

Greg Laurie: What to Do When Worry Seeks to Kill You

Charlie Brown said, "I have a new philosophy; I'm only going to dread one day at a time." That's an insightful thought about worry.

Anxiety, fear and worry are big issues in our nation today. And now medical experts are telling us the prevalence of anxiety across the country and around the world has reached a crisis level.

When things are going well, we worry about how long it will be until they start going badly again. Yet Jesus said, "Today's trouble is enough for today" (Matt. 6:34b, NLT). In other words, you have enough problems to face today, so don't start worrying about tomorrow and the day after and a week after and a month after.

So, what do we do when worry hits? What do we do when we're suddenly filled with anxiety? What do we do when we're overcome with fear?

When we find ourselves filled with anxiety, worry and stress, we need to take out the trash. The trash is picked up once a week at our house, and I'm glad about that. In the same way, we need to give our worries to Jesus Christ. The Bible says, "Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you" (1 Pet. 5:7).

In the original language, this signifies a definite act of the will by which we choose to stop worrying and instead let God assume the responsibility for our welfare. It's essentially saying, "I'm deliberately choosing to not worry about this. I'm intentionally throwing this on God and putting it in his hands. And I'm leaving it in his hands."

You don't empty your trash once a month. You do it weekly and sometimes even daily. It's the same with our worries. Sometimes we have to keep coming back to the Lord again and again. Some days we have to bring it to Him more often than other days, depending on what we're facing in a given moment.

God cares for you. He is mindful of you. Let that sink in for a bit. He wants to take your cares. He wants to take your worries and anxieties. In fact, Jesus said, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavily burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28, MEV).

Jesus also said, "Do not be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32). We learn three things about God from that brief verse: God is our shepherd, God is our Father and God is our King.

God is in control of our lives, and nothing catches Him by surprise. He knew it was coming. And if something is a concern to you, then it's also a concern to Him.

Here's another thing we need to keep in mind: There are no accidents in the life of a Christian, only providence. We as believers do not believe in fate. We believe in faith, and we believe that God is in control.

When it seems as though your world is coming apart, God is aware of it. And remember, you're not alone in your suffering. Others have experienced something very similar, if not the same thing. Others are currently going through it. And others will go through it in the future.

The Bible even tells us this: "No temptation has taken you except what is common to man. God is faithful, and He will not permit you to be tempted above what you can endure, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it" (1 Cor. 10:13).

If we're suffering with something and then find someone else

who has suffered with the same thing, or maybe something even worse, it's very helpful to talk with them. This is where community comes in. It's where the church family comes in. It's also the reason we shouldn't try to be solo Christians.

We need our Christian friends. We should never isolate ourselves and disconnect from other believers. When we're not around those who can help us, we can get into a funk.

By the way, this happened to men and women of God. For instance, Elijah, after his great victory over the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel, made his way to a cave. Then he went into a deep depression.

While he was there, the Lord actually spoke to him and said, "Why are you here, Elijah?" (1 Kings 19:9). I have found that low lows often follow high highs. Elijah had a big moment, and then he had to return to reality.

God is near, and He will be with us if we call out to Him. He reminds us in Isaiah 41:10, "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will help you, yes, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."

I heard a story about a man who came face to face with the dangers of worry. One day he saw Death marching toward a city, and he said, "What are you doing?"

Death said, "I'm going to take 100 people today."

"That's horrible!" the man said. So he ran ahead and warned everyone that Death was coming at the end of the day.

As the sun was setting, the man saw Death leaving the city. He said, "Wait a second! You told me you were going to take 100 people. A thousand people died today!"

"I kept my word," Death said. "I only took 100. Worry took the rest."

That's what worry can do.

If you're dealing with depression, anxiety and fear, take your eyes off yourself and put them on God. And remember this: You are not alone. Despite your circumstances or certain challenges you may be facing, despite everything in life that you're dealing with, God is still in control. So give all your worries to Him. {eoa}

For more on mental health, check out the new e-book Healing From the Inside Out, available here for just \$.

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