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Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

**The Oaks
Baptist Church**
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Freed from Worry Matt 6:25-34

Lesson Background and Introduction

Worry is a universal human experience. Our brains constantly provoke us to evaluate our circumstances and identify threats to our well-being. Threats are many, but even when they are minor, we exaggerate them or imagine threats that do not exist. We leave ourselves with restlessness, sleeplessness, loss of appetite, short tempers, and feelings of hopelessness. Jesus addresses our deep capacity to worry in today's text. He tells us not to worry, but he does so differently from others. And his conclusions are cause for great faith in God. Today's text is near the middle of Jesus' discourse known as the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7). Few passages of the Bible challenge us relentlessly throughout life as much as does this one. Do you see all the ways it makes us think about our lives? Trusting God for the future, seeking His kingdom constantly as the first priority, makes us ponder how we use our time, where we place our efforts, how we relate to the people around us, and how we feel inside. Jesus gives his followers a great responsibility in this passage. But we are missing the point if we feel burdened by that responsibility. When we listen carefully, we realize that Jesus is not making our lives harder with these words. Rather, he is making our lives easier. We are free from the burden of worry when we submit to God. Clearly, worry does not keep us alive and well. Only God's provision can sustain us through the trials of life. And certainly only God can give us a life that triumphs over death. God's provision is powerful. He provides exactly what his people need. Trusting in God's provision is the antidote to worry.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

The Curse of Worry - In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus specifically addressed worry and urged His listeners to untangle themselves from being overly concerned about daily needs such as food and clothing. Worry means one's mind is overwhelmed by negative, fearful thoughts. It's similar to a relentless army marching back and forth. How do I figure this out? How do I fix it? What can I do about this or that? What if "X" happens? These kinds of distractions are unnecessary and contrary to God's desire. When the mind is stressed out, there is very little or no time to meditate on what's on God's heart or pursue spiritual matters.

Look at Nature - Jesus drew His audience's attention to nature, the birds, flowers, and grass. Our feathery friends wake up each morning anticipating worms in the ground or fish in the lake. They expect the Father's attentiveness to their needs. In the same way, the heavenly Father longs for His children to share the same expectancy of His care. Aren't human beings worth more than birds and flowers?

How to Stop Worrying - But how does one accept Jesus' invitation to worry-free living? Is it possible to stop the persistent habit? First of all, Jesus said, realize anxieties accomplish nothing. It destructively eats away at the inside of one's body. Secondly, ask different questions. Wake up in the morning and seek what the Father is up to that day. Holy Spirit, where will you lead me? Lord, how can I join with You in Your work, building up Your kingdom here on earth? Kingdom work should be God's children's major primary concern. Ask God to transform your thought life, believing each day; the worm is already in the ground for breakfast. So now, my needs are met, I can turn my thinking toward God, what He wants of my day. That's an indication He is the top priority, He's in His proper place as God. Seek Him. He's the one in control.

Limit It - And lastly, if you must be distracted with your troubles, limit it to today, not next week, month, or year. It's okay to make plans for the future. It's natural to think back on past mistakes, grieve over poor decisions—but don't dwell in either place. Live in the right now. The key to worry-free living is to seek God earnestly, look to Him, and Him alone, as your source for all things.

(Adapted from the Echoes Commentary)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:

The more you think about God's goodness, the less you'll think about your worries

POEM FOR THE WEEK:

When we give all our cares to God,
Our worries will depart; He gives to us a peace of mind
That calms our anxious heart. —Sper

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God

(Phil 4:6 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", Feb 01, 2002)

New Series: Confident Hope

**UNIT 1: Jesus Teaches
About Faith**

NEXT WEEK

**Delivered from Fear
(Matthew 8:23-27)**

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

Life Without Worry through Trust (Matt 6:25-29)

Trust and don't worry about physical things (25-26)

Food and other physical things do not bring us nearer to God, only our faith (1 Cor 8:8)

Even if we were to work and obtain many physical things, they are meaningless in terms of eternity (Eccl 2:21-23)

We must realize that our human appetite is never satisfied (Eccl 6:7)

As Jesus said, we do not live on bread alone (Luke 4:4)

In our physical toil, we must remember what is the most important between it and the words of Jesus (Luke 10:41-42)

We needn't worry about physical things because God has promised to provide for His righteous people (Prov 10:3)

Trust knowing the true meaning of life (27)

It is the Holy Spirit who gives life to the spirit (John 6:63)

God says that those who want to save their life must lose it in Him (Matt 16:25-26)

Life is a loss without God (Phil 3:7-8)

Jesus is the life of which everyone who gets it must come through Him (John 14:6)

God controls life, not man (Daniel 5:23)

Trust and don't worry about financial things (28-29)

We must learn to trust God with our finances and be content with our financial situation (1 Tim 6:6-10)

Financial things will forsake us, but Jesus never will forsake us (Heb 13:5)

Be careful of greed, our life does not consist of abundance (Luke 12:15)

By trusting God, He promises to bless us beyond our capacity (Mal 3:10)

By trusting God, He promises to make us rich in all the right ways (2 Cor 9:11)

Life Without Worry through Faith (Matt 6:30-34)

Faith in God because He is the ultimate provider (30-32)

The same God who supplies our physical needs is the same one that supplies our salvation (2 Cor 9:10)

God knows what we need before we ask Him (Matt 6:8)

God is more than able to provide all things at all times (2 Cor 9:8)

All wealth and strength comes from God (1 Chron 29:12)

Faith in God through seeking His Kingdom (33)

Seeking spiritual things

God's word is like spiritual food and therefore we need to ingest it daily (Heb 5:12-14)

We need to trust God by casting all our anxieties on Him (1 Peter 5:7)

Trust assumes faith (Luke 8:25)

God's grace is more than sufficient for us (2 Cor 12:9)

We needn't worry because God will not allow any temptation more than we can bear (1 Cor 10:13)

We need to trust God because our competence is only in Him (2 Cor 3:5)

In our time of need, we need to approach the throne of God (Heb 4:16)

Seeking heavenly value versus earthly value

Earthly things have no value because regardless of the amount accumulated, others will eventually reap the benefit (Ps 39:6)

Heavenly value is deliverance from eternal death whereas earthly value is worthless (Prov 11:4)

Heavenly values result in godly wisdom and understanding (Prov 16:16)

Earthly values are like chasing after the wind (Eccl 2:26)

Earthly values are never satisfying (Eccl 5:10)

Contentment is one of the virtues of heavenly values (Heb 13:5)

Remember that our citizenship is in heaven, not on earth (Phil 3:20)

Our hope is stored in Heaven (Col 1:5)

Our mind should be set on heavenly things, not only earthly things (Col 3:2)

Earthly values are uncertain, but heavenly ones have a Divine promise (1 Tim 6:17-19)

Faith in God regardless of troubles (34)

We need to enjoy daily life because we don't know what the next day will bring (Eccl 3:22)

We must only think of today because life is too short to worry about tomorrow (James 4:13-14)

Every man's days are full of trouble (Job 14:1)

Jesus showed us how to think of provisions and life – day by day (Matt 6:11)

It is only through God's great love and mercy that we are able to see another day (Lam 3:22-23)