

How to Whip Worrying

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-4 Larry: REAL Tuesdays. Mental Health Awareness Month. Missionary Updates.
- B. Slide5 Children at Risk: Cory Nickols w/Destiny Rescue.
- C. Slide6 Mammoth: just heard *Chad Robichaux* will be sharing the devo's in Mammoth.
- D. Shout out to *Danielle Turner* 2nd service.

II. Slide7 Intro: How to Whip Worrying

A. Slide8a-f Did You Know...

1. Anxiety disorders are the most common *mental illness* in the US, affecting **40 million adults** age 18 & older **or 18.1%** of the population every year.
2. Anxiety disorders are *highly treatable*, **yet** only **36.9%** of those suffering receive treatment.
3. Anxiety disorders develop from a complex set of **risk factors**, including *genetics, brain chemistry, personality, and life events*.
 - a) According to the *World Health Organization*, **1 in 13** globally suffers from anxiety.
 - b) As far as we know, anxiety is a uniquely **human** experience. **Animals** clearly know fear, **but human anxiety** involves **an ability to use memory and imagination to move backward and forward in time**, that animals do not appear to have.

B. Slide9 There is certainly a lot of **anxiety** going around. **Anxiety disorder** is any anxiety that persists to the point that it *interferes with one's life*.

1. **Stress** is an external stimulus that signals danger, often by causing pain.
2. **Fear** is the short-term response such stresses produce in us.
3. **Anxiety** has a lot of the same symptoms as fear, **but** it's a feeling that lingers long after the stress has lifted and the threat has passed.
4. **Depression** is a prolonged sadness that results in a blunting of emotions & a sense of futility.

C. Slide10 **BUT** the **anxiety** Paul talks about here seems to be an **Occasional Anxiety** which is a **normal** part of life. You might feel anxious when *faced with a problem at work, before taking a test, or making an important decision*.

D. Slide11 And to help with **this**, the believers *relationship to the Lord* **can** make a difference.

1. A Difference in his/her **relationship to people** (unity)
2. A Difference in his/her **own attitude** (rejoice & gentleness)
3. A Difference in his/her **own condition** (anxious)
4. A Difference in his/her **own circumstances** (pray/peace)

E. Slide12 *Read Text*

F. Outline: *Unifying Power & Fortifying Power.*

III. Slide13a **UNIFYING POWER (1-3)**

A. **THE CONTENDERS** (1,2)

B. When it comes to **church fights** we've see everything from hand to hand combat **to** all out war [**from** *verbal* bullets **to** *real* bullets]

1. Catholic against Protestant (in Ireland). Doctrinal Issues (Calvinism vs Arminianism) Denominational splits. Church splits. Christian Friend splits. Even Christian Husband/Wife splits.

C. (2) So these 2 friends/co-laborers/ladies are urged to **harmony**.

1. **Euodia**/Eu-o-Dia) *Prosperous Journey*. **Syntyche**/Soon-too-Xay) *Pleasant Acquaintance*

D. Church problems spread fast...all the way to **Rome**.

1. **Are these women Christians?** Yes, names in the book of life.
2. **Are these women mature Christians?** Yes, were leaders (everyone in church knew their names; they labored with Paul).
3. **So, leaders can have these divisions?** Yes, & **isn't** an issue with false teaching or heresy.
4. **What was the division then?** We don't know.
 - a) It must not matter, because the bible doesn't say.
 - b) **It's division that matters.** Paint any story on it from lil church issues **to** big ones.

E. **THE COUNSELOR** (3)

F. Some disputes require a 3rd person, a mediator.

1. Don't be embarrassed then when you need a **mediator**/counselor.

G. Slide13b The ultimate goal w/church conflicts:

1. The common goal? Restoration, not Discipline.

2. The right attitude? Grace, not Force.

3. The common ground? Christ, not logic, church policy, tradition, or your will.

a) Rom.12:18 *If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men*

b) Note the difference between disagreeing & being disagreeable is an important one.

(1) Prov.18:19 **A brother offended is harder to win than a strong city, And contentions are like the bars of a castle.**

IV. Slide14a FORTIFYING POWER (4-7)

A. (4) Rejoice - Your Joy is to be in the Lord & unchanging/always.

1. Paul's own circumstances (in jail) reminded him of the joy available in the Lord

B. (5) Gentleness - graciousness, showing consideration for one another. By displaying gentleness toward all people (believers and unbelievers alike).

C. (5) The Lord is at hand - can either mean *the Lord is close by, at their side, or His coming is Imminent.*

D. There are 2 rules for this Fortifying Power to function: *Never Stressful, Always Thankful.*

E. Slide14b NEVER STRESSFUL (6a)

F. To resolve a problem we often resort to: *Worry, complaining, becoming depressed; or telling everybody who'll listen about our troubles.* It may feel good temporarily...but it never gets the problem resolved.

G. What good has worrying ever accomplished in your life?

1. It has never made anyone stronger; or helped anyone to do Gods will; or provided for anyone a way of escape out of their anxiety or confusion.¹

2. Slide14c Anxiety is a contradiction of the life of faith.

¹ Streams In The Desert, pg.380

- H. Deep beneath the surface of the **ocean** is a place that does not get **agitated by storms** nor **churned by the wind**. It's *unaffected* by all the **turbulence** that is above it.
- The **peace of God** is an **eternal calm** like this *cushion of the sea*. It lies so deep in our hearts **that no circumstance or difficulty** can reach it.
We can go **within** and **access** that place at any time, **and** in doing so, we draw those around us into *the presence of our God* whose everlasting arms are beneath all of our **stormy seas** in **life**.
 - We need to be like the guys on a submarine in a storm. *Did you guys feel that storm... What storm?*
- I. **Slide15 Worry** is being *mentally harassed, emotionally agitated, burdened* about things that haven't happened... **BUT THEY COULD!!!**
- In *Middle English* the **original sense of the verb** gave rise to the meaning '**seize by the throat and tear**', later figuratively '**harass**', then '**cause anxiety to**'.
[It means troubled, fretful, troubled w/cares, to turn over in the mind]
 - We are told to *stop being anxious* (lit.) (RWP)
 - Cares/concerns** are normal, we *should have & will have cares*.
(ie. wise foresight, a necessary sense of responsibility). **But**, it is what we do w/them is the key.
 - See, *Life causes anxiety*. **But**, what will you do with it???
- J. **Slide16 Worry vs. Concern** - be **concerned** for things **we are responsible for**... **but worrying** is concerning ourselves over things which *you have no control*.
- Funny, we allow **worry** which is *outside our control* to **control us**???
- K. We are to **cast our cares** where? (upon **Him**)
- 1 Pet.5:7 **Cast all your cares/anxiety on Him** because He **cares** for you.
 - Cast** = *to throw something upon something else*. (used for Jesus donkey)
 - How do we cast our cares on Him?** In Petitionary Prayer. [Anxiety is the Opposite of Prayer]
 - Put them on *the back of God* – Let Him worry about your cares :)
 - Don't be a prisoner to Worry** (it will strangle your faith & make you unable to bear fruit).

- a) Picture **sap** running out of your tree & never making it up to *nourish the fruit* each time you **worry**. [*don't be a sap*]

L. Slide17a Can you imagine a life w/o Worry?[Jesus could & did & took the time to explain it]

M. Read Mt.6:24-34 - Jesus starts his *worry teaching* on \$.

1. He **does not mean** we are **not** to **think ahead** or that our life should never have **a plan or pattern** to it. He **simply means** that we are not to **worry** about these things.

N. Jesus is trying to help them stop there *hyperfocus*. I want to *pull you back*.

1. Don't worry if you will be able to **retire**. Don't worry if your kids are going to get into the **right college**. Don't worry if you're gonna be **single** your whole life. Don't worry if you're going to be able to **keep your kids in that school**. Don't worry if you're going to be able to **find a job you love**. Don't worry about **keeping your job**. Don't worry about **your prodigal** son/daughter.

Jesus says...*Don't worry about your life.*²

- a) I want to *pull you back*. Would you say the whole of **Life** = retirement?
Life = school? **Life** = health?

2. I'm **not** saying those things *aren't* important. All of those things **are** important. And there is *uncertainty* involved in each of those things. **And some of those aren't going to work out all perfect and fine**. **But** you still don't have to **worry** about it.

- a) There is a way to face *uncertainty* tomorrow, **and** not **worry** about it today.

3. *You're hyper-focused, and your devotion goes with your focus and your emotion follows your devotion*. So he tells them the answer, **look at the birds**.
4. Slide17b **What???** (read vs.26) If Jesus was speaking to us he would remind us that *birds don't have 401(k)s, they don't get a college education, they don't walk to kids holding their hands and make them wear helmets to walk to the mailbox so they don't get hurt*.

- a) No, the birds of the air build their nest as high as they can **and then** just push them out...*good luck!* (now there's a parenting model)

² Andy Stanley Sermon, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bM19bZOawgE>

5. Birds fly around & one day says hey, *I'm going to go south*. He doesn't know why. Hey there's a string. I'm going to make a *tree-fort*, wait, didn't I do that last spring?
 6. *Slide17c Look at the birds*, they don't make plans or follow day planners, or budget, or have mortgages. Here's the point, "*you can have uncertainty and not worry all at the same time.*"
- O. *Slide18 ALWAYS THANKFUL* (6b) *Never Stressful, Always Thankful*
- P. *Thanksgiving* is an *attitude of heart* which should always accompany one's *prayers*.
- Q. *Prayer* - Paul wants the believers to acknowledge *their dependence on God* and *His provision*.
- R. I read on the NIH, *National Institute of Medical Health* website, *Psychotherapy or talk therapy can help people with anxiety disorders*.
1. *God agrees w/talk therapy*. He *invites us* to come talk to *Him*.
 - a) A dialogue w/*Me is better than* a monologue w/*yourself*. *Come let us reason together*.
- S. 4 words to describe prayer: *prayer, supplication, thanksgiving, requests*.
1. Each contributes to a proper understanding of the *comprehensive nature* of the prayer life.
- T. *Slide19 THE PEACE* (7)
- U. Here's the lasting benefits from the program...*Peace from a divine origin!*
1. (NLT) 6 *Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. 7 Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.*
 2. Paul's didn't envision a *situation change or external needs met*.
This peace was a characteristic of GOD that *invades* the Christian!
 3. The Greek word used here, conveys a range of meanings, including *well-being, prosperity, freedom from anxiety, safety from harm, and deliverance from enemies*.

- V. **Surpasses all understanding** - peace, even when we don't understand the *why's*.
- W. **Slide20 Guard your hearts** – *A military term picturing soldiers standing on guard duty & refers to the guarding of the city gate from within, as a control on all who went out.*
(LKGNT)
1. Look again. **Who's doing the guarding?** Peace is.
 - a) Paul envisions **God's peace** as a **silent sentry** who protects the *hearts, minds, emotions & the will* of believers **from anxiety, fear, and doubt**.
- X. **Prayer:** May the *peace of God* guard us & the *God of peace* go with us.