

Free in 2023 - Week 3 – Jan. 25, 2023

Theme for the year. Focus on becoming better. **Free from Worry**

Easy to be worried... don't know what's coming next/ tomorrow will bring.

We **prepared?** Ready? Wow will we **make it?** How much more ...?

Worry can overtake U if U take control of worried thoughts.

“Worry weighs a person down; an encouraging word cheers a person up.”

– **Prov. 12:25**

All people go thru this. But we weren't created to live worried.

Matt 6:25-34 – Jesus tells us: “**do not worry**” **3x**. But how?

²⁵ “Therefore I tell you, **do not worry** about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life^[a]?

²⁸ “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you— you of little faith? ³¹ So **do not worry**, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore **do not worry** about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

Stop worrying, God has you. God has this.

But how? 5 steps.

W – O – R – R – Y

Wake up. You're worrying. Don't kid yourself... thinking about it again.

Can't fix what U don't acknowledge.

Give it another name: stress, anxiety, nervous, uneasy, distracted

Worry – anxiety, unease, or uncertainty over actual or potential problems; allowing one's mind to dwell on a difficulty or trouble.

Need to fix it. Worry is a **blessing blocker**. Living in rocking chair.

Wake up - worry less, pray more

Phil. 4:6 – “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.” NIV

NLT – “Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done.”

Worry doesn’t stop bad stuff from happening, but stops us from enjoying good.

Open up to uncertainty.

Journey of faith - follow & trust. It’s not trust if you see the way.

- We like **control**. We make plans. But in difficult times... **clouds!**
- God isn’t a map; He dwells in a **thick cloud**. 2 Chron. 6:1; 1 Ki. 8:12.
- **Ex. 24:15-16** – “When Moses went up on the mountain, the cloud covered it, and the glory of the Lord settled on Mount Sinai.”

Ex. 13:21 – “And the Lord went before them in a pillar of cloud to guide their way by day, and in a pillar of fire to give them light by night, so that they could travel by day or night.”

- We can’t see thru the cloud, but we can **see God’s presence**.
 - o We aren’t alone. He’s with us. He’s working. He’s leading.
- Prov. 3:6** - “In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.”

Rest - God built rest into life. 7 days/1.

- We need reminding: rest. Stop. Take a break. Do something else.

Numbers 9:17-20 – “Whenever the cloud lifted from above the tent, the Israelites set out; wherever the cloud settled, the Israelites encamped. At the LORD’s command the Israelites set out, and at his command they encamped. As long as the cloud stayed over the tabernacle, they remained in camp. When the cloud remained over the tabernacle a long time, the Israelites obeyed the LORD’s order and did not set out. Sometimes the cloud was over the tabernacle only a few days; at the LORD’s command they would encamp, and then at his command they would set out.”

God will part the sea at just the right time. The cloud will move. Rest.

- It’s in the resting stage we **hear His voice, draw closer...**

Reassurance

Rested, we're better able to hear God's voice.

- "Cast all your care upon him; for he careth for you." – **1 Pet. 5:7**
NIV – "Cast all your **anxiety** on him because he cares for you."
NLT – "Give all your **worries and cares** to God, for he cares about you."
- "Cast your burden on the LORD, and he will sustain you" – **Psm. 55:22**
- "Though they stumble, they will never fall, for the LORD holds them by the hand." – **Psm. 37:24**
- "He lifted me up from the pit of despair, out of the miry clay; He set my feet upon a rock, and made my footsteps firm." – **Psm. 40:2**
- "God works all things together for the good of those who love Him" – **Rom. 8:28**

Rom. 8:35 – Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? **37** - No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us."

NIV – "in all these things we are more than conquerors thru him who loved us"

Yet. Don't know **yet.**

Yet takes the pressure off. Answers will become clear in time.

Thus far... Until now... As yet... we'll get more info, we'll know,

Worry is a lack of faith in God... these 5 steps can get you back to trusting.

Jer. 17:8 – "But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in Him. He is like a tree planted by the waters that sends out its roots toward the stream. It does not fear when the heat comes, and its leaves are always green. It does not worry in a year of drought, nor does it cease to produce fruit."

Put roots in God's word. More the conquerors... overwhelming victory

Stay positive. Test negative. Vaccinated. Stop worrying.

Song of the week: I'm Not Gonna Worry – GVB