

# OpenTheo

## Worry



### Individual Topics - Steve Gregg

In "Worry," Steve Gregg highlights the Bible's command for Christians to avoid worry and love for material possessions while acknowledging the temptations that cause people to worry. He asserts that worrying is a sin that can be eliminated by placing trust in God's promises and focusing on His kingdom rather than the material world. Gregg notes that guilt and unaddressed sins can be root causes of worry and the solution to worry is to cast it upon Jesus, who cares for us.

### Transcript

In the Bible, the word cares is often used where we would substitute the word worry to convey the right meaning. And I wish I could say that Christians are free from the cares of the world. The Bible tells us not to love the world.

The Bible says not to set our affections on the things of the world. The Bible says we must renounce the world, we're crucified unto the world. The Bible makes all those statements and yet, sadly, we are all afflicted to some degree or at least tempted to indulge in the cares of this world.

That is, the worries about things in this world. We worry, for example, some of us, or maybe none of you do, but there are certainly many who do, worry about various dangers that may lie in the future, personal and national. Nuclear war is one of those things that people are constantly worrying about.

Many people are worried that when they're older they'll get cancer. Or now, AIDS is more commonly the thing that's in the forefront of our minds when we think of health hazards that we may encounter, you know. Almost, probably almost every one of you, having read some current research on AIDS, has wondered, I wonder if I could contract this disease from drinking out of a dirty cup or shaking hands when I have a cut on my finger or something like that.

And a lot of our fears are certainly irrational about that, and there is a bit of hysteria about it, but I wouldn't be surprised if many of you have been tempted to worry even about this, because it is entirely possible that a good person may get AIDS or cancer. We

could all be wiped out in nuclear war, we don't know. One of the things people worry about day by day the most is financial adequacy, whether or not the money they are earning is going to be enough to pay the bills, whether there'll be some emergency that will call for more than they have on hand, whether the cost of living will increase at a greater rate than their income does, whether they'll even be able to keep their job because there's tremendous amounts of layoffs going on in some fields.

And people worry about this a lot. And people worry about the loss of their possessions, thieves breaking through and stealing. They worry about the loss of their reputation.

There's all kinds of cares of this world that we can worry about if we so choose. We worry about our children being safe when they're not with us. We could, many women, of course, worry about rape or about, and anyone might, if they wish, worry about violent crime, which is on the rise in major cities.

I don't know that it's on the rise here in Bandon, but it is certainly a problem that our society copes with all the time. There's enough that one might worry about if he was so disposed to do so. And many people are tormented by worry as a continual state of mind.

Inveterate worriers, habitual worriers. And you've even heard people, no doubt, say, oh, I'm a worrier, or describe somebody else in those terms. And usually when someone identifies themselves or himself as a worrier, they're not trying to confess a sin.

They're usually basically saying, well, you know, poor me, I'm just afflicted by this habit of worrying. I'm just victimized by this overwhelming tendency to worry about everything. And the first thing we need to understand about worry is that worry is not something of which we are victims.

We are not victims of worry. If we are worrying, we are culprits. We are guilty.

We are choosing to worry when we might choose not to. And the reason I can say that with confidence is because the Bible commands us not to worry, and God would never command you to do something if you were incapable of fulfilling that command. God is not unreasonable.

If He says, don't worry, it must be within your power to obey that command, or else it's an unjust command. And God has commanded us to never worry. Therefore, we must be capable of choosing to succumb to the temptation to worry or to resist that temptation as any other temptation.

And when we do worry, we should recognize it for the sin that it is. And instead of sort of joking around about, well, you know, that's just me, I always worry about everything, we need to see it as a sin to be repented of. And we all struggle with various sins.

In my case, I must say worry is not one of mine, but I have others. But when we think of those sins that easily beset us, as the Bible uses that term, we realize that worry is among the top of the list for many Christians today. And it is not as though they necessarily enjoy worrying.

Most people would say they don't like worrying. Now, I really think some people do like to worry. I think some people would rather worry than not.

I think some people enjoy or thrive on worrying. I'm not sure why they would. I don't enjoy it at all.

That's why I don't do it. And also because if I did enjoy it, I'd still think it was wrong to do it, so I wouldn't. But most of us, even who don't want to worry, need to find out how we can stop worrying about things.

For some people, it's such an ingrained pattern of thinking, a habit of mind, that though they might choose to cease worrying, they don't find it an easy habit to break. And that is what we want to talk about today. First of all, I want to address the question, why shouldn't we worry? I just mentioned a number of reasons why a person who is so disposed might worry.

There's plenty to worry about. The world is in a very uncertain state at this point. Our own country is in very poor condition in many respects.

And we're doing better than anyone else. And so why shouldn't we worry? Well, the only and best reason I can give you why we shouldn't worry is because Jesus told us not to. But just like everything else Jesus said, he had good reasons behind the command.

If we didn't know of any good reasons behind his commands, we should obey them anyway, because he's Jesus, and he's the Lord, and we obey his commands because we're his followers. But we can see in this, as in most of his commandments, the very clear reasons behind it. I'd like for you to look at the passage where Jesus spoke most plainly about it in Matthew chapter 6. And I want to read the passage, and as I read it, I would like for you to observe that Jesus gave four good reasons not to worry in this passage.

He gave us four good reasons not to worry. He made an unassailable argument against the habit of worrying. And the passage is Matthew chapter 6, beginning at verse 25, and it goes to the end of that chapter, which is verse 34.

Matthew 6, 25 through 34. Our students here recently studied this passage in their Life of Christ groups. I'd like to read the passage, and watch, and see if you can see the four reasons that Jesus is giving not to worry.

Verse 25, Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat or

what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns. Yet your heavenly Father feedeth them.

Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They toil not, neither do they spend. And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

Wherefore, if God so clothed the grass of the field, which today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall not he much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or What shall we drink? or Wherewithal shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. Well a number of times, I think three times or so in this passage, Jesus uses the expression take no thought.

And I just want to clarify that in the original language that Jesus spoke, this expression take no thought simply means don't worry. It means don't take any anxious thought. Don't be disturbed by thoughts about the future and what you're going to eat and what you're going to drink.

He's talking about worry. He is not forbidding us to think rationally and so forth about the future, but he is telling us not to indulge in the irrational process of thinking, which is worry, which is irrational. Now let me show you the four reasons that he gave here, in case you didn't catch them.

First of all, he said we shouldn't worry because A, it's not necessary. It's not necessary to worry. God is going to take care of things.

He takes care of the birds. He feeds them. We don't find them worrying about what they're going to eat.

He takes care of them. And yet we are far more valuable to God than they are. If he takes care of them, he'll certainly take care of us.

So it's not necessary to worry. We're safe in his hands. He gives the example of the grass, also the field, the flowers.

And he says that, you know, they don't worry about a thing. They just grow in the sunlight that God gives them and he nourishes them and sends rain upon them and he clothes them beautifully. And if he clothes the grass, the field, then we certainly should

expect he will take care enough of us to clothe us as we need to be clothed.

So it's not necessary, he says, for us to worry. He even gives at the opening of the discussion, verse 25, the statement, don't worry about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor yet for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life more than meat and the body more than raiment? What he's saying here is your life needs food.

Your body needs clothing. God has given you a body that's far more valuable than clothing to put on the body. He's given you life.

That's far more valuable than food to sustain that life. If he's given you life and a body, which are the harder things, the more valuable things, the greater things, then he'll certainly give those things which are lesser, which are the easier to produce. And therefore it is unnecessary for us to worry.

That's his first argument. The second argument he makes is in verse 27, and that is that it's not helpful to worry. Not only is it not necessary, it's not helpful.

It makes no improvement in the circumstance. It doesn't change anything positively. Worrying, as we now know, can have a negative effect on your health and on your mental health.

Sanity, but it does not make any positive improvement in any circumstance. It is not helpful to worry. He says in verse 27, which of you, by taking thought or by worrying, can add one cubit unto his stature.

And although in the literal words there, it seems to speak of adding 18 inches to your height. The figure of speech that is being used here, if you compare the wording with other passages of scripture, can be plainly shown that he's talking about adding length not to your height physically, but to the length of your life. And most new translations will alter it in some way to bring that out.

He's saying how many of you, by worrying, can add any length at all to your life. You can't. And we now know you can even shorten your life by worrying, but you can't lengthen it.

Now you can, perhaps, it could be argued, live longer by taking serious and responsible consideration of your future things, which if you don't think about them, you may walk into disaster because you didn't have any foresight. I mean, it does say in the book of Proverbs, the wise man foresees the danger and hides himself. And so it is wise to foresee that you're going to need food, to foresee that it's dangerous to go out driving when there's ice on the roads or whatever, and to make choices about things based on the awareness of certain dangers.

You can stay alive longer by being smart and by thinking about things and even being aware of the dangers of some situation that you're contemplating. But what he is saying is if your life is set to end, and God has a set time for your life to end, by the way, your life is not an accident. You didn't appear here by accident.

You're not going to disappear by accident. God made you for a purpose, and you're not going to leave here until it's finished or until he sees that he can't accomplish it in your life. You're not just going to die by accident.

God has a set time when you're going to check out. And no matter how much you worry about it, you can't extend your life beyond that time. It won't help.

If it's your time to go, you can worry all you want. It won't change the fact that it's your time to go, and you're going. That's what Jesus is teaching.

Worry doesn't change things positively. It is not helpful, and it is not necessary. Third argument he gives is in verses 31 through 33, and there he teaches that worry is not appropriate.

It's not appropriate for godly people to worry. It sets its sights on that which they should not be setting their sights on. They are of a heavenly class.

In Colossians chapter 3 and verses 1 and 2, it says, set your affections on things above where Christ sits. If you are raised with Christ, if you are seated with Christ, then why would you set your affections on things of the earth? It's not appropriate for you to say, what shall we eat? What shall we drink? After all these things the heathen are seeking, he says. The pagans think about those things.

That's not for you. You have another pursuit. These things distract from your pursuit.

It's not appropriate for you. Let the heathen who have no god who can help them, let them worry. But you, you have no reason to worry.

It's inappropriate for you. It doesn't honor god when you worry. You just set your sights on doing what god has called you to do.

Seek first the kingdom of god and his righteousness, and let him worry about all these other things. He can add them as he sees the need. Worry is not appropriate for Christians.

It dishonors god when you worry. It suggests, of course, that you don't trust him, obviously. And the fourth reason Jesus gives in this passage not to worry is that it's not wise.

It's not wise to worry. That he says in verse 34. Take no thought for tomorrow.

Tomorrow's going to have enough worries of its own. That's what he's actually saying. Each day has sufficient problem to justify sticking to the problems of today in your focus.

The problems of today present to you certain duties and reactions and responses that you need to make today. Tomorrow will have a whole new set of unpredicted, unforeseen problems which will call for your full attention at that time. It's not wise to speculate and try to foresee all the problems that you're going to have tomorrow.

Now, you know, most of the things people worry about never happen anyway. And if we spend our time dreading something that might happen tomorrow that we could imagine happening that would be very horrible. We torture ourselves today with something which may never even happen.

And if it does happen, we torture ourselves twice today and we torture, you know, we'll have the same torture tomorrow. Why heap tomorrow's burdens upon today? Today is bad enough, sufficient to the day is the evil of it. Today is an evil enough day.

Don't you have enough evil to tackle today without borrowing from tomorrow's ration? And it's not wise, it's not rational to worry. So Jesus says we shouldn't worry because it's not necessary. God cares for us.

It's not helpful, it doesn't change anything, it doesn't improve the situation. It's not appropriate because you're people of God, you should be seeking the Kingdom of God, not worrying about these things on earth. And it's not wise.

Well, what is the root cause of worry? This is more important. It's not just theoretical. It's more important than you might think immediately.

And you know this is true if you've ever tried not to worry. Because you never really try not to worry unless you're already worried. And sometimes, I mean, if you're not worried about anything, you never think about trying not to worry.

But after you've been worried for a while and you realize, you know, you're just fretting away because you're not sure what's going to happen or how late they're going to get in or whatever, you know, if they're safe on the road, eventually you think, well, it makes no sense to worry. I'm going to have to stop worrying about this. You go to bed, you can't go to sleep, you're tossed and turned, you get up, pace around some more, you're still worried.

Now, you've made a decision that you don't want to worry, but you're still worried. Now, if you've chosen not to worry and you're still worried, there must be something deeply rooted that you're not getting a handle on that needs to be pulled out before you can cut off the thing at the ground level. If you're going to stop worrying, you're going to have to know where its roots are, what its foundation is, what is the cause of worry.

If you can nip it in the bud, if you can pull the rug out from under it, then you'll be successful against it. But if you're trying to just say, I won't worry, I won't worry, but you've got all the causes of worry in your life, then you're going to be fighting a losing battle and you'll probably end up in a padded cell. Now, there are some causes of worry that the Bible brings out for us.

And the first of them is trusting in uncertain things rather than trusting in God. Now, as I understand it, the main difference between worry and any other kind of fear, because obviously worry is a species of fear, what sets worry apart as its own kind of fear is the element of uncertainty, I think. If you know something's going to happen that's horrible, you fear it, but you don't worry about it in the same sense as if you think this horrible thing could happen.

It might not happen, but it could happen. Then you're tormented because you can't get a handle on reality. I mean, if you know for sure something's going to happen, you can cope with fear, you can deal with the fear, because there's a certainty there, this is certainly going to happen, this is something I've got to live with, I've just got to face up to it, I've got to trust God for it or whatever.

But when there's uncertainty, that's when you worry, it seems to me. And it is this element of uncertainty that makes worry worry instead of just fear. And worry is caused, one of its roots, one of its causes is trusting in things that are uncertain instead of trusting in God.

If you're trusting in God, He is certain. The best way to banish worry is to put yourself totally at the mercy of God, because He can never fail you. If you are trusting God plus the money in the bank, God plus a certain relationship for your fulfillment, God plus all of your bolts on your doors, you know, to keep you safe at night.

If it's God plus, then that plus has got to be something that is in the realm of the uncertain, because God is absolutely a certainty. God doesn't change. God's promises can be banked on, they're like a solid rock that you can build your life on and it'll never shift, it'll never change.

But the plus, God and, it's whatever after the and that's not sure. Will the locks hold? Will the banks close? That's the uncertain part. And so the only way to totally eradicate worry in your life is to trust wholly in God, not God and something else.

Hudson Taylor told a story that was very moving in his journals. Hudson Taylor was the first missionary to penetrate inland China, established the China Inland Mission, one of my great heroes and probably yours too. He learned to live by faith while he was still in England, because he knew he'd have to do so in China.

And he figured if he can't do it in England, he'd better not go to China, because it's going



to be harder to live by faith in China where there's no Christians to support you, than in England where you have a lot of Christian friends who might give you assistance. So he decided to test it out in America. I mean England, he was English, not American.

And so he was living by faith. Now that doesn't mean he wasn't working. He was working a job as an intern under a doctor.

The doctor was a Christian man, very kindly, but a little bit absent-minded. And the arrangement was that Hudson Taylor was to be paid quarterly, I think it was, once every three months. So the doctor who paid him was commonly forgetful about when the time would come up.

And he always said, Hudson Taylor, Hudson, Mr. Taylor, whatever he called him, he said, just remind me when it's time for you to pay, just tell me, just remind me. But Hudson Taylor had decided he wasn't going to do that. That was part of his living by faith.

He wasn't going to speak to any man about his needs. He was just going to tell God and trust God to put it in the man's mind. Well, that's a long story and it's got a good ending, but one of the anecdotes that comes from it is a case that he tells in his journals, how that he was doing some mission work down in a poor district in England, and he happened to be very low on money and in a very great need coming up for the next weekend for his rent.

And he had to pay his rent that day. He couldn't get an extension because his landlady was very poor and couldn't be put off with it. And so he absolutely had to pay his rent, which he didn't have enough money to do.

He had a certain amount and it was an English sum, which I don't know the value of, but it wasn't much. And while he was working, a poor man came and said, would you come and pray for my wife? She's very sick. And so he agreed and he went down through the slums and everything to this man's home, saw this woman with half a dozen children and a baby that was just all skin and bones.

And she herself was skin and bones at the point of death and they were starving to death. And Hudson Taylor said in his heart, he could hear the Lord saying, give the man your money. But Hudson Taylor only had one coin.

It was a coin that could have been subdivided into smaller parts. And just for the sake of the illustration, since I don't remember the exact denomination, we'll use American currency. It's as though he had a silver dollar.

And as he felt the Lord telling him to give the man some money, he says, oh, if I only had this in two half dollars, I would be so glad to give this man a half dollar and just keep the other half for myself. But he says, I wasn't willing to trust God without a half dollar. I was willing to trust God and a half dollar, but I wasn't willing to give him the whole sum and

just trust God alone.

And as he prayed for the man, he got, he felt like he began to pray for the woman. And he said, God spoke to his heart and said, you hypocrite, how can you pray for me to help this woman when you have money in your pocket, you can help them with and you won't do it. And he said he tried to pray, but he just gagged.

He kind of choked because he just felt that conviction come on him. And he just in his heart, he says, oh, if I only had this in four quarters instead of a dollar, I'd give, I'd gladly give 75 cents and just keep a quarter for myself. But he says, I wasn't yet willing to trust God alone instead of God and 25 cents.

And finally, uh, he says, the man said to him, sir, you see what need we're in. Can't you help us? Please help us. And Hudson Taylor says he remembered immediately the words of the Lord, give to him that asketh of you.

And he said, in the word of the King, there is power. And he says he received the strength at that moment to take his money and give it to the man completely. And he said, he just had this flooding of joy that he, he practically was walking on air after that.

And to make a long story short, the Lord provided his rent money later when it was needed the very night it was needed, but a tremendous, tremendous man of faith. But I just think of that illustration of how he said he was willing to trust God and 25 cents. He was willing to trust God and half a dollar, but trusting God alone was something.

It, it just took a real breakthrough in his life to do that. And as long as we're trusting God and something else, then there's going to be occasion to worry because that something else is something we can't really trust in a hundred percent because it's not certain. It says in first Timothy chapter six and verse 17, charge those that are rich in this world to not be high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God first Timothy six, 17, these people, Timothy is supposed to charge them because they are rich and would have a tendency to do so.

He says, teach them not to trust in their riches, but he doesn't just say don't trust in riches. He says, don't trust in uncertain riches. And there's hardly anything less certain than riches that you could put your trust in.

If you are putting your trust in money in any degree, there is room for worry in your life. There is a route from which worry can grow. I'm not saying you'll be worried every minute or every second, but I'm saying to the degree that any fragment of your faith and security rests on anything other than God himself to that same degree, there's room for worry, the sin of worry in your life, because worry cannot exist if you're trusting wholly in God, because you know he's for sure, he's a sure bet.

Money is uncertain. What else do people trust in besides money? Well, they trust in

military strength. Some do.

They spend a lot of money on that very thing, as a matter of fact. The importance of having a strong defense is stressed by most of our candidates these days, on both sides, whether they're for Star Wars or against Star Wars, they all want, they all know that the American people want to hear the candidate say, I believe in a strong defense. Don't they? And don't you want a strong defense as an American citizen? Don't you hope that we want a strong defense? Well, to tell you the truth, it doesn't matter to me.

I mean, I'm not saying we shouldn't have one or should. To tell you the truth, I don't really care about it. That's not one of the things I spend my time thinking about.

I've got business to perform in the kingdom of God. I don't care about whether we have a strong defense or not. Some trust in horses and some in chariots, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God.

Let people trust in horses and chariots if they want to. Let them trust in Star Wars or other weaponry if they wish. That's their problem.

They've got a lot to worry about. I don't have anything to worry about, because military strength is indeed uncertain as a source of security. It says in Psalm 33, no king is saved by the multitude of an host.

That means an army. And a horse is a vain thing in battle. Now, a horse represents a weapon, a military vehicle.

And it says it's a vain thing to trust in these things. We don't trust in horses and chariots. We trust in the name of the Lord our God.

I've got no opinion about whether we need a strong defense or not. I think, however, if we do have one, that probably our nation will trust in it more than if we don't. And that may be a great disappointment to them somewhere down the line.

Another uncertain thing that we ought never put our trust in is men, whether it's our own selves or others. And many people trust themselves. They trust by their own wits, by their own strength.

They can get themselves out of anything. Or if they can't, they just figure they've got nothing else but themselves, and they'd better do it themselves, because that's all they've got. And if you are all you've got, you've really got something to worry about.

Or if man is all you have to trust, or if you trust in man in any measure in addition to God, then you are trusting in that which is uncertain, and there is room for worry in your life. The Scripture says, Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, and maketh flesh his arm. That's Jeremiah 17.5. Cursed is he that trusted in man.

That's a lousy thing to put your trust in. It's amazing how many people think that man is basically good, and all we have to do is for man to just realize his potential, for man to just realize that we're all gods, for man just to harness that innate energy that we all have within us, and begin to operate as the gods that we are. That's putting an awful lot of trust in human nature.

Dave Hunt was reading something written by a New Age writer who was saying that, you know, we all have this God power inside of us. He's not talking about Christian concepts. He's talking about the New Age concepts, that we're all God.

He says, we need to learn how to harness this power because it's more powerful than the atom bomb that each of us has. And Dave Hunt says, we're living in fear because just a handful of people in the world have the power of the atom bomb, and you're advocating a time when every person in the world has more power than that? You've got to be crazy. If you find that desirable, you must put a lot of confidence in man to think that if every man was armed with a power greater than the atomic bomb, this is going to be a better world.

Man cannot be trusted. And the Bible says it again, and again and again. In Psalm 118, we have it again.

Psalm 118, verse 8, it says, It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. I guess that's an understatement. It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.

So, some people trust in money, some trust in military strength, some people trust in themselves or in others. These are uncertain things to put any confidence in, and it's necessary that we don't have any of our trust resting upon such things as that because then there is a root from which worry will surely spring from time to time because we know, deep down inside, that our money might fail, our military might be inadequate, it might be inferior to that of an aggressor. The person whom we trust may simply not be trustworthy, or even if they intend well, they might reach the crisis, they may not be equal to it.

If we're trusting in ourselves, we know the time may come when we're weakened by disease or by accident or something, and there's always this to worry about. And so, you see, trusting in uncertainties is one of the major root problems of worry. Another is having too low a view of God.

And if I could just show you a few scriptures on this, people worry because they have a low view of God. They don't know God as He wants to be known and as He has revealed Himself. And there are three things about God that are false which are suggested by worry.

If you are worrying, then you are making one of these three mistakes in your thinking about God. The first is that God doesn't have the power to help. In Mark chapter 9, when Jesus came down from the mountain of transfiguration and there He found a man whose son was possessed by a demon that was tormenting him, and His disciples were unable to help.

The man, the father, came to Jesus seeking help. And in verse 22 of Mark 9, it says, the man is talking, he says, Oftentimes this demon has cast this boy into the fire and into waters to destroy him. But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.

And Jesus said, Jesus said unto him, If you can believe, all things are possible to him that believeth. The man said, If you can help, imagine approaching God that way. God, I don't know if you've got the power.

I mean, this problem is a biggie. This problem may be bigger than you are. Now how big is God anyway? The Bible says He measures the heavens with the span of His hand.

That's the distance between the tip of the thumb and the tip of the little finger when it's outstretched. Astronomers believe that the universe is 30 billion light years across. And the Bible says God measures it with the span of His hand.

Changing the image, it says He measures out the oceans in the hollow of His hand. Three quarters of the earth is full of ocean, covered with ocean. And God, here's how He filled it up.

Boop. Just out of the palm of His hand, He filled up all the oceans. God's big enough.

God's big enough. None of our problems are too big. If you can do anything, help us.

Jesus said, If you can believe, that's the problem. It's not me that can't do it. It's you that have got to put out.

I've got no problem with being able to do it, but you have a problem in believing. And the man said, Lord, I believe, help my unbelief. And that was a good, humble thing to say, and it worked.

It overcame the crisis. But the first problem is that we wonder if God has the power to change things. Now, I realize most of us are not so crass as to wonder if God's strong enough to cast out a demon or something like that, but there are circumstances that just seem so complex.

So many different persons, including their own free will, is involved. So many things would have to be manipulated to make things go just right. It just seems even God probably can't sort this one out.

But that's too low a thought of God. God said, I am the Lord. There's nothing too hard for

me in Jeremiah.

And I think that that is certainly one of the biggest problems in people who worry too much, and that is that they just underestimate God's power. A second mistake they make about God, besides wondering whether he has enough strength or whether he's powerful enough, is the suggestion that maybe God doesn't care. Sure, God's got enough power, but does he even care that I'm in trouble? Another passage in Mark, Mark chapter 4, has the disciples in a boat going across the Sea of Galilee and Jesus is asleep in the back.

A storm arises, as they frequently do on the Sea of Galilee, and tempestuous, and all the boat's filling up with water, and the disciples are at their wits' end. They're terrified. They're going to sink.

They figure out it's time to wake up Jesus. And they said to him, in Mark 4, 38, they awoke him and say unto him, Master, carest thou not? Don't you care that we're going to perish? They doubted that he cared. I've never heard, I've never heard anyone make an estimate.

I once heard an estimate of how many herring there are in the sea, and this was supposed to be a scientific estimate, there's supposed to be a billion billion herring in the world's oceans. A billion billion. What is that? Is that a trillion or a zillion? That's a lot.

More than any of us are even able to imagine the size of that number. Now, there must be probably a similar amount of sparrows in the world, but God keeps his tabs on every one of them. He's a very close bookkeeper.

Not one of them dies without him being aware of it. I mean, he doesn't just hear about it in the monthly meeting with the angels later. He sees it.

He's aware of it when it's happening. It doesn't happen apart from his will and his express attention. Every sparrow.

Now, what does God care about sparrows? You're worth more than many sparrows. He says a sparrow, even people don't value sparrows. Two, you can buy two of them for a penny in a marketplace.

They're of so little value and God cares for them. Now, in Luke's parallel to this statement, which is in Luke 12, 6, you needn't turn there, but Jesus is making the same statement, but the way Luke records it in Luke 12, 6, is, are not five sparrows sold for two farthings? Now, it might sound like the two gospels got their mathematics wrong, because in Matthew it says two sparrows for one farthing. In Luke it says five sparrows for two farthings.

Now the mathematics isn't wrong. It simply reflects the value that was placed on

sparrows in those days. Two? Two for a penny.

Five for two cents. The fifth one is thrown in. Now when Luke records Jesus' statement, he says not even one of these five falls to the ground.

Not even the one that's more or less thrown in as something valueless, just thrown in with the deal. Men treat it as a worthless thing, but not even that falls to the ground without God knowing. And don't you think God is paying attention to you? The hairs of your head are numbered.

God knows more about you than you do. You don't know how many hairs there are on your head. Well, some of you might, just because there's not many, but most of us don't.

And we could put it otherwise. Jesus was just using a figure of speech. Today he could say the cells of your body are numbered, or something like that.

And it would be equally true, conveying the same fact. God knows every detail. So if we are worried, we either think God doesn't have the power to help, or he doesn't care enough to help, or maybe he's not aware of this particular situation.

All of those are views of God that are much too low, and they keep us from trusting God for the given situation. But if you know that God has all power, and there's nothing too hard for him, then he cares for you like he cares for nothing else. I mean, human beings, and particularly his redeemed people, are his number one project in the universe.

He cares more about us than he cares about angels. He cares more about us than he cares about the world, that is, the physical planet, or any world, any number of worlds. Jesus said, what shall it profit man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul? One soul.

He says, you lose. If you trade the world for a soul, the soul's worth more. Any number of worlds, or angels, or created things, don't hold anywhere near the priority in God's mind that you do.

And he knows every detail. He knows what you're going through now, he knows what you're going through tomorrow, and there's where he has an advantage over you. You don't.

You don't know what's going to happen tomorrow, and you're just hurting yourself, and it's a foolish thing, obviously, if you spend any time trying to construct the circumstances in your mind that are likely to come upon you tomorrow. It almost never happens the way you think it will. Some disasters are somewhat predictable, but the majority of things we are tempted to worry about are things that don't happen, or even if they are going to happen, worrying about it doesn't change that fact.

They happen even if we did worry about it, so we torment ourselves twice about it. Once when we're going through it, and once when we're anticipating it. So it's not wise, nor necessary.

And so worry springs from these two things. A, trusting in something that is uncertain, rather than in God. B, having too low a view of God in one respect or another, thinking him to be too impotent, too callous, or too ignorant of your situation.

But if you give God the proper glory and honor that he deserves, based upon what he's revealed about himself in these circumstances, then you will not worry, I guarantee you. You won't worry. You won't.

Now there's one other thing to say about worry that may be listed among those that are the cause of worry, although I don't know if this is the cause of worry, or if the worry is the cause of this. I haven't really been able to sort it out yet, so I'll just throw it in at this point, before we go further and talk about the cure for worry. And that is an unsound mental condition.

You know, psychologists talk about neuroses and paranoia and things like that. This is usually considered to be a state of mental ill health. Now I don't know if I believe in such a thing as mental health.

I believe that the brain itself, as an organ, can be healthy or not. I believe the cells of the brain and the functions of the brain can be healthy or unhealthy, because that's a physical thing. But a mind is not a brain.

A mind is something that's your soul. And I don't know if I agree with this concept of mental health or not, but I'll tell you, the Bible indicates that worry goes hand in hand with an unsound mental state. For example, 2 Timothy 1.7 says, God has not given us a spirit of fear, but what? He's given us a spirit of love and of power and of a sound mind.

A sound mind is set over in juxtaposition from fear. Because a person who knows God, if his mind is sound, if he's thinking soundly, if he's thinking rationally, he won't fear anything. He won't worry.

And worry can cause perhaps an unsound mental condition or sometimes it may be caused by it. Of course there's people who have all these hallucinations and they have all these phobias and neuroses and whatever. I don't know very much about that kind of thing.

But I know this much about it, that that's not anything that God can't overcome either. If you're a Christian, you needn't worry about living the rest of your life in an unsound mental condition. If you weren't in a sound mental condition when you became a Christian, it's time to change that because you have not received from God a spirit of fear, but a spirit of a sound mind.



And that spirit of God enables us to obey the scriptures. And one of the things the Bible commands us to do is not to worry. And you know, if you do have problems in those areas, maybe worry is as much a cause or at least something that continues to feed an unsound mental state as anything.

You know, psychologists who aren't even enlightened by the scriptures have in many cases recognized the role that guilt plays in various mental problems that people have when people have especially paranoia and so forth. A lot of times guilt is at the root. I think some psychologists would simply say guilt feelings because they don't believe in actual guilt itself, that there really are moral absolutes or anything, but they acknowledge that there's a feeling of guilt that's causing something.

There's underlying guilt feelings that cause this paranoia or whatever. And the Bible would agree with that. The Bible says in Proverbs 28, 1, the wicked flee when no man's pursuing.

What is that but paranoia? No one's chasing you and you're running away. Who does that? The wicked. The one who doesn't have a clean conscience.

But what does he say? The righteous are bold as a lion. Fear is for the Christian not a product of a sound mental state. And if we do not have a sound mental state, one of the chief causes of that is guilt, undealt with sin and guilt.

And you know, I think a lot of times people can't cope with the future. They're consumed with worries about the future because they haven't really dealt with the past. In some instances, there are some things for which they are guilty, which they need to repent of, and they need to maybe go confess or make restitution.

There's something they have to do to clear up the past. They need to conclude the past as a friend of mine uses that term, conclude the past. And many times once that's really done and a clean conscience is restored, then there's no more worry.

There's no more fear. There's no more paranoia because there's a cleanness of conscience. If we have a clean conscience before God, then we have nothing to fear.

First of all, we've got a good relationship with God and trust in God removes worry. Furthermore, we know and everyone knows that eventually we'll die, but we're not afraid to die. The worst thing that could happen to you is that you die.

And really for the Christian, that's the best thing that could happen to you. To die is gain. And so there's no worries for the person who has a sound mind, who has a clear relationship with God, where the guilt on the conscience is removed.

And if a person is guilty before God, whether they're a Christian or a non-Christian, there is good reason to be fearful because the judgment of God is upon guilt and the wrath of

God abides upon it. And so a person of course can't rest in God's protection and claim the promises of God when they've got a guilty heart. It says in 1 Peter chapter 3 verses 14 through 16, if I can quickly find it here.

1 Peter 3, 14 says, but and if you suffer for righteousness sake, happy are ye and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled. Don't be troubled or afraid like they are. But what should you do instead? Sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.

And then down in verse 16 he says, having a good conscience. Don't be afraid, don't be troubled, but rather sanctify God in your hearts and keep your conscience clean. You keep your conscience clean, that'll do away with a lot of the grounds for fear and worry.

It says in Isaiah 59 verses 1 and 2, God's hand is not shortened that he cannot save. God's ear is not heavy that he cannot hear, but your iniquities have separated between you and your God. What are you worried about? God can reach you.

He's not incapable of saving. God can hear you. He knows your situation.

Why aren't you being saved? Because of iniquities. Your conscience isn't clear before God. You've got some things in the past you've got to deal with so that you can from now on cope with the future.

And so we see this as perhaps another cause of worry, one of the root causes. But now we need to talk about the cure that God has provided and revealed in the scripture for worry. And that cure can be summarized in one verse, but it will be expanded for many others.

The verse that summarizes this is in 1 Peter chapter 5 and verse 7, which is a very short verse, perhaps the shortest verse in that chapter, but it's long on benefit to us if we take it seriously and understand it and apply it. 1 Peter 5, 7 says, casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you. Now, the secret is casting your care, and we could substitute the word worries, your concerns.

You've got worries. Something's weighing on you. Cast it on Jesus because he cares for you.

Well, that's obvious that if you cast on him, you're not carrying it anymore either. Now, I was reading in a book by Jay Adams about a man who I think was not a real character, but it was rather, I think, a joke, but it was a good illustration of this principle. He was talking about a man named Bill, who was known by all his friends to be an inveterate worrier.

He was always worried about everything, always had a negative outlook on the future and was sure that every disaster that was conceivable was likely to fall upon him. And all of his friends just knew him this way. This was how he was characterized.

This was the dominant feature of his personality. And then one of his friends saw him after being, after not seeing him for a while and saw that the man was just free, apparently from care. He was smiling.

He was whistling a tune. All the signs of being in a positive state of mind. And he said, Bill, what's happened to you? You look totally different than before.

He says, oh yeah, I used to worry all the time. That thing was just killing me. You know, I was, it was really bad for me.

I don't worry anymore. I've just given it up entirely. And his friends said, well, how in the world have you managed to do that? That's not the easiest thing in the world.

You've totally changed. He says, oh, I've got this wonderful solution. There's this man who advertised in the newspaper.

He said he'd worry for me for a price. And so I have just hired him on as my worrier. And so whenever I worry or I have a worry, I give it to him and he worries about it for me and I don't have to worry about it anymore.

And his friends said, wow, that's a service I'd like to have. How much does the guy charge? He said, oh, \$6,000 a week. His friends said, well, how in the world do you pay that? He said, I don't know.

That's his worry. As I said, I don't think that's a true story, but obviously the key to overcoming worry is to get someone else to worry for you. And that's what 1 Peter 5, 7 says Jesus does.

He worries for you. Cast your worries on him because he worries for you. He cares for you.

Now, he doesn't really worry, but he is concerned for the things that you worry about. He's concerned for your concerns. He cares about you and he'll care instead of you caring.

He'll worry instead of you worrying, if we might put it more crassly, and we probably shouldn't. But now we need to know, well, how do you do that? Sounds easy enough, just cast your cares on Jesus. How do you cast your cares on Jesus? Now, that's a fair question.

A lot of times the Bible tells us to do things and we don't see an immediate description of how exactly you carry out those instructions. But in the Bible we have clear teaching and we will expand that concept right now. First of all, an underlying knowledge of the promises of God has to be present.

A key, maybe the key, to overcoming worry has got to be a familiarity with the promises

of God. Because, you see, the opposite of worry or the cure for worry is faith, trusting God. But you can't trust him if you don't know what he's promised.

You can't trust him to provide if you don't know he's made a promise. The Bible says faith comes by hearing and hearing comes by God speaking, by the word of God, by the rhema of God. When God speaks, then you can believe what he said.

But if he doesn't say anything, then you've got nothing to believe. So you've got to know what he said. You've got to know what he's promised.

And if you know what he's promised, then you've got something to put your faith in. You've got something you can trust. And you need to know the promises of God.

There's some very wonderful, wonderful promises of God in the Scripture. I'd like to give you a few and you probably should write them down if you can. Some of you may want to just get the tape and just listen if you can't write it down.

But I have a feeling these are scriptures that after you've heard them, you're going to wish you'd written them down or wish you could get a hold of them again. Psalm 84 is one of them. I'm going to go quickly through some.

You might not be able to turn to them all at the same speed that I cover them. Psalm 84, verse 11 says, For the Lord God is a sun and a shield. The Lord will give grace and glory.

No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. No good thing will he withhold. If you know that promise of God and if you believe that promise, what can you worry about? Anything that's good, he won't withhold from you.

He'll give you everything that's good for you. Anything he doesn't give you isn't good for you. I mean, for a Christian to lay hold of that concept means that he can accept any deprivation or any provision.

Anything that is dished out to him on his plate from God, he can accept it. Remember how Jesus, when he was caught in the garden and was arrested there and Peter tried to defend him by sword, Jesus said, No, the cup that the Father has given me, shall I not drink it? He just took it. That was from God.

It must be the good thing. If it's from God, it must be what's good. John the Baptist's disciples were worried because their hero, John, was becoming less popular and Jesus was becoming more popular.

And in John chapter 3, they came to John the Baptist and said, You know, this guy that you baptized not long ago, he's baptizing now over across the Jordan, and more people are going to him than to you. And the first thing John said was, A man can receive nothing except it be given to him by God. What's he saying? My reputation, my fame,

and Jesus' reputation, his fame, these are all whatever God gives.

If God takes the glory from me and gives it to him, well and good. I must decrease, he must increase. That's the will of God.

He could take it. He just saw it as from the hand of God. Therefore, he wasn't worried about it.

He knew that whatever was good, God would give him. No good thing will God withhold. If God is withholding something from you, don't worry about it.

It's not good. It's not a good thing. And so be glad he's withholding it.

Tremendous promise. Everyone can quote Romans 8, 28, another very general promise that should be encouraging for any crisis. Romans 8, 28, of course, says, And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to his purpose.

If you love God, if you are the called, if you're one of the called ones according to his purpose, then it is inevitable that all things must work together for your good. All things must work together for your good. If you know that promise, what are you worried about? What can you worry about? That encompasses every contingency.

There's nothing really that can happen that isn't covered in that. All things work together for good. So that promise itself should eliminate worry if you believe it's true.

Well let's talk about some specific things that we might need some promises about. How about finances? Uncertain riches. Some of our financial conditions here are, as individuals and even corporately here in this ministry, there's some uncertainties about the finances in the future.

One thing is certain, if God wants us to have it, the money will have it. That is not uncertain. But we're not sure yet what God wants.

But you see, the Bible gives us many promises that God is going to provide all our needs. One of those we've already seen in Matthew 6, 33, which said, Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you. And all these things in that context, of course, are the food and the clothing and the things you need.

You seek God's kingdom first and let him worry about the rest. He has guaranteed he will. In Psalm 34, and by the way, the book of Psalms is one of the greatest treasuries of promises available to the Christian, and I would advise that a Christian probably read through the book of Psalms underlining each passage that is a promise from God, because you need to know the promises of God.

But here's a statement in Psalm 34, verse 9 and 10. O fear the Lord, ye his saints, for

there is no lack to them that fear him. The young lions do lack and suffer hunger, but they that seek the Lord shall not lack any good thing.

Young lions are powerful. They're in their prime. They're strong.

They're adept hunters. They have the ability to secure prey, yet even they sometimes will go hungry. But he that fears the Lord will never lack any good thing again.

So God will provide all good things to you, even though we see those who are strong, those who are capable of making a living for themselves, if they aren't trusting the Lord, their position is not secure. They may lack and suffer hunger, but if you're fearing the Lord, you have a promise from God. You will not lack any good thing.

In Psalm 37 and verse 25, David said, I have been young and now I'm old. Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed, that is his children, begging bread. Sometimes I've had to remember that promise.

I've had to remember it a lot of different times, because there were times when I was almost reduced to begging. But I remembered this promise. I thought, well, it doesn't seem appropriate.

And the Lord has always been faithful to me. Sometimes we've been very low and sometimes we've been rich. But it is true.

God does not allow his righteous to be forsaken. In Philippians 4:19, Paul said, My God shall supply all your need according to his riches and glory in Christ Jesus. So there are sufficient promises to remove any worry that we might have about finances, about financial needs.

Now, if you're greedy and the things you want are not things you need, but they're just keeping up with the Joneses or every luxury or convenience or toy that is faddish to have nowadays. Yeah, God hasn't promised he's going to give you all those things. And if your heart is set on those things, well, then you might experience disappointment in the level of provision that God gives.

But if you're seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness rather than those things, then the things you need will be added and you never need to worry about it ever. What about safety? Well, there's promises about that, too. In Psalm 34, in verse 7, it says, The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivers them.

The angel of God encamps around you. One angel in the Old Testament slew 185,000 Syrian soldiers in one night. Jesus said that he could call 12 legions of angels to have saved him if that were what he desired to do.

And Jesus told us to be careful about offending children because they have angels, too,

that report to God regularly and stand up for them. Well, here we have a promise that those who fear God, the angel of the Lord encamps around about them, have no fear. Nothing can touch you unless it's the will of God, if you are trusting God, if you're one of those that fear God.

Yes, you can die. Yes, you can be in an accident. You can get sick.

These things can happen, but they can't happen unless God lets it happen because his angels are normally encamped around about you. Nothing can get through unless it is God's desire. We know the story of Job, how the devil wanted to get at Job to hurt him physically, but he couldn't and he complained, there's a hedge around this guy.

And God had to remove the hedge temporarily just so that Job could experience a little bit of pain or a great deal of pain. But the point is that so that Job could be attacked, God had to consciously remove the barrier around him because Satan would say, I can't get through to this guy. You've got this hedge around him.

Well, there's a hedge around you too. God protects you. And you can be quite sure that if you ever do experience an accident or a serious loss or danger to your person, that it is not because God is on vacation.

God is there. God has a purpose in it. And because you trust God, you can rejoice in it and not worry that something's going to happen that you won't be able to rejoice in because God is on your side and his angels are there.

In Psalm 91, we have a similar kind of promise. And of course, it has to be qualified with the same kind of things I just said. It may be in God's will for you to experience some physical harm.

God uses this sometimes and certainly someday we have to die. So the promises only apply insofar as the will of God is so far alive. But we're not afraid of the will of God.

He's on our side. And even if he brings something we would not have chosen for ourselves because we trust his better wisdom and better judgment, we are not afraid that he will bring something that's bad for us. But in Psalm 91, beginning with verse three, it says, surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler and from the noisome pestilence.

He shall cover you with his feathers and under his wings shall thou trust in his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flies by day war. Not afraid of that, nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wastes at noon day.

A thousand shall fall at thy side and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked

because thou has made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most high thy habitation. There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling, for he shall give his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against the stone.

A more comprehensive promise of physical protection could not be desired. Just about everything that would present danger to life and limb is brought up in this psalm. And it says these things can't touch you.

The angels are given charge of you. They're not going to lose their charge. They're not going to be faithless to their commission.

They're watching over you. They're going to have to answer to God for it. But if something does happen to you, you can say, well, I was trusting God.

I was claiming the promises, but still these things happened to me. Therefore, I must assume this is the will of God and therefore I rejoice in it. And only if we believe that God is fully sovereign over our circumstances, can we rejoice in disasters.

Well, there are promises about safety. Hebrews 13, five and six says, be content with such things as you have. For he has said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.

Therefore we may confidently say, the Lord is my helper. I will not fear what men shall do to me. Jesus said, don't fear those who can kill the body and can do no more, but fear him who can kill the body and soul and health.

Jesus said, he's going to be with us. We don't have to fear what men do to us. We have promises of provision.

We have promises of safety. Well, what if we're worried about failure, failure in the Christian life? We know people who backslidden. What if I backslide? I mean, I may not be any stronger than some of those who have.

How do I know I'm really going to make it to the end? How can I be sure by laying hold on the promises of God? Again, there are promises about this that mean that tell us that you will not fail if you're trusting God in these things. Look at, for example, Psalm 37 again, Psalm 37 and verse 24, though he fall. Now the, the, he is the good man mentioned in verse 23, the Christian, though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down for the Lord upholds him with his hand.

The Lord upholds you. Failure is impossible if you are trusting in this promise that God will uphold you. He cannot fail you.

He has never failed anyone before. And as preachers are fond of saying, he's not going to destroy a perfect record on your account. He's never failed anyone before you.



In Isaiah 41 and verse 10, another promise about this, feared thou not for I am with thee, be not dismayed for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee. Yea, I will help thee.

Yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. If you believe that, then you will never fear that someday you will fail in the Christian life and that you'll fall away and you'll end up not saved when you were really hoping that God would keep you. There's a promise in 1 Peter, I think it's 1:5, if I'm not mistaken, it says that we are kept, and that means guarded as with a garrison of soldiers, we are kept by the power of God through faith.

So as long as we're trusting, as long as we have faith, we are kept by the power of God. We cannot fall. We can fall if we cease to trust, however, but as long as we trust, which is a choice we make, we will not fall.

We trust in his promises. You know, the only thing that I ever really am tempted to worry about, there is only one thing in the whole world I am ever tempted to worry about, and that is my kids. I'm not afraid to die, and when I was single, to die as a martyr was something I wanted to do.

I was eager for it. Bring on the lions. But with kids, it's hard to think that way because you think, well, who's going to raise my kids? Maybe they won't be Christians, you know? What if my kids are taken from me? What if persecution comes like the Christians in Russia experience, where because they're Christians, their children are taken from them and raised in state institutions where they're taught atheism and so forth? It could happen here, and the thought of that, if I allow it to come and dwell on it, can really cause me to worry about my children.

But there are promises that I lay hold of about my children, and it pulls the rug out from under worry. Let me give you some of these. Isaiah 49, 25.

Isaiah 49, in verse 25, God said, But thus saith the Lord, Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered. For I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children. I will take that as a promise of God.

That he will contend with those who come against me and my family, and he will save my children. Maybe some would say, well, you can't take that as a general promise. That only applies to a certain situation.

Well, then don't take it as a promise. I will. Don't if you don't want to.

I shall, as for me and my house. In Isaiah 54, another promise that is encouraging when I think about my children and when I'm tempted to worry about them. Isaiah 54, verse 13.

It says, And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of

thy children. I like that. Another verse that means a lot to me, and the Lord just spoke this to me as sort of a personal word once when I was thinking about my children and what would happen to them if I would die and so forth.

It's in 2 Timothy 1.12. Just the latter part of that verse where Paul says, I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day. And the Lord reminded me that I had committed my children to him at the time they were born, and even before, when they were in the womb, they were committed to God. And Paul says, I believe God can keep that which I have committed to him.

He doesn't need me there to keep them safe. He can do it. I've committed them to him.

They're not mine anyway, so it's in his lap. Now, that doesn't mean I'm without responsibility in raising them and so forth. I obviously, no promises of God are intended to create irresponsibility in our lifestyle.

There's always obligations. There's always conditions. It's only as we seek the kingdom of God that the other things are added to us.

It's only as we fear the Lord that we shall not lack any good things. There's always a condition. And obviously, we have responsibilities about providing for our families and training them in the Lord and so forth.

But we have the promise of God. If we're trusting him that he will save, great will be the peace of our children. And he can keep that which we've committed unto him.

The last thing I wanted to mention that people worry about, for which we have a tremendous promise, is old age. Some people worry so much about old age they don't want to think about. They don't want to talk about it.

You bring up the subject and they just change the subject. I know some grandparents who refuse to think of themselves as grandparents when they first had grandchildren because it just made them feel too old. And people worry about old age.

I mean, all kinds of things happen to you when you're old. You get weak. Your organs start failing one at a time, maybe several at a time.

Finances are hard to get a hold of if you're not insured and so forth. And old age is a scary time for some. And a lot of people think and worry about their old age.

But the Bible has this precious promise in Isaiah 46, verses 3 and 4. Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnants of the house of Israel which are born by me from the belly. That is, from the time you were born, from the womb you've been carried by me, he says, which are carried from the womb. And even to your old age, I am he.

Even to your hoar hairs, hoar means white hairs, when you have white hairs instead of black hairs, I will carry you. I have made and I will bear. Even I will carry and I will deliver you.

There's a promise for old age that everyone ought to know if they ever worry about that. The promise of God, there's far more than this, of course. I've just given some representative samples that deal with the things that most people worry about in our society.

If we lived in a different society, there might be a whole different set of things that people worry about. Although really, these are the things most people worry about who worry. Food, safety, clothing, their children, old age.

These are the common dreads that people have. And the Bible has promises for every single one. It's not surprising that in 2 Peter it says, in him we've been given great and precious promises that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature.

The promises themselves are truly precious and meaningful. And it's these promises that will deliver you. They're the keys to unlock.

What was it in Pilgrim's Progress? They were in the giant despair's castle, right? In the castle of doubting or something like that. But the key that got Pilgrim out of the castle, the doubting castle or whatever it was called, was the key of the promise. The key of promise.

The promises of God get you out of despair. They deliver from worry if you mix them with faith. So how do we cast our cares on him? Let me just give it to you in four quick points.

First of all, you pray. In praying you are transferring your burden to God. Paul Hawkins, once I was listening to Paul Hawkins and he said something that I thought was really interesting or profound.

He said sometimes when burdens are put upon us, God is the one putting a burden upon us. But the reason the burden gets heavier is it's supposed to drive us down to our knees so that we can pray and we should pray until the burden is lifted. But God allows concerns to be put on us.

We shouldn't be carefree in the sense that we don't have any compassion for the fact that a lot of horrible things are happening to people in the world. We should have concern. But when these things burden us down, instead of worrying about them, which won't do any good, we let the burden drive us to our knees and then we unload it in prayer.

We transfer it to the one who is willing to bear it for us. And it says in Philippians chapter

four about this very thing in verses six and seven, be careful for nothing, which means don't worry about a thing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be known to God and the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Pray about it.

Jesus talked a lot about prayer and even in the passage where he told us not to worry about food and clothing. In the same chapter a little earlier, he said, when you pray this way, pray, give us this day our daily bread. That's why you don't have to worry about it because you prayed about it.

In chapter six of Matthew, he says first pray about it. Then he says, don't worry about it. Once you've prayed about it, you've given the burden to God.

So the next thing to do, of course, is to just go about obediently to God, trust in the Lord and do good. Part of committing something to God is just going about your business and carrying out your duty and your responsibilities as you should, as though there's nothing to worry about because there isn't now. You've prayed about it.

Now just do what you're supposed to do as a Christian. If your car breaks down and you don't know how to fix it, you commit the job into someone's hands who you trust. You leave the keys to the car there and you walk away and go about your business.

You don't sit around worrying all day whether your car is going to get fixed. You trust the person you give to. You've committed the job over to them.

You've transferred the responsibility to someone else. Now you can go about your business and not worry about a thing. Leave it in competent hands and that is what casting it on the Lord is.

Then, of course, what comes next is rest, resting in the Lord. You need to discipline yourself to rest in the Lord. It says in Hebrews chapter 4, we need to strive to enter into that rest.

It's a discipline. It's not something that comes naturally because doubt and fear comes naturally because these are attacks from the enemy. But rest is a discipline that we must cultivate.

We've given it to the Lord. Let's just rest. Let's just go to sleep.

I don't mean go to sleep in the negative sense, but go to bed and sleep. Stop tossing and turning. Psalm 37 7 says, rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him.

Fret not thyself. Rest in the Lord, don't fret. In Psalm 127, Psalm 127 verse 2 says, it is a vain thing for you to rise up early and to sit up late to eat the bread of sorrows.

For so he giveth his beloved sleep. You rest, you go to sleep. Don't sit up late worrying or

get up out of bed early pacing the floor, eating the bread of sorrows.

You just, you just go to bed. Let God take care of it. It says in Psalm 121 verses 3 and 4, he that keepeth Israel does not slumber nor sleep.

And you know, the story I've told before about the woman during World War II, who in England, her town was evacuated because of the bombings from Germany and all the people went into the bomb shelters, but she wasn't there. And they wondered if she had been killed. But when they came out after the bombings, they saw her sitting on her front porch, rocking her chair and said, where were you? She said, I was here in the house.

Where should I be? And they said, but what about the bombings? Didn't, didn't that unnerve you? She says, no. Well, where'd you sleep? Right here in the house. And they thought, well, how could you sleep with all that danger around? And she said, well, I read in my Bible that the Lord God never slumbers nor sleeps.

And I figured there's no use both of us staying awake. And you can rest in the Lord. If you've transferred the responsibility of your cares to him, you've prayed about it.

There's nothing more you need to do. Go about your business and do good and trust in the Lord and rest in the Lord and discipline your soul to do so. Sometimes you need to say, why are you cast down within me? Oh, my soul.

You need to look at yourself, talk to yourself. Sometimes they wait, what's going on there? What are you worried about? Isn't God still on the throne? What's going on? What are you cast out for? Why are you disquieted within me? The Psalmist said to his soul on another occasion, the Psalmist said, my soul waits out only on God. You need to take command of your soul sometimes.

You need to tell it what to do. You need to say, stop worrying. He that has no rule over his own spirit is like a city that's broken down without walls.

You need to rule your spirit. You need to take command of your soul and you need to tell it when to stop worrying. You need to say, why are you disquieted? Wait thou only on God.

Trust in the Lord, soul. And this is the cure for worry. You transfer it to another.