

Rev. Janet Doyle  
Sunday, July 25, 2021  
Scripture: Matthew 6: 22-24

## Sermon: Don't Worry Be Happy

In 1988, a song came out that is such a catchy tune that once you got it in your head you never forgot it. The song is: "Don't Worry Be Happy". Do you remember it? Most people just know the title and the tune and not all the words.

"Here's a little song I wrote  
You might want to sing it note for note  
Don't worry, be happy. Don't worry, be happy now."

When I hear that song, it does lift my spirits and it makes me smile and I usually sing along. It is a simple song but has great truth to it.

This past year and a half has been a year with great stress, anxiety and worry for all of us. There has been some relief this summer and some normal activities and getting back to church activities, but our world and our country still give us cause for worry, anxiety and stress to be a part of our lives.

Jesus commands us in our scripture lesson today from Matthew 6: DO NOT BE ANXIOUS! Boy is that easy to say and hard to do. Do you know of anyone who lives life with no anxiety?

There are different types of worries: **Ignorant Worry**—means we don't know enough; **Knowledgeable Worry**—means we know too much; **Rich Worry**—means we are afraid of losing what we have; **Poor Worry**—means we are worrying when we don't have enough; **Old Worry**—worrying about our health when we are older and facing death; **Young Worry**—worrying about our future and not knowing what to do with our life. Anxiety can take on many names, but it means we are distracted and consumed by the cares of this world.

The root meaning for the word "Anxious" literally means to be torn in two different directions due to opposing concerns. Have you ever heard someone say, "My life is falling to pieces"?

This is where that comes from. It means to have a lot of concerns, fears, worries, and anxiety, about a lot of different things in our life.

Billy Graham wrote in 2004 about anxiety. He said, "Historians will probably call our era 'the age of anxiety.' Modern men and women have tried to fill the vacuum of their empty souls with things that have proved inadequate to satisfy their deeper longings and hungers. External luxury is a cheap substitute for spiritual wholeness.

Anxiety is the natural result when our hopes are centered on anything short of God and His will for us. When we make anything else our goal, frustration and defeat are inevitable. Turn your eyes on Christ; worship Him. He will never fall or fail. He gives life balance, security and peace. Some Christians have not learned that life is a partnership between God and individual men and women. Christ said: 'Take my yoke upon you.' When we are yoked with Christ, pulling as a team, life's burdens are easily borne."

Philippians 4:6 says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."

George MacDonald, a Scottish author, poet and Christian minister wrote, "No person ever sank under the burden of the day. It is when tomorrow's burden is added to the burden of today, that the weight is more than a person can bear."

Verse 34 of Matthew 6 tells us, "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

1 Peter 5:7 tells us, "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you."

David Martyn Lloyd-Jones was the minister of Westminster Chapel in London and a medical doctor said, "If worrying is dominating my life, then I am really behaving like those who do not know God."

It's hard work trusting God, especially when we are facing something in life that is making us feel anxious. All of us have wrestled with anxiety in our lives and deal with it on a daily basis. It is something we all have in common.

Americans spend billions of dollars each year trying to understand anxiety and minimize its impact on our daily lives.

Someone has said that worry is like a rocking chair; it gives you something to do but it doesn't get you anywhere.

Most of the anxiety Jesus talks about in this passage is dealing with food, drink and clothing; the basics of life that we all worry about in some form or another. We are anxious about meeting our financial commitments; we are anxious about our children and their health and their future; we are anxious about our family members and friends and our jobs. This list could be endless.

Jesus said look at the birds if you're worried. "They neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they are?" Jesus is telling us that the Father cares for birds and he will care for you even more.

So, here's Jesus' solution to our anxiety in Verse 33, "Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

Remember, last week we talked about storing up treasures in heaven and not on earth "because where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

Seeking the Kingdom of God and serving God will give you treasures in heaven and will give you the peace you need in this world of unrest, anxiety and constant change.

Have you ever noticed that we usually worry about things we have no control over? Whatever we are worried about we need to give it over to God. Trust God that He is going to work all things together for good to those that love him and are called according to His purpose. Do you believe that God can help you with those things that are causing you anxiety?

Max Lucado, pastor and author wrote in his book, ***Traveling Light***, "Weary travelers. You've seen them—everything they own crammed into their luggage. Staggering through terminals and hotel lobbies with overstuffed suitcases, trucks, duffels and backpacks. Back ache. Feet burn. Eyelids droop. We've all seen people like that. At times, we are people

like that—if not with our physical luggage, then at least with our spiritual load. We all lug loads we were never intended to carry. Fear. Worry. Discontent. No wonder we get so weary. We're worn out carrying that excess baggage. Wouldn't it be nice to lose some of those bags? Anxiety splits our energy between today's priorities and tomorrow's problems. Part of our mind is on the now; the rest is on the not yet. The result is half-minded living. Worrying is not a disease, but it causes diseases. It has been connected to high blood pressure, heart trouble, blindness, migraine headaches, thyroid malfunctions, and a host of stomach disorders." He goes on to say, "How can a person deal with anxiety? You might try what one fellow did. He worried so much that he decided to hire someone to do his worrying for him. He found a man who agreed to be his hired worrier for a salary of \$200,000 per year. After the man accepted the job, his first question to his boss was, 'Where are you going to get \$200,000 per year?' To which the man responded, 'That's your worry.'"

"The key is this: Meet today's problems with today's strength. Don't start tackling tomorrow's problems until tomorrow. You do not have tomorrow's strength yet. You simply have enough for today." (Page 50 *Traveling Light* by Max Lucado)

To all who desire to work on their anxiety, first put the whole weight of your burdens and worries on Jesus who died for you. Understand just how much God loves you. If God didn't care about us, we'd have every reason to worry about the future. He loves us so much that he came into the world and gave his life for us. Excessive fear and worry "keeps us from trusting God."

Secondly, focus on God. Spend time in prayer, for others as well as self. "Trust in him at all times...pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge." (Psalm 62:8)

Thirdly, commit yourself fully to Christ and surrender your life to Him to be used by him for his glory in this world of hopelessness and worry. In God you will find peace for your soul. Spend time going to church and being in a community of faith so you can be encouraged in your walk with the Lord and share your worries. Church is a community where you can belong and pray with and for each other. Church is a place where you are not alone in this world.

John 14:1 Jesus reminds us, “Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me.”

When anxieties come, bring them to God in prayer.

Don’t worry Be Happy because God loves you and cares for your life and your needs.

“Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” (Matthew 6:33)