, "Even before you know if those things are going to turn out to be okay or not I'm going to give you peace. It's going to transcend all understanding. You may have the world coming down upon you but I'm going to give you My peace. You're going to be at peace with these things. I know that worry is a difficult enemy so I'm going to guard your hearts and your minds."

Why does God promise to guard our hearts and minds? Because those are the two things that worry attacks. Worry attacks our hearts and minds and it trips us up. God says, "I'm going to give you the peace that transcends all that and it's going to guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

If you're going to worry about something it'd be better for you as a Christian to give it over to Jesus and pray about it. That means we need to get on our knees and say, "Lord, You know I'm concerned about this but I'm giving it to You. I'm going to allow You to be responsible because You're the One Who owns it, rules it and provides for it. So I'm giving it to You."

What are you worried about today? What's concerning you? What's causing you anxiety? Is it a health report? Is it a job? Is it your money? Is it your family member? Is it a bad marriage? Is it a broken relationship? What is it? Whatever it is, give it to God. Even if it casts a large shadow over your life don't let it rob you of your sleep and fill your days with pain and sorrow.

Paul says that we are to give everything to God. Peter says God cares for us. He's our Father. That needs to be our only focus. He is the Author and Perfector of our faith and He's the only One Who can take away our anxiety and replace it with peace.

So give it to Him. Let Him guard your heart and mind with the peace of God. Are you going to worry or are you going to trust Jesus? You need to make a decision. Tomorrow has plenty to worry about so you better make the decision now so that you can honor Him even when the worries come.

Let's pray.

Father God, we ask that You would go before us into this world of anxiety, worry and stress. We ask that You would put the truth of this passage in our hearts. Every time we see a bird or flower, remind us that we don't need to worry. Remind us that Your mercies are new each morning and that You are faithful. Remind us of this so that when tomorrow's worries come we can say, "Lord, whatever You have for me I will trust and obey You and You alone."

Lord, I know the worries that are on my friends' hearts and minds are big. I know they're no small thing because they wouldn't be worrying about it if they weren't. So take these big things out of our lives. Let us cast them on You knowing that You are more than able to accomplish what concerns us today, tomorrow and the day after tomorrow. Help us to focus on the one thing that You have for us: to seek with all our hearts after Your kingdom and Your righteousness. We know what our marching orders are and we know what we can't take our worries and anxieties into battle with us. So we give them to You knowing You are able to handle them. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.