

Why Should I Be Worried?

I don't know about you, but I have more than a few things to worry about. Some big, some small. Some short term, some long term. A few things I have some control over and others that I have no control over. On top of that, I receive emails filled with details about additional things to worry about as if I should join the sender in their concern. There are a lot of things to worry about.

Can you relate?

If I choose to, I could worry about my car falling apart, my yard that needs mowing, a project that is really late, bills that are behind, the lack of money that is coming in and the fact that I have no health care. Oh, but that's not all. I could also worry about my office that is a mess, or that many people, friends of mine, who struggle with little income and worse circumstances than I. While I'm at it I could also worry about our state and federal governments and everything else that is madness in the world.

My friends, all that I've listed here are genuinely a part of my reality.

Now I know that many of you have even longer lists than I. Some of you might be tempted to say "big deal, you think you've got problems, take a look at my list!" What I find fascinating is that I know people with long lists with poor circumstances that worry less than people with shorter lists and seemingly smaller issues.

Lessons I've learned

With this knowledge I draw these conclusions:

1. Our worries and concerns are relative and in no way can be compared with someone else's. People

that live an “easier life” should not be put down or their problems minimized because they don’t “compare” to mine. Who am I to judge?

2. It really is a choice to worry, but harder for some to break. I’ve been told by people that their mother worried so it became a learned habit for them, or even maybe a genetic trait, I don’t know.
3. Some people can hide it well and some people wear it on their sleeve. Appearances can be deceiving, people don’t always “have it altogether” as you may think.
4. Everyone’s worried about something, in various degrees. Everyone also has something to be thankful for. (Read Psalm 103)

What amazes me is that I can be out doing anything and can be in a cheerful mood when I suddenly have a worrisome thought enter my mind. If I ruminate (Beth’s word, not mine) on these thoughts without considering the sovereignty of God and His plans and purposes for my life then I’m left hopeless. It is that simple. Without God, there is no hope. If I fail to acknowledge my Creator then my cheerful mood quickly turns to despair.

1 Thessalonians 5: ¹⁶ Always be joyful. ¹⁷ Never stop praying. ¹⁸ Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.

Nothing substitutes our time spent with God

This is just one reason why it is essential to spend time with God daily in prayer, His Word, and spiritually charged fellowship regularly if we want any hope of having a joyful life regardless of the circumstances.

I think worry or fear is the absence of or lack of faith. Is God truly sovereign? Is He in control? Does He want what’s

best for me?

Based on this passage from Psalm 112 I think the measure that someone worries is an indicator of how well they know their God, personally and/or intellectually.

Psalm 112:

¹ *Praise the Lord!*

*How joyful are those who fear the Lord
and delight in obeying his commands.*

...

⁶ *Such people will not be overcome by evil.
Those who are righteous will be long remembered.*

⁷ *They do not fear bad news;
they confidently trust the Lord to care for them.*

⁸ *They are confident and fearless
and can face their foes triumphantly.*

This passage in 1 John says it well:

1 John 4:¹⁶ *We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love.*

God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them. ¹⁷ And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect. So we will not be afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face him with confidence because we live like Jesus here in this world.

¹⁸ *Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced his perfect love.*

ALL things work together...

One thing that I've found is that God allows us to experience

“rough spots” so that we learn to depend on Him more (which is what He desires most):

Romans 8: ²⁸ And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

And He stretches and matures us through the process:

Romans 5: ³ We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. 4 And endurance develops strength of character, and character strengthens our confident hope of salvation. 5 And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.

Knowing this should excite us and then we can really shout with joy.

It tells us that there really is a purpose and that we'll be better witnesses on the other end.

“Hard times”, when allowing God to work with us (remaining submissive), yields patience, compassion, joy, understanding, and perseverance. There are things you learn through difficulties that you simply cannot learn otherwise. Do you remember the book of Job?

Job was blameless from the beginning.

Job 1: ⁸ Then the Lord asked Satan, “Have you noticed my servant Job? He is the finest man in all the earth. He is blameless—a man of complete integrity. He fears God and stays away from evil.”

He naturally went through a great period of despair. When God

finally reveals Himself to Job He sets Job straight by making it abundantly clear that He is God and Job is not. What I think is really cool is how God showcased His creation to illustrate just how great He is. This humbled Job. It was this great experience with the Almighty and the revelation of things “far too wonderful” for him that led to his repentance and, after praying for His friends, concluded His test.

Job 42: ¹ Then Job replied to the Lord:

*² “I know that you can do anything,
and no one can stop you.*

*³ You asked, ‘Who is this that questions my wisdom with such
ignorance?’*

*It is I—and I was talking about things I knew nothing about,
things far too wonderful for me.*

*⁴ You said, ‘Listen and I will speak!
I have some questions for you,
and you must answer them.’*

*⁵ I had only heard about you before,
but now I have seen you with my own eyes.*

*⁶ I take back everything I said,
and I sit in dust and ashes to show my repentance.”*

**One significant lesson to learn from Job is that
being blameless is not enough.**

If that is all you are seeking, you will miss out on Life Himself. What God desires most is for us to continually get to know and understand Him more which will only perfect our love and admiration for Him. This is why the greatest commandment is to “love God...” and not “Don’t sin and be blameless”. After all, it is our love for Him that ultimately gives us the power and desire to do good.

Here are some lessons from Job that will lead you to peace:

1. Don't count on advice or sympathy from ignorant friends, but pray for them.
2. Spend time with people that know God personally more than you do. Usually, they are the older ones (not necessarily as in Job) at church that always seem to be full of joy.
3. Continually strive to know God, both intellectually and personally (Bible reading, prayer, journaling to name a few activities).
4. Do whatever it takes and pray that you stay humble and meek, keeping your heart soft.

I'm not at all suggesting that if you continue seeking God that you'll ever be worry-free, for even Jesus was distressed in the garden of Gethsemane. What I am saying is that listening to and following these words will greatly reduce your worry, giving you peace, improving your witness and moving you towards godliness rather than bitterness.

These are great passages to memorize:

Philippians 4: ⁴ Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! ⁵ Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon.

⁶ **Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything.** Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. ⁷ Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

Matthew 6: ³¹ "So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' ³² These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. ³³ Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

³⁴ *“So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today.*

**If God, the Creator of all things seen and unseen,
is for us, what do we have to worry about?**

“Dear God, Let all that I am praise your name!, Thank you for teaching me so many things. My hope is in you and you alone, for you do not disappoint. Continue to lead me in your Truth so that I may grow in knowledge and understanding. Help me to know you better so that I can lean on you in dark times. You are awesome Lord and I thank you for loving me to begin with. Your loving mercies endure forever. In Jesus' name, amen”

Take comfort from these closing words...

Job 23:

8 I go east, but he is not there.

I go west, but I cannot find him.

9 I do not see him in the north, for he is hidden.

I look to the south, but he is concealed.

10 But he knows where I am going.

And when he tests me, I will come out as pure as gold.

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