

"Worry" and the Word of God

Worry ~ The Enemy of the Believer's Peace and Joy

Worry is one of the most destructive *habits* ensnaring human beings, even Christians. Many consider worrying as natural as breathing and as harmless as blinking. Worry is such a skilled and deceptive thief that we don't even know we have been robbed of peace, of time, of mental energy and of emotional well-being.

Worry is like a thick braided headband that puts pressure on the mind—
a confining cord interwoven with three strands—
the distresses of yesterday, the trials of today and the fearful "what if's" of tomorrow.
This vice-like grip of worry tragically compresses your joy,
[hijacks] your peace and [restricts] your freedom.
But this constriction can be conquered!
—June Hunt

Yes, worry can be conquered! Memorize:

ISAIAH 26:3-4 NKJV

**You [God] will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You,
Because he trusts in You.
Trust in the LORD forever, for in YAH, the LORD, is everlasting strength.**

A. WORDS TO DEFINE AND CONSIDER

- **OBEDIENT** — Submissive to the restraint or command of authority: willing to obey.
- **ANXIETY** — Painful or apprehensive uneasiness of mind over an impending or anticipated ill; fearful concern or interest; an abnormal and overwhelming sense of apprehension and fear often marked by physiological signs (as sweating, tension, and increased pulse), by doubt concerning the reality and nature of the threat, and by self-doubt about one's capacity to cope with it.
- **STRESS** — Stress can arise from an external pressure that causes physical, mental or emotional strain or from an internal resistance in response to outside pressure. Stress can be either a negative pressure that results in distress, danger or destruction, or a positive pressure that results in motivation and movement.
- **FAITH** — Biblical faith is placing your trust in the person and work of Jesus Christ as your Savior, as your only way of being reconciled to God.

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

- **TRUST** — Assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something. To trust is to place confidence in the intentions and integrity of another person. Trust within a relationship implies both belief and behavior, perceiving another person as trustworthy and placing yourself in a position of vulnerability with that person. Trust in God implies both belief in Him and changed behavior, knowing that God is reliable, dependable and unchanging, and submitting to the will of God in your life by giving Him control of your mind, will and emotions.
- **WORRY** — A mental distress or agitation resulting from concern for something impending or anticipated: anxiety

B. HOW DOES WORRY AFFECT US?

In the New Testament one Greek word translated as "worry" is *merimnao*, which means "to be anxious, to be distracted" or "to have a divided mind" (*merizo*, "to divide" — *nous*, "the mind").

To worry is to divide my mind between that which is useful and worthwhile and that which is damaging and destructive.

To worry is to block the flow of positive energy (the Holy Spirit) in my life.

- **Matthew 6:27 NKJV** – *Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?*

The concept of worrying is conveyed throughout Scripture by numerous words and phrases:

- to be fretful
 - to be without peace
 - to be anxious
 - to be distracted
 - to be concerned
 - to be troubled
 - to be weighed with cares
 - to be distressed
 - to be heavy-hearted (depression)
 - to be despairing
- **Psalms 139:23 NKJV** – *Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; ...*

C. WHAT IS THE NATURE OF WORRY?

1. **WORRY IS NOT AN INHERITED WEAKNESS** — ("My mom was a worrier."), a humorous habit ("I'm just a worry wart!"), or a justifiable excuse for prideful perfectionism ("Somebody has to worry about doing it right").
2. **WORRY IS A BLATANT SIN THAT IS DISPLEASING TO GOD BECAUSE ITS UNDERLYING NATURE IS:**
 - A) **Disbelief** – Worry reveals that I really don't believe God when He says He will provide all that I need.

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

- **Isaiah 58:11 NKJV** — *The LORD will guide you continually, And satisfy your soul in drought, And strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.*
- B) **Disobedience** – Worry reveals that I am taking on personal responsibility and concern for that which God has already promised to provide.
- **Matthew 6:25-31 NKJV** – Jesus said: *"Therefore I say to you, do not worry 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, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?*
 - ²⁷ *Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?*
 - ²⁸ *"So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;*
 - ²⁹ *and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.*
 - ³⁰ *Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?*
 - ³¹ *"Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'"*
- C) **Destruction** – Worry can damage my physical body, which is the "temple of the Holy Spirit." It can bring about a host of physical ailments, such as high blood pressure, heart trouble, headaches, colds and stomach disorders.
- **1 Corinthians 6:19-20 NKJV** — *Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.*
- D) **Dishonor** – Worry shifts the focus of attention from the all sufficient power of Christ to my human insufficiency and insecurity. Ultimately, worry can undermine my Christian witness by presenting God as impotent and unworthy of praise.
- **Matthew 5:16 NKJV** — *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*

Since God says, "Do not worry," it is clearly His desire that I do not worry.

D. WHAT IS THE FOCUS OF WORRY?

A specific characteristic of worry is a negative focus on the future. If I am a worrier, I am spending time speculating on what may or may not happen and then fearing the worst.

- "What if I lose my job?" ... "How will pay my bills?" ... "What if I can't find another job?"
- "What if my spouse leaves me?" ... "How will I make it alone?" ... "What will people think?"
- "What if my teen gets into trouble?" ... "How will I deal with it?" ... "What will my options be?"

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

- "What if my parents become incapacitated?" ... "How will I pay for long-term care?" ... "What will they expect me to do for them?"
- "What if my spouse has an affair?" ... "How will I ever forgive?" ... "What will I tell the children?"
- "What if I have cancer?" ... "How will it impact my life?" ... "What will be my treatment possibilities?"

E. THE OTHER SIDE OF WORRY

A fine line determines the difference between destructive worry and constructive concern. I may have defended my tendency to worry as being only genuine concern, but honesty requires that I take a closer look at my heart and my motives.

- **Psalm 51:6** – *Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, And in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.*

1. **Destructive Worry** – "I'm so worried that my child might drown that I'm never going to let her anywhere near the water."

- paralyzes
- decreases creativity
- prevents initiative
- results in anxious fretting
- attempts to control the future
- fears the worst
- appears negative to others
- distracts the mind from what is important

2. **Constructive Concern** – "I'm so concerned that my child can't swim that I've made arrangements to give her swimming lessons."

- motivates
- increases creativity
- promotes initiative
- results in calm focusing
- attempts to improve the future
- hopes for the best
- appears positive to others
- directs the mind to what is important

- **Colossians 3:2** – *Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.*

F. BIBLICAL EXAMPLE OF A WORRIER

Mary and Martha both loved their friend Jesus but expressed their love in different ways. When Jesus was visiting at the sisters' home, Mary devotedly sat at His feet feasting on His every word

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

while Martha scurried diligently to prepare a feast for her King. Clearly distracted by all the unfinished details, martyr Martha demanded that Jesus order Mary to make herself useful. But Jesus saw Mary as tranquil and teachable, Martha as troubled and testy. Martha had been caught in her own web of worry, but instead of scolding her, Jesus targeted the solution for all the ensnared Martha's of the world with this timeless truth:

- **Luke 10:38-42 NKJV**

Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house.

³⁹ And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word.

⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."

⁴¹ And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things.

⁴² But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

Freedom is found not by fretting over the temporal, but by focusing on the eternal.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A WORRIER

Worry is like a thief in the night that steals the Believer's spiritual peace. God never intended for His children to live fearfully focused on the future ... hostage to an emotional hijacking. If we are consumed with worry, we experiencing some of the following physical and emotional symptoms that are robbing us of spiritual maturity.

- **Matthew 13:22 NKJV — Jesus said: "Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful."**

Are you snared in the web of worry?

- **Proverbs 29:25 – The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe.**

A. EMOTIONAL — WORRY AFFECTS THE MIND AND HEART OF THE SOUL

- Are you fearful of what others think about you?
 - Are you overwhelmed with fear of the future?
 - Are you dismayed when you hear bad news?
 - Are you fretful when an unjust person succeeds?
 - Are you anxious over unresolved relationships?
 - Are you terrified of death?
- **Psalm 25:17 – The troubles of my heart have enlarged; Bring me out of my distresses!**

B. PHYSICAL — WORRY AFFECTS BODY OF FLESH

- Are you having difficulty sleeping?
- Are you losing your appetite?
- Are you overeating?
- Are you experiencing headaches?
- Are you having stomach problems?
- Are you struggling with maintaining good health?
 - **Ecclesiastics 2:23** – *For all his days are sorrowful, and his work burdensome; even in the night his heart takes no rest. ...*



CAUSES OF WORRYING

A. WHY DO YOU WORRY?

What we worry about is not nearly as important as why we worry. We may know and love God, but when we trust in anything other than God's promises and provision for your life, then worry will turn our hearts away from the Lord and turn our trust into distrust.

- **Jeremiah 17:5** -- *Thus says the LORD: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man And makes flesh his strength, Whose heart departs from the LORD."*
1. **DISTRUST — CARNAL THINKING** – Trusting God to save us, but not trusting Him to meet your everyday needs. Casual Christianity.
 - **Matthew 7:9-11** – *Jesus said: "Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? ¹¹If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!"*
 2. **PROJECTING OR DAYDREAMING (FANTASYING)** – Thinking that by mentally arranging future events we can control the outcome.
 - **Proverbs 29:25** – *The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe.*
 - **James 4:13-17** – *Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit";
¹⁴ whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life?
It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.
¹⁵ Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."
¹⁶ But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.
¹⁷ Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.*
 3. **EXPECTATIONS** – Having a burdened sense of duty to make every area of our life perfect, not having learned to be content.

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

- **Philippians 4:11-13** – *Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: ¹² I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. ► Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. ¹³ I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*
- 4. **FEAR OF EXPOSURE** – Instead of confronting the real sin in my life, allowing guilt to surface as worry in other areas.
 - **Psalms 32:3-5** – *When I kept silent, my bones grew old through my groaning all the day long. ⁴ For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was turned into the drought of summer. Selah ⁵ I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," And You forgave the iniquity of my sin.*
- 5. **RUNAWAY EMOTIONS** – Instead of choosing to respond to what Scripture says when I face difficulties, letting anxiety or fear have full control.
 - **Psalms 34:4** – *I sought the LORD, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. How many fears?*
- 6. **SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS** – Feeling a desperate need to have the approval of others; and worrying about how we look, how we present ourselves.
 - **Galatians 1:10** – *For do I now persuade men, or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ.*
- 7. **SPIRITUAL STARVATION** – Trying to live on past spiritual nourishment, but starving for lack of a present spiritual intimacy with God.
 - **Psalms 34:8-10** – *Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him! ⁹Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints! There is no want to those who fear Him. ¹⁰The young lions lack and suffer hunger; But those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good thing.*
- 8. **FALSE HUMILITY (UNREALISTIC SELF-IMAGE)** – Lack of knowledge and faith in who I am in Christ — thus believing I am powerless to cope with problems
 - **Psalms 34:18** – *The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit.*

B. **ROOT CAUSE OF WORRY**

1. **OUR FOCUS**

Without hesitation, Peter literally stepped out on faith, stepped out of the boat and started his sweeping strides on the water. But Peter's wondrous walk quickly became a sinking experience when he changed his focus from Christ to his own frailty. Likewise, when our focus is drawn

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

away from the Lord Jesus and the Word of God, we set ourselves up to drown in a sea of worry.

- **Matthew 14:25-34** – *Now in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went to them, walking on the sea.*
²⁶And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear.
²⁷But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid."
²⁸And Peter answered Him and said, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water."
²⁹So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.
³⁰But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"
³¹And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"
³²And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.
³³Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God."

2. **WRONG THINKING:** "I believe God cares about me, but I can't believe He is concerned with the everyday details of my life. I can't help but worry."
3. **RIGHT THINKING:** God has already promised to provide all the needs in my life through Christ. I don't need to worry about how He will carry out that promise. I will trust Him to do it.
 - **Philippians 4:19** – *And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

BIBLICAL SOLUTIONS FOR WORRY



Scripture commands Believers to cast their cares or worries upon the Lord ... to commit and entrust ourselves and our desires and concerns totally to Him. But how do we do that? In the Bible, God often describes His people as being like sheep.

When a sheep falls and ends up on its back, it is said to be "cast." A cast sheep is totally helpless and has no resources upon which it can draw to remedy the situation. When we worry, we are like cast sheep.

We have no resources within ourselves upon which to draw that will really affect our situation. But Jesus actually wants us to cast ourselves upon Him. He wants us to come to the end of our own resources so that we will depend upon Him for our very life. When we cast ourselves upon Him, He gently picks us up and carries us in His arms.

- **Isaiah 40:11:** *"He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart."*

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

A. KEY VERSE TO MEMORIZE

- **1 Peter 5:6-7 NKJV** — *Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.*

B. KEY PASSAGE TO READ AND REREAD

- **Luke 12:22-34** – *Then He said to His disciples, "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat; nor about the body, what you will put on.
²³ Life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing.
²⁴ Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap, which have neither storehouse nor barn; and God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds?
²⁵ And which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?
²⁶ If you then are not able to do the least, why are you anxious for the rest?
²⁷ Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.
²⁸ If then God so clothes the grass, which today is in the field and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will He clothe you, O you of little faith?
²⁹ "And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind.
³⁰ For all these things the nations of the world seek after, and your Father knows that you need these things.
³¹ But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you.
³² "Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.
³³ Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys.
³⁴ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."*

C. WORRY IS WORTHLESS!

If we worry, we need to consider ...

- Life is more than food and clothes ... Luke 12:22
- You'll miss the meaning of life ... Luke 12:23
- God feeds the birds and will be sure to feed you ... Luke 12:24
- You can't extend the length of your life ... Luke 12:25
- It is an exercise in futility ... Luke 12:26
- You waste your time and energy ... Luke 12:27
- You exhibit a lack of faith ... Luke 12:28
- You set your heart on tangibles instead of trust ... Luke 12:29
- You are like unbelievers, refusing faith in God ... Luke 12:30
- You are not making God's kingdom your priority ... Luke 12:31
- You forfeit the inheritance your Father has already given ... Luke 12:32
- You are thinking more of yourself than others ... Luke 12:33
- You are treasuring the temporal over the eternal ... Luke 12:34

D. CURE FOR THE CHRONIC WORRIER

1. **REPROGRAM YOUR MIND.** Worries can become well rehearsed tapes in our minds. We know we shouldn't worry, but we can't seem to turn the worry tape off ... then we worry about worrying. Fortunately God doesn't simply say, "Stop worrying," without telling us how to stop worrying. Although our thoughts and memories can't be erased, the landscape of you mind can be planted with seeds from Scriptures for a renewed mind — Scripture tells us how:

• **Philippians 4:6-9**

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy — meditate on these things.

⁹ The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.

2. **GOD'S WORD**

- A) **What does God say to us about worrying?**

"He says I am not to worry." —Philippians 4:6

- B) **What does God say we should do instead of worrying?**

"He says I am to express my concerns to Him in prayer." —Philippians 4:6

- C) **What does God want us to pray about?**

"He says bring everything to Him." —Philippians 4:6

- D) **What kind of attitude does God expect us to have?**

"He says I am to have a heart of praise and thankfulness." —Philippians 4:6

- E) **What does God promise if we give Him your worries?**

"He says I will have incomparable peace of heart and mind." —Philippians 4:7

- F) **What does God say we should focus your thoughts on?**

"He says I should replace my negative thoughts with those that are truthful, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable and praiseworthy." —Philippians 4:8

- G) **What does God say about how we should act?**

—Philippians 4:9: _____

3. **GOD'S WAY**

We need to acknowledge what we worry about — Read Philippians 4:8 carefully one point at a time.

- A) Evaluate every worry against each point. Ask, "Are my thoughts true ... noble ... right ... pure ... lovely ... admirable ... excellent ... praiseworthy?"

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

B) Change our focus from worrying to resting in God's sovereignty.

- **Psalm 34:10** – *The young lions lack and suffer hunger; But those who seek the LORD shall not lack any good thing.*

E. GOD'S SOLUTIONS FOR WORRY

1. If we say: I'm afraid that my situation is impossible.

The Lord says: "I can make all things possible."

- **Luke 18:27** – *But He said, "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God."*

2. If we say: I'm worried that I'm not wise enough.

The Lord says: "I will give you My wisdom."

- **1 Corinthians 1:30-31** – *But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God — and righteousness and sanctification and redemption — that, as it is written, "He who glories, let him glory in the LORD."*

3. If we say: I feel anxiety over the cares of the world.

The Lord says: "Cast all your anxiety on Me."

- **1 Peter 5:6-7** – *Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.*

4. If we say: I'm overwhelmed with fear.

The Lord says: "I will give you My strength when you're afraid."

- **Isaiah 41:10** – *Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous righthand.'*

5. If we say: I'm so worried—I can't forgive myself.

The Lord says: "I can forgive you."

- **1 John 1:8-10** – *If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.*

6. If we say: I'm worried that my loved ones might leave me.

The Lord says: "Once you've come to Me, I will never leave you."

- **Deuteronomy 31:8** – *"And the LORD, He is the One who goes before you. He will be with you, He will not leave you nor forsake you; do not fear nor be dismayed."*

7. If we say: I'm worried that I might die.

The Lord says: "I will give you eternal life."

- **John 3:16-17** – *Jesus said: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."*

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

8. If you say: I'm so worried that I can't rest.

The Lord says: "I will give you My rest."

- **Matthew 11:28-30** – Jesus said: *"Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."*

F. HOW TO OVERCOME WORRY

1. DESIRE TO BE FREE OF ALL THAT CHOKES OUT THE WILL OF GOD.

A) **Express your heart's desire to do God's will.**

- **Psalm 40:8** – "I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is within my heart."

B) **Admit you have sinned and chosen to go your own way.**

- **Psalm 51:4** – *Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight — That You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge.*

C) **Give Christ control over your life, allowing Him to be your Lord.**

- **Mark 8:34-38** – *When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ³⁵For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. ³⁶For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? ³⁷Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? ³⁸For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."*

D) **Tell God that you desire Him to do His will in and through you.**

- **Philippians 2:13** – *... for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.*

2. RECOGNIZE GOD'S PRESENCE IN YOUR LIFE.

A) **The Lord IS your life.**

- **Colossians 3:4** – *If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.
²Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.
³For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.
⁴When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.*

B) **The Lord IS your security.**

- **Romans 8:38-39** – *For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

C) The Lord IS your provider.

- **Philippians 4:19** – *And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

D) The Lord IS your protector.

- **Isaiah 41:10** – *Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.'*
- **Psalms 18:2** – *The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.*

3. SEE YOUR WORRY-PRODUCING SITUATIONS AS OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHARACTER BUILDING.

- A) Initiate new relationships even at the risk of being hurt.
- B) Have confidence that the Lord is directing your life even if circumstances don't work out the way you had hoped.
- C) Expect the Lord to make positive changes in you even when you fail.
- D) Let your life be an example of growing older gracefully.
- **Philippians 1:6** – *...being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;...*

4. CULTIVATE CONTENTMENT WITH PRAYER, FOR EXAMPLE:

- A) "Lord, I want to be accepted by others, but if I'm not, I won't be robbed of my joy because You accept me in Christ Jesus."
- B) "Lord, rather than worry about the welfare of my family, I'll trust them to Your sovereign care as I am obedient to Your guidance."
- C) "Lord, instead of becoming anxious about my job, I choose to trust You with my future."
- D) "Lord, I want to have excellent health, but if I don't, I am willing to learn contentment and refuse to worry."

E) _____

- **Luke 18:1** – *Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart.*

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

5. RENEW YOUR MIND WITH GOD'S PROMISES FOR . . .

A) CONTENTMENT

- **Philippians 4:11-13** – *Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

B) HOPE

- **Jeremiah 29 11** -- *"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you," says the LORD, "thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."*

C) STRENGTH

- **Isaiah 41:10** – *"Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."*

D) CONFIDENCE

- **2 Timothy 1:7** – *For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*
- **2 Peter 1:2-4** – *Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

6. THANK GOD FOR . . .

A) His comforting presence in the midst of your pain

- **Psalms 34:18** – *The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.*

B) What He will teach you through your trials

- **James 1:2-4** – *My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.*

C) His compassion you now have toward others in similar trials

- **2 Corinthians 1:3-4** – *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.*

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

D) His sovereignty over yesterday, today and tomorrow

- **Isaiah 46:9-10** – *"For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,' ..."*
- **Matthew 5:45** — *... that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.*

7. NURTURE YOUR SPIRIT WITH SPIRITUAL MUSIC

A) Listen to uplifting praise music and hymns.

Meditate on the words of the songs.

Sing songs of God's promises to provide what you need.

The moment worry begins, praise God with a song of about His faithfulness.

- **Psalms 28:7** – *The LORD is my strength and my shield; My heart trusted in Him, and I am helped; Therefore my heart greatly rejoices, And with my song I will praise Him.*

8. COMMIT TO DOING THE FOLLOWING EVERY DAY FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS – DEVELOP NEW FAITH HABITS TO REPLACE FEAR AND WORRY:

A) **Focus on living in the present—not in the past or future.** The past cannot be changed, and only God knows the future.

- **James 4:13-15** – *Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit"; whereas **you do not know what will happen tomorrow**. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."*

B) **Emulate the example of godly people you know.**

- **Proverbs 13:20** – *He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed.*
- **Psalm 1:1** — *Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, ...*

C) **Ask God to direct you in performing at least one unexpected act of kindness — PUT YOUR FAITH INTO ACTION.**

- **Matthew 7:12** – Jesus said: *"Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets."*

D) **Believe His promise — DO NOT WORRY— you have the peace of God surrounding you and the God of peace within you.**

- **John 14:27** – Jesus said: *"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."*

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

- **Matthew 6:34** – *Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.*
- **Jeremiah 17:7-8** – *Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, and whose hope is the LORD. For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, And will not fear when heat comes; but its leaf will be green, And will not be anxious in the year of drought, nor will cease from yielding fruit.*

F. GOD'S WORD FOR WORRIED HEARTS

Jesus said: "Let not your heart be troubled;
you believe in God, believe also in Me."
John 14:1 NKJV

DO YOU DESIRE ...

- COMFORT?
 - **Psalm 23:1-3** — *The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
² He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.
³ He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake.*
- CONFIDENCE?
 - **2 Timothy 1:7** — *For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.*
- CONTENTMENT?
 - **Philippians 4:11-13** — *Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: ¹² I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. ¹³ I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*
- GRACE?
 - **Hebrews 4:16** — *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*
- HOPE?
 - **Jeremiah 29:11** — *"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you," says the LORD, "thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope."*
- LOVE?
 - **1 John 3:1-2** — *Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.*
- PEACE?
 - **Isaiah 26:3** — *You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.*

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

- **REST?**
 - **Matthew 11:28-30** — *Jesus said: Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.*
- **RESTORATION?**
 - **1 Peter 5:10-11** — *But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.*
- **SALVATION?**
 - **Romans 10:8-9** — *But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.*
- **STRENGTH?**
 - **Isaiah 41:10** — *"Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."*

DO YOU NEED ...

- **A NEW BEGINNING?**
 - **Isaiah 43:18-19** — *"Do not remember the former things, Nor consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing, Now it shall spring forth; Shall you not know it? I will even make a road in the wilderness And rivers in the desert."*
- **COMFORT IN AGING?**
 - **Isaiah 46:4** — *"Even to your old age, I am He, And even to gray hairs I will carry you! I have made, and I will bear; Even I will carry, and will deliver you."*
- **COURAGE TO STAND?**
 - **Romans 8:31** — *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?*
- **FREEDOM FROM FEAR?**
 - **Isaiah 43:1-2** — *But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, and He who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you."*
- **FREEDOM FROM PERSONAL WORKS?**
 - **Ephesians 2:8-10** — *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

The Most Excellent Way ~ "Becoming GOD-Dependent"

- **GOD'S PRESENCE?**
 - **Psalms 34:18** — *The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, And saves such as have a contrite spirit.*
- **PERSPECTIVE IN PERSECUTION?**
 - **Romans 12:17-21** — *Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. ¹⁸ If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. ¹⁹ Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. ²⁰ Therefore, "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head." ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*
- **PERSPECTIVE ON DEPRESSION?**
 - **Psalm 42:11** — *Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; For I shall yet praise Him, The help of my countenance and my God.*
- **PERSPECTIVE ON WORRY?**
 - **Matthew 6:25-34** — **Jesus said:** *"Therefore I say to you, do not worry 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, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?
²⁷ Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?
²⁸ "So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; ²⁹ and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰ Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?
³¹ "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'" ³² For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.
³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."*
- **GOD'S PROVISION?**
 - **Matthew 7:9-11** — **Jesus said:** *"Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!"*
- **GOD'S WILL?**
 - **Proverbs 3:5-6** — *Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.*



Resource: PC Study Bible; Biblical Counseling Keys