

A Cure for Worry

2016 Mark Beard

Text: Philippians: 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! **5** Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. **6** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. **7** And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Introduction

Wouldn't it be great if our lives were worry free? No reason to worry. No cause. No fears. No uncertainties. Sounds great, but not at all realistic.

- Those without money worry about getting money. Those with money worry about losing it.
- Those without good health worry about recovering their health. Those with good health worry about losing it.
- Those who are young worry about getting older. Those who are older often worry about getting older.
- And the worry list goes on and on...

Illustration

"Modern science has brought to light the fact that worry will kill, and determines, from recent discoveries, how worry kills. Scores of deaths, set down to other causes, are due to worry alone. Anxiety and care, the fretting and chafing of habitual worry, injure beyond repair certain cells of the brain, which being the nutritive center of the body, cause other organs to become gradually injured; and when some disease of these organs, or ailments arise, death finally ensues. Insidiously, worry creeps upon the brain in the form of a single, constant, never-lost idea; and as the dropping of water over a period of years will wear a groove in a stone, so worry, gradually, imperceptibly, but no less surely, destroys the brain cells that are, so to speak, the commanding officers of mental power, health, and motion.

Worry is an irritant, at certain points, producing little harm if it comes at intervals or irregularly. But against the iteration and reiteration of one idea of a disquieting sort the cells of the brain are not immune. It is as if the skull were laid bare, and the surface of the brain struck lightly with a hammer every few seconds, with mechanical precision, with never a sign of a let-up or the failure of a stroke. Just in this way does the annoying idea, the maddening thought that will not be done away with, strike or fall upon certain nerve cells, never ceasing, and week by week, diminishing the vitality of these delicate organisms, so minute that they can only be seen under the microscope."

Do not worry. Do not hurry. "Let your moderation be known to all men."—*Arthur T. Pierson.*

Not worrying is not about having a life that is worry free. Those lives don't exist. Not worrying is about the *choices* we make with our thoughts.

I. Choose to Set Your Mind On Rejoicing (V.4-5).

II. Choose to Pray Rather Than Fret (V.6).

III. Choose to Allow God's Peace to Guard Your Heart (V.7).

Conclusion

In an article on WebMD, Robert L. Leahy, PhD, author of, *The Worry Cure: 7 Steps to Stop Worry From Stopping You*, he offers, *9 Steps to End Chronic Worrying*

No. 1. Make a list of your worries. Identify what you are worried about, says Leahy.

No. 2. Analyze the list. "Look at whether your worry is productive or unproductive," Leahy says. A productive worry is one that you can do something about right now.

No. 3. Embrace uncertainty. Once you have isolated your unproductive worries, it's time to identify what you need to accept in order to get over them, Leahy says.

No. 4. Bore yourself calm. "Repeat a feared thought over and over and it will become boring and will go away," Leahy says.

No 5. Make yourself uncomfortable. "Worriers feel that they can't tolerate discomfort, but if you practice discomfort, you will accomplish a lot more," Leahy says.

No 6. Stop the clock. "Worried people often have a sense of urgency," Leahy says. "They think, 'I need the answer right now and if I don't get it then something terrible will happen.'"

No 7. Remember that it's never as bad as you think it will be. Anxiety or worry is all about anticipation.

No 8. Cry out loud. Use your emotions; don't try to get rid of them because when you are crying or angry, you are not worried."

No 9. Talk about it.

As we have said, not worrying is not about having a life that is worry free. Those lives don't exist. Not worrying is about the *choices* we make with our thoughts.

Sources:

Robert L. Leahy, PhD, author, *The Worry Cure: 7 Steps to Stop Worry From Stopping You*; director, American Institute for Cognitive Therapy, New York City.