

In the Middle of Chaos: Helping Those Who Worry.

1. The chaos of COVID-19 has set the stage for worry.
 - a. Incidences of anxiety are up among young adults.
 - b. Healthcare workers are struggling with depression, anxiety, PTSD
 - c. The consumption of alcohol has increased in those with depression or anxiety.

2. How can we help those who struggle?
 - a. The Gospel. The true answer for most individuals who worry is first and foremost the gospel of grace! We need a God who tells us He will make it right!
 - b. We can point the saved to the Scriptures.
 - c. At some point, make sure there is no underlying medical cause. There are many medical reasons that might be mistaken for worry, such as hyperthyroidism, abnormal rapid heart rhythms, among others., but there isn't time today to outline them.

3. Point them to the Scriptures: Matthew 6.
 - a. Defines sinful worry. If we know what it *is*, it becomes less difficult to know what it is *not*.
 - b. Verses 19-24 set the stage. Worry is the dissonance we suffer when our loyalty is divided between earthly treasures and heavenly eternal treasure. It is idolatry by definition. You cannot serve God and wealth!
 - c. Jesus sets the criteria. Sinful worry comes in categories. It is sinful because He, Jesus, tells us not to do it!
 - d. Three times He tells us in verses 25, 31 and 34.
 - e. There are primary areas of worry: what you treasure on earth, food clothing, health.
 - f. It becomes the opposite of 2 Corinthians 5:9 or 1 Corinthians 10:31.
 - e. The important take away is that sinful worry always has an object. Sinful worry is the worship of the object in the place of our Lord.

- g. Verse 34 sums up the Lord's response. Do not worry about tomorrow, tomorrow will take care of itself. Sufficient is the day for the evil thereof!
 - 4. Change your focus.
 - a. Dealing with worry requires us to change our focus! Taking every thought captive. 2 Corinthians 10:5
 - b. Philippians 4. Change your focus! In Philippians 3:20-21 Paul reminds us that our citizenship is in heaven and that we will be transformed! I love that thought.
 - 4:1 - Therefore, stand firm in the Lord. In the face of trouble, trials, and struggles.
 - 4:4 - Change your emotional barometer to rejoicing.
 - 4:5 - Change your behavioral response to the Problem.
 - 4:6 - Don't worry. Pray, petition, giving thanks for the problem. Ask for a better solution! Be willing to die on the hill on which God has placed you!
 - 4:7 - Get peace.
 - 4:8 - Focus your thinking on the truth of scripture!
 - 4:9 - get back to work!
5. How can we use the Psalms!
 - a. Psalm 1.
 - b. Psalm 37 - move the Philippians 4 criteria around to match the statements in this psalm.
 - (1) There is a sinful worry, taking thoughts captive.
 - (2) We can help the believer define it with (verses 1 and 2).
 - (3) Encourage them to stand firm, Take their thoughts captive. Get to work!
 - (4) Choose your emotional response.
 - (5) Choose our behavioral response. (verse 3 as well)

- (6) You are not alone in the process or the outcome! He will bring it!
 - (7) Find peace!
 - (8) Choose your emotional and behavioral response! Sinful worry leads to more sin.
 - (9) Focus on the truth and you can have confidence!
- c. Psalm 13, 6: See their suffering. Help them stand firm in in it.
 - d. Psalm 23, 24, 27: Help them change their emotional response.
 - e. Psalm 37: Change your behavioral response.
 - f. Psalm 28: Don't ruminate, pray instead!
 - g. Psalm 32: Get peace.
 - h. Psalm 15: Get to work!



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