

# FREEDOM FROM WORRY

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**TEXT: PHILIPPIANS 4:4-7**

## INTRODUCTION

Worry is an expression of an inward anxiety we have all experienced at some point. It is part of the human experience. It is also a part of the human experience most would be happy to do without.

**Mark Twain said,** "I've had a lot of troubles in my life, most of which never happened." (Christianity, Vol. 3, No. 9, p. 30)

**William Barclay, in his book New Testament Words, contends that there is a "right and wrong anxiety." On the wrong side he finds:** "The anxiety and worry which come from too much involvement in the affairs of the world; worry about the future; worry that causes the expenditure of energy on nonessentials; worry about how to face the oppositions and trials which come to a Christian; and worry about how to please the wrong people. The right kind of anxiety, however, looks like this: It is right that we should take thought for each other. It is especially right to take thought for our fellow Christians. It is right to take thought for the church of Christ. But what is forbidden is disabling worry and not enabling foresight. It is the duty of a Christian to do all that he can and to leave the rest to God.

But, how do we leave the rest to God? Paul offers a plan. Here in these verses we have **actions** we can take.

## I. CHOOSE TO REJOICE IN THE LORD (vv.4-5).

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! <sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near."

**A. THIS IS AN EMPHATIC EXHORTATION TO INTENTIONALLY REJOICE.**

**B. WE ARE ALSO CALLED TO "GENTELENESS" OR "SELF-CONTROL" IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY.**

## II. REPLACE WORRY WITH PRAYER (v.6).

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

Years ago, in the pioneer days of aviation, a pilot was making a flight around the world. After he had been gone for some two hours from his last landing field, he heard a noise in his plane, which he recognized as the gnawing of a rat. He realized that while his plane had been on the ground a rat had gotten in. For all he knew the rat could be gnawing through a vital cable or control of the plane. It was a very serious situation. He was both concerned and anxious. At first he did not know what to do. It was two hours back to the landing field from which he had taken off and more than two hours to the next field ahead. Then he

remembered that the rat is a rodent. It is not made for the heights; it is made to live on the ground and under the ground. Therefore the pilot began to climb. He went up a thousand feet, then another thousand and another until he was over 20,000 feet up. The gnawing ceased. The rat was dead. He could not survive in the atmosphere of those heights. More than two hours later the pilot brought the plane safely to the next landing field and found the dead rat. Brothers and sisters in Christ, worry is a rodent. It cannot live in the secret place of the Most High. It cannot breathe in the atmosphere made vital by prayer and familiarity with the Scripture. Worry dies when we ascend to the the Lord through prayer and His word. - Questions Jesus Asked by Clovis Chappell

**A. THE ROOT OF MOST ANXIETY AND WORRY IS UNCERTAINTY.**

**B. COMBAT UNCERTAINTY WITH THE ASSURANCE OFFERED BY THE SCRIPTURE, PRAYER, AND GOD'S PRESENCE.**

### **III. REST IN THE PEACE OF GOD (v.7).**

"And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

**A. WE MUST CULTIVATE OUR CAPACITY TO TRUST GOD THROUGH PRAYER.**

**B. THROUGH THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE PEACE OF GOD WILL STAND GUARD OVER OUR HEART.**

## **CONCLUSION**

**Dr. E. Stanley Jones writes in his book, Transformed by Thorns, "I am inwardly fashioned for faith, not for fear. Fear is not my native land; faith is. I am so made that worry and anxiety are sand in the machinery of life; faith is the oil. I live better by faith and confidence than by fear, doubt and anxiety. In anxiety and worry, my being is gasping for breath--these are not my native air. But in faith and confidence, I breathe freely--these are my native air.**

A John Hopkins University doctor says, "We do not know why it is that worriers die sooner than the non- worriers, but that is a fact." But I, who am simple of mind, think I know; We are inwardly constructed in nerve and tissue, brain cell and soul, for faith and not for fear. God made us that way. To live by worry is to live against reality." --Dr. E. Stanley Jones, Transformed by Thorns, p. 95.