

LOOK AND CONSIDER

TEXT: MATTHEW 6:25-34, II Kings 8:1-6

Kent Brantly was a medical missionary to Liberia, waging war on the cruelest of viruses—Ebola. The epidemic was killing people by the thousands. Brantly knew the consequences of the disease. He knew the symptoms—raging fever, severe diarrhea, nausea. He had seen the results of the fever and for the first time he is feeling the symptoms.

His colleagues had drawn blood and began testing for the virus. On July 23rd 2014 Dr. Brantly quarantined himself into his house; no one allowed in, he was quite literally all alone. He opened his bible and began to read a passage from the book of Hebrews and meditated on it. He writes in his journal “The promise of entering his rest still stands, so let us never give up. Let therefore make every effort to enter in his rest.” He then turns his attention to another passage in the book of Hebrews: “Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may find mercy and grace in the time of need.” He copied the scripture into his prayer journal and behind it wrote in italics the words: ‘with confidence.’

The test results indicated that he had contracted Ebola. He called and told his wife Amber the news. After much crying she went outside away from all others around her who too had heard the news and began to pray the words of an old hymn she had learned as a child:

THERE IS NO SHADOW OF TURNING WITH THEE;
THOU CHANGEST NOT, THY COMPASSIONS, THEY FAIL NOT
AS THOU HAST BEEN THOU FOREVER WILL BE

Her spirits were lifted and she began to sing the old hymn: I need the, O I need thee, every hour I need thee, O bless me now my Savior, I come to thee

He was transported to Atlanta, Georgia, where he underwent experimental and untested treatment. He got better a little at a time and when he exited the hospital, the whole world sighed a sigh of relief, Ebola had been conquered. We celebrate another victory over a contagion every bit as deadly as Ebola, the unseen contagion of Anxiety.

Kent and Amber were prime candidates for PANIC. Kent opened his BIBLE and began to meditate on the word of God, Amber began to sing hymns and meditate upon their words. They filled their minds with the words of God’s truth.

- I. Commands to be obeyed
 - a. Look
 - b. At the birds of the air
 - c. They don't sew
 - d. They don't reap
 - e. They don't store up in barns
 - f. Yet your Heavenly Father feeds the
- II. Consider the LILIES
 - a. They don't work
 - b. They don't make their own clothing
 - c. Solomon with all his riches wasn't dressed like one of these
 - d. If God cares for one of these flowers who are here today and gone tomorrow will he not most assuredly care about you
 - e. Where is your faith

III. Four simple truths from the sparrow and the Lilies

- 1. Worry is unreasonable.** To worry about something you can't change is useless.
 - 1. To worry about something you can change is foolish!
 - 2. And every time you review a worry in your mind, it just gets bigger.
 - 3. Worry amplifies problems out of proportion.
- 2. Worry is unnatural.** You weren't born a worrier. It is a learned response to life. In fact, you have to practice to get good at it.
 - 4. Fortunately worry can be unlearned.
 - 5. The only species in God's creation that worries is human beings.
 - 6. We don't think God will take care of us.
- 3. Worry is unhelpful.** It doesn't work. It can't change the past.
 - 7. It can't control the future. It only makes you miserable today.
 - 8. Worrying about a problem never solves the problem.
- 4. Worry is unnecessary.** God has promised to take care of you if you'll trust him with the details of your life.
 - 9. As a child, if you asked your father for lunch money you never worried about where it would come from. That was his problem.
 - 10. Let God be God in your life! "God will take care of you,
 - 11. just have faith."

- II. How can I break the worry habit?
 - a. Trust God with every area of your life:
- 12. your heavenly Father already knows perfectly well that you need them, and he will give them to you if you give him first place in your life and live as he wants you to" (Matthew

6:32 LB).

b. live just one day at a time:

13. "So don't be anxious about tomorrow. God will take care of your tomorrow too.

14. Live one day at a time" (Matthew 6:34 LB).

IV. Lessons from the Shunemite's struggles

- a. God gave her a son when she was barren
- b. God gave her direction when it was time to leave Israel because of famine
- c. God told her the length of the famine
- d. She knew when to return
- e. She went to the king to have home and land restored
- f. Not only did she have her home and land restored, but seven years of crops restored when there was no crops because of the famine

V. God knows how to provide for his own

- a. Faithfulness to God's word had led her away and leaving home for another land
- b. Faithfulness not only to hear God's word, but obey it brought her back to her home
- c. Faithfulness to plead her case before God's authority in the form of his anointed King Gave her back her home and land and even fruit that did not exist during the famine was now given to her
- d. God provides for his faithful children

VI. Key Lessons from God's word today

- a. Anxiety, Worry and Panic are tools of the enemy to create Spiritual starvation to the Child of God
- b. Anxiety, Worry and Panic can't change any situation in your life—You can't worry the problem away
- c. Anxiety, Worry and Panic speak to one thing—An absence of Faith
- d. Anxiety, Worry and Panic can't add any length to your life, they can only cause misery for today.

VII. What to do

- a. Like Shunemite woman call upon God
- b. Trust God with your heritage
- c. Trust God with your wealth
- d. Trust God with your today and your tomorrows
- e. And plead your case to the King of all Kings
- f. Let the King restore your losses
- g. Let the King add to what your losses were
- h. Seek ye first the kingdom of God
- i. Seek his righteousness

j. And all these things will be added unto you

Conclusion: Put Worry, Anxiety and Panic where they belong—under your feet—they are only tools of the enemy. He uses them effectively and they rob you of your joy. The joy of the Lord is our strength, use your strength and see if your outlook is better. Fly at the right altitude.