

Worry-less Living

By Dana Chau

Some might say this is Worry Season rather than Thanksgiving Season. There are economic uncertainties, growing unemployment, loss of consumer confidence, and many newly elected and appointed officials coming into office.

We are worried about how each affects our lives: Our quality of life and our ability to have what we need to live on.

Here's what Jesus says about worrying. **Luke 12:13-34**

Some things are NOT worth worrying about, because we CAN live without them.

Someone tells of a man who was offered as much land as he could walk around in twenty-four hours. The man began to walk in the morning, and he was thrilled to see how much land he had covered by nightfall. Without sleep, he continued to walk.

As the next morning drew near, he thought, *"I can walk just a few more steps, a few more steps, and a few more steps."*

With an hour left, he realized that he might not be able to circle back to the starting point. So he began to run. He ran as fast as he could. When he arrived at the starting point, he dropped dead of a heart attack.

Question: *"How much land does a man need?"*

Answer: *"Six feet, between the top of his head and the bottom of his toes."*

We have to fight the tendency of "the more we have, the more we want." Because the more we want, the more we worry about not having what we want. This is the kind of worry Jesus wants us to stop. Jesus says, *"A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."*

What do we want? Can we live without it? What happens when we don't get what we want?

We may want our retirement account to grow. But we see the losses in our retirement investment over the past three months. Should we worry?

"A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

~ Jesus Christ

Here are four good questions to ask.

1) *"Does worrying help?"*

2) *"Do I have food on the table and roof over my head?"*

3) *"Why should I worry about something I can live without?"*

4) *"If I can't live without it, why did I risk losing what I can't live without?"*

Here's a possible 5th question: Had we known that we would lose this money, would we have given the money to God's work?

Fred Smith asked Maxey Jarman if

he ever thought about the millions of dollars he gave away to Christian work. Jarman replied, *"Of course I have, but remember, I didn't lose a penny I gave away. I only lost what I kept."*

Paul wrote, *"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that (1 Timothy 6:6-8)."*

There are people around the world who are thankful for clean drinking water and a full stomach. We should be thankful to have what we have. It is certainly much more than what we need.

Some things ARE worth worrying about, but it WON'T help to worry about them.

Some necessities in life may be worth worrying about. In our society, transportation, health insurance and education are necessities to living.

But Jesus says that worrying won't help. Worrying doesn't increase our opportunities, skills or income. Here's what worrying does: It robs us of time, creativity, motivation, faith and health.

Instead of worrying, Jesus encourages us to consider God's loving provisions in creation and time. God's creation gives us the raw material to sustain life. God created the sun, the soil, and the seed. We sow and we reap what we need for life.

A friend took me out to lunch. I gave thanks when the food arrived at our table. Afterward he asked, *"Why did you thank God, when I'm treating you?"*

"But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that."

~ Apostle Paul

I thought for a moment and asked, *"Where did the cow for the meat come from? And the vegetable for the salad? Who gave you life, mind and muscle to earn the money to treat me to lunch?"*

He replied, *"Well, if you put it that way."*

We receive what we need when we act on God's loving provisions in creation. Here's what else. We receive what we need when we act on God's loving provisions of time. Time in terms of today and eternity.

Jesus taught us to pray: *"Give us today our daily bread (Matthew 6:11)."*

We must understand the importance of today. Use today well, and we will worry less about tomorrow. Study today and worry less on the next exam. Do your job as a parent today and worry less when your children leave home for college. Learn a new skill today and worry less about tomorrow's changing market.

John Maxwell pointed out that success comes from managing today well. Most people make promises but allow the promises to slip through today. Into "someday."

Someday, I will spend time with my kids. No, do it today. You can spare 30 minutes today. Someday I will eat healthier. No, do it today. Add a salad to your dinner tonight. Someday I will make room and time for God in my life. No, do it today.

Paul reminds us, *"Now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation (2 Corinthians 6:2)."*

Jesus reminds us that God has already given us what we need for our earthly life. And He has also given us eternal life through Jesus Christ.

John 3:16 - *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."*

"We are inwardly constructed in nerve and tissue, brain cell and soul, for faith (in God) and not for fear. God made us that way. To live by worry is to live against reality."
~ Dr. E. Stanley Jones

Romans 8:32 - *"[God] who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?"*

Today is the day to put your trust in God's loving provisions of creation, today and eternal life through Jesus Christ.

A John Hopkins University doctor said, "We do not know why it is that worriers die sooner than the non-worriers, but that is a fact."

Dr. E. Stanley Jones replied, "I think I know. We are inwardly constructed in nerve and tissue, brain cell and soul, for faith (in God) and not for fear. God made us that way. To live by worry is to live against reality."

To schedule Dana to speak at a small group, Worship Service or retreat, contact asianintegrity@eathlink.net