

Quiz: Is Worry Killing You?

by James P. Gills, M.D.

Answer A or B to the following questions and then tally your answers to find the results.

A. I'm usually disorganized.

B. I don't let little things bother me.

A. I can be very irritable.

B. I'm not an indecisive person.

A. I can be critical and judgmental.

B. I feel like my days are pretty productive.

A. I have problems building genuine friendships.

B. I'm in good health.

A. I often get colds or the flu.

B. I have close friends.

A. I have trouble sleeping.

B. I can focus on one task until completion.

A. I'm a workaholic.

B. I'm often singing praise and worship songs.

Mostly A's. Don't worry. There is still hope for you. Remember that the Bible tells us a thankful spirit is the basis for all of life. Paul tells us not to worry but to always be thankful to the Lord. With Paul's counsel, we can reject worry. We can rejoice with thanksgiving.

When we're focused on the person of Jesus Christ in thanksgiving, our anxieties and fears are wiped away. Our hearts overflow with a spirit of peace and joy because He lives in us.

What a relief to know that each of us can turn to God and put our lives in His hands! We can be thankful for His blessings

and let thanksgiving fill our hearts.

We can be filled with peace regardless of our circumstances. We can be faithful to the one who faithfully provides. We must focus on Him with thankful hearts.

Are you weighed down with worry? Are you filled with fear? There's refuge in the loving arms of God.

He will break the bonds of worry. He will banish fear.

We get His real and lasting peace when we turn to Him and say: "Thank You, Father, for always loving me. Thank You for the eternity that You have given me through the person of Jesus Christ, who died and rose again for me." When we turn to Him, we will no longer be consumed by fear and worry.

Jesus told His disciples: "'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in Me.

'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. ... Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid'" (John 14:1,27).

Certainly none of us can avoid the situations that could create worry and fear. But we can avoid the worry itself by having a spirit of thanksgiving.

We can turn to God and trust in His goodness. We can choose His peace rather than the troubles of this world.

It isn't always easy. Worry can sneak up on us. Satan knows that, given the choice, we'd rather have peace than the turmoil that worry creates. So he uses our weak human will and lures us into a lifestyle of worry.

Worry starts innocently enough as a normal, natural concern about our basic needs. Do we have enough money to buy adequate food, clothes and shelter? Is our health good? Are our friends and family healthy and happy?

It is perfectly natural to have these concerns. But Satan uses them to lure us away from our trust in God.

As we become less God-centered and more self-centered, our concerns become worries. We quit trusting that God will provide for us. We think we have to take care of ourselves, and we begin to worry about circumstances and events that are beyond our control.

The way to avoid Satan's trap is to learn the promises God makes in His Word about how He will take care of us. Search for promises that relate to the specific issues and circumstances you face. Then when one of them weighs you down, turn to read His promises and use these verses in the fight against fear.

The Bible tells us repeatedly to "fear not." Often this command is followed by the words "I am with you" (Is. 41:10). It is because God is with us that we do not need to fear. He will always be with us.

May we learn to trust fully in Him, with thanksgiving for His grace. He will destroy fear and worry and give us His peace.

Mostly B's. Congratulations! You refuse to allow the cares of the world to control your life by infecting your thoughts, attitudes and actions. You understand that worry can destroy you physically, emotionally and worst of all, spiritually because chronic worry drives a wedge between us and God. Continue to cast you cares on God.

James P. Gills, M.D., is the founder and director of St. Luke's Cataract and Laser Institute in Tarpon Springs, Florida. He is also the author of numerous books on spiritual topics, including God's Prescription for Healing (Siloam) and Rx for Worry (Creation House Press), from which this article is adapted.