

TIP TOEING THROUGH THE TOUGH STUFF

Lesson Four: Do Not Be Anxious

I. Do not be anxious for anything

A. "Anxious" – "merimnao" used 19 times in the New Testament.

1. In general, it means "to be concerned about." Some good examples of this term:

Phil. 2:20 "...take a genuine interest"

1 Cor. 7:32 "...I would like you to be free from concern."

1 Cor. 7:34 "...concerned about the Lord's affairs"

1 Cor. 12:25 " ...equal concern for each other"

2. Literally though, it means to have a split or divided mind. It's a mind that can not focus properly, it's bouncing around, not settled.

B. "Anything" – a comprehensive term

Nothing is to grab our attention and fracture our focus.

1. Matt. 6:25 – Do not worry about the tangibles of life:

Life – your soul and the seat of your senses, desires, affection and passions

Food – what you eat and drink, what sustains your life

Body – your material self

Clothes – robes, wrap arounds, linen undergarments, cloaks

2. Luke 12:11 Do not worry about the intangibles of life: how to defend yourself – what to say in a difficult situation.

II. Some Biblical examples of worriers:

- A. Jacob Genesis 32:11 - He worried about his family relationships
- B. Elijah 1 Kings 19:14 - He is worried that he is the only one standing for truth
- C. Timothy 1 Tim. 4:12 - He is worried that he is not qualified for the job (too young)
- D. Martha Luke 10:41

vs. 40: "Distracted" – drawn in different direction

vs. 41: "Worried" – anxious

vs. 41: "Upset" – in an uproar, troubled

vs. 41: "Many things" – in many ways

III. What worrying will not achieve:

Matt 6:27 – It won't add an hour to your life. Another translation reads "can't add one cubit to your stature"

Bottom line: It ultimately will make no substantial difference to our lives.

IV. What worrying will do

- A. It will rob you of energy with which to engage normal living (Prov. 12:25)
- B. It will rob you of your enthusiasm for risks (the "leeks and onion syndrome") (Israel's comments after leaving Egypt. Num. 11:5)
- C. It will minimize your impact and ministry potential ("I'm just a ...") (1 Tim. 4:12)
- D. It will negatively impact your relationships (Gen. 32:11)
- E. It will cause you to fear the future (John 14:1-3)
- F. It questions God's sufficiency in our lives (2 Cor. 12:9-10)
- G. It questions God's sovereignty over our lives (Rom. 8:28)

V. The anecdotes for worry

- A. Casting – literally, "throw it away"

1 Peter 5:7 “Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”

B. Trusting – literally, “hold His Hand”

Isa. 41:10, 13 “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand....For I am the LORD your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.”

Isa. 26:3-4 “You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD himself, is the Rock eternal.”

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think Paul put a discussion regarding worry in the midst of his command “to rejoice?” What is the connection?
2. What kinds of things do you worry about? How does that kind of worrying distract you?
3. In the past, what kind of “loss” (see IV) have you suffered because of your worrying?
4. Discuss the “casting/holding” principle. How can you apply it to your situation this next week?