

WORRY and ANXIETY

Worry (the noun) defined: “mental distress or agitation...” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). Worry is often associated with a specific object or situation.

Anxiety defined: “an abnormal and overwhelming sense of apprehension and fear...” Anxiety can be manifested by a set of symptoms such as pounding of the heart, shakiness, dizziness, sweating and other symptoms, especially if it increases to a state of “panic.”

“Concern” defined: “matter of consideration.” So, to consider something is very different from worrying about something. (See 1 Corinthians 12:25-27 describing the concern we should have for each other. The Apostle Paul was pleased that the church of Corinth showed their concern for him in 2 Corinthians 7:5-7)

A comment on “fear:” “an unpleasant often strong emotion caused by anticipation or awareness of danger (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). So, here again, it is an emotion aroused by the threat of danger. It is a response to real, or unreal conditions that may cause harm. In this case, it is important that we “interpret the conditions correctly” to avoid unfounded fears that can turn into “phobias” (exaggerated fears).

Key Questions to prepare for what follows:

- 1) What is the difference between being concerned and being worried or anxious?
- 2) What does God have to say about worry and anxiety?
- 3) What is the cause of worry or anxiety?
- 4) How do we conquer worry and anxiety?

Key verses to help determine the problem of worry and anxiety and what to do about it:

• The problem

(see matching verses in the next column)

- 1) Doubt and unbelief
(Hebrews 3:12)
- 2) Worries about life, what we will eat, drink and wear. (Matthew 6:25-27)
- 3) Fretting that evil men will do bad things to us. (Psalm 37:1)
- 4) Anxiety and worry within me cause my “foot to slip.” (Psalm 94:18-19)
- 5) Anxiety about anything!
(Philippians 4:6);
Also, a negative thought life and the lack of discipline
- 6) We are wasting away outwardly
(2 Corinthians 4:16)

• The solution

(see matching verses from the previous column)

- 1) Encourage one another not to be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness (Hebrews 3:13-14)
- 2) Seek first God’s Kingdom and His righteousness and He will provide. (Matthew 6:28-34)
- 3) Trust in the Lord and delight in Him. Commit your way to the Lord and receive justice. (Psalm 37:2-6)
- 4) Make the Lord your fortress and refuge and He will bring joy to your soul. (Psalm 94:19-22)
- 5) Pray and petition (ask) God with thanksgiving for His peace that transcends all understanding. He will guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7); Practice a new thought life (Philippians 4:8-9)
- 6) Fix your eyes not on what is temporary but what is unseen, eternal and glorious (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

Additional Scripture of encouragement:

- Proverbs 3:5-6 (Trust in the Lord with all your heart for His direction)
- Joshua 1:9 (Be strong and courageous, for God is with you just as He was with Joshua)
- Psalm 23 (God is our Shepherd)
- Psalm 27:1 (Don’t be afraid, for God is your light and salvation)
- Psalm 139:23-24 (God knows our anxious thoughts and will lead us in the way everlasting)
- John 14:27 (Don’t be troubled or afraid but receive Christ’s peace)
- 1 Peter 5:7 (Cast all anxiety on Jesus because He cares for you)

A final challenge:

It is difficult to trust in God when you don’t know Him well. So, What is the best way to get to know Him better?

- Spend time with God in prayer (Romans 12:12; Colossians 4:2; Ephesians 6:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:17)
- Spend time with God in His Word; His Love Letter to us (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Timothy 2:15; Colossians 3:16)
- Be in fellowship with others who love Him (Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:24-25; 2 Corinthians 6:14-15)
- Trusting and obeying Him are essential in dealing with worry and anxiety. They can be “red flags” of not trusting and obeying as we should. (Compare James 4:1-4 and 1 John 2:3-6)

Do you tell God how great your problems are or do you tell your problems how great your God is?