

Spiritual Warfare: What You Can Do When You're Paralyzed by Worries

A very worried man once approached famous 18th-century preacher John Wesley, nervously complaining, "I don't know what I should do with all this trouble in my life!"

Just as the anxious man finished, Wesley noticed a cow looking over a stone wall. And as if by divine revelation, Wesley suddenly saw a profound lesson in the cow's behavior.

"Do you know why that cow is looking over the wall?" he inquired of the man.

"No," the man responded with great curiosity.

"The cow is looking over the wall because she can't see through it," Wesley answered. "And that's what you must do with your wall of trouble; you must look over it."

Wesley's illustration back then remains solid advice to those who face a wall of worries today, be it built of debts, symptoms, relationship woes or anything else. If you only stare into the trouble, you'll be paralyzed by it. And worry will beget worry. The key to press past the problem is to do what the cow did with the wall: look over it.

What to Look To

Wesley's wisdom closely echoes Jesus' words in His sermon on the mount. But Jesus took it a step further and instructed what to look to.

"Don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What we wear?' ... Your heavenly Father

already knows your needs,' He encouraged. But rather, 'Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need'" (Matt. 6:31–33, NLT).

In other words, according to Jesus, to not worry about "these things," you have to stop looking into them and begin to look beyond them. But not just to overlook them, but to see what's above them—the kingdom of God, which includes the King of the kingdom. Yes, keep your eyes fixed on His character, His promises and His presence—above all else.

See God's Faithfulness

When you look to God, remember how He brought you through times you never thought you'd make it through. Reflect upon His protection in everything you were certain would be the end of you. Recall His provision in moments you didn't know what to do. In seeking Him, you're sure to see the goodness of His heart.

Therefore, be encouraged: God's faithfulness is above the fickleness of today's finances, the seriousness of today's symptoms, the debris of today's disaster or the hurt of today's heartbreak. Now lift up your head, see the one from whom your help comes (Ps. 121:1–2), and move forward with confidence that He will get you through again.

(For more help to overcome your worries, watch my full teaching, "The Easy Way to Trust God.") {eoa}

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