

Is Worrying a Christian Duty?

by J.R. Miller

Worrying is a sin that hurts the soul and grieves God, and we can overcome it by putting things in God's hands through prayer and supplication.

Scripture: Philippians 4:6

Topics: "Trust in God", "Worry"

Description

J.R. Miller emphasizes that worrying is not a Christian duty but a sin that harms the soul and displeases God. He argues that peace is the ideal state for Christians, as exemplified by Christ, who never worried and left all burdens to God. Miller encourages believers to bring their anxieties to God through prayer and supplication, trusting Him to handle their concerns. He highlights that true peace comes from relinquishing control and seeking God's kingdom first. Ultimately, he reassures that God cares for every detail of our lives, and by trusting Him, we can experience a peace that surpasses understanding.

Transcript

Not many people seem to think of worrying as a sin. It would almost appear from the universality of the habit, that many regard it as a virtue! Many people almost resent the suggestion that they should be anxious about nothing, as if it were an effort to interfere with their personal rights.

It is quite time we should learn that worrying is neither a grace nor a duty -- but rather a most unlovely blemish in a life; and a sin that hurts the soul, and grieves God. The opposite of worrying is peace -- and peace is enjoined in the Scriptures as the very ideal of Christian life. Christ's legacy to his friends, was his peace. He never worried. He never lost his self-poise for a moment. His own peace, he gives to every one who earnestly seeks it. He taught, too, plainly and forcefully, that worrying is not only useless, but sinful. "Be not anxious," he said. Our heavenly Father feeds his birds -- will he not much more bountifully feed his children? He clothes the lilies and the grasses -- will he not much more clothe those who bear his own image?

But how can we keep from worrying? Paul answers this question in a wonderfully practical paragraph in one of his epistles. He first lays down the rule: "In nothing be anxious." He leaves no room for exceptions to this rule. It is for every Christian, and it covers every experience of each one's life. No one can say, "But my case is exceptional." Still the quiet answer is, "In nothing be anxious."

What then should we do with the things which break so disturbingly into our life -- which tend so to vex and fret us? If we are not to be anxious about these things, what shall we do with them? Paul answers promptly and tells us what to do. "In nothing be anxious; but in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving -- let your requests be made known unto God." That is, when things break in upon our lives which would naturally disturb us, we are to put them altogether out of our own hands into God's -- and then leave them there.

This is not a mere arbitrary rule -- it is most reasonable. It means that we trust God with the hard things -- the tangles, the complications, the perplexities, of our lives; instead of trying to look after them ourselves. There is no doubt that God has power to deal with these things. Neither is there any doubt that he is infinitely wiser than we are, and able to adjust such affairs so as to make them work together for our good. If his care for us really includes such matters -- then there is no question about his ability to carry them. The only question that can arise is: "Does God indeed care for such small things, as the little frets and tangles of our daily common lives?"

"If I could only surely know

That all the things that tire me so

Were noticed by my Lord --

The pang that cuts me like a knife,

The lesser pains of daily strife --

What peace it would afford!

"I wonder if he really shares

In all these little human cares,

This mighty King of kings?

If he who guides through boundless space

Each blazing planet in its place

Can have the condescending grace

To mind these petty things?

"Dear Lord, my heart shall no more doubt

That you do compass me about

With sympathy divine:

The Love for me once crucified

Is not the love to leave my side,

But waits ever to divide

Each smallest care of mine."

There is no doubt whatever, that God does care, not only for the great things in our lives -- but quite as much for all the matters which concern us. We may bring to him everything which troubles us and know that he will take it into his own hands and do what is best. Of course, we are not absolved from responsibility -- we must always do our duty. The secret of not worrying, which Jesus himself gives, is, "Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness -- and all these things shall be added unto you."

The trouble with us, however, is that we do not leave our affairs in God's hands. We take our perplexities and cares to him -- but in a little while, we gather them back into our own hands again, giving God neither time nor opportunity to adjust them for us! What he wants us to do, is to take them to him in prayer -- and then keep our own hands off.

The promise in Paul's cure for care is, that if we take everything to God in prayer and leave it there, "The peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus." The figure is military. As the army sleeps at night in quietness and confidence, because sentinels keep their watch -- so the peace of God stands guard over our hearts and our thoughts. We have the same assurance of divine keeping in the old promise, "You shall keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on you."

This is a lesson which young people should set themselves most earnestly to learn -- the lesson of not worrying. Worry hurts our lives. It mars our beauty. It saps their strength. It unfits us for doing our best work, for no one with a worried mind can ever do his best in anything. Besides, it grieves God. "In nothing be anxious."

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/jr-miller/is-worrying-a-christian-duty/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net