

Jesus once said to a friend who was overtaken with common tasks: *“Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered by so many things; only one thing is necessary”* (**Luke 10:41**). He was speaking of His Word and spiritual things being so much more important than the physical. She had lost focus of that and was having a tough time.

I think most of us can relate to Martha. We live in a time of great potential anxiety, stress and worry in many more categories than housecleaning: health is an issue for some, or the gravity of our daily responsibilities can get heavy, or raising a family, or work. And concern for these things can divide our minds, pulling us in and away from spiritual things and our true daily purpose: to live for and honor our Maker.

And listen, not all worry is sinful. Being concerned about things in our circle of influence is a part of life and can actually help us live better lives. Concern about our JOB can make us WORK HARDER. Concern about our KIDS can make us give them ATTENTION and TRAINING. Concern about our HEALTH can lead to DIET or EXERCISE. Even Paul mentioned his “daily concern for the CHURCHES” which led him to constantly pray for them.

But this can easily EVOLVE. It can become something more, something harmful, something wrong. To demonstrate that change, let me show you the definition of the word Jesus used in Luke 10:

*“to be anxious” “to be troubled with care” “to seek to promoted one’s interests”*

That’s strong! It’s anxiety and it brings trouble, because my emphasized interest shifts!

I have omitted the section of my notes addressing categories. I typed up thoughts on categories wherein this evolution occur – (Things in your past you can’t change) (That’s in your future you can’t change) (Things that will never even happen) – a heart pulled away from God to things we can do nothing but stare. And then there are (things you can change), which we should maybe, I don’t know, change, instead of letting them rip our gaze away from our spiritual purpose.

Anyway, I want to leave the specifics to you this morning. You know the areas in your life where there is healthy concern. Wherein you are still all about God and His way of handling it. And you know the areas in your life where something has changed. Concern has evolved to anxiety and less of God and maybe spiritual crisis. For us all, God has some powerful messages.

- I. **What is Jesus’ Position on Worry?** (Matthew 6:24-34)
  - a. Don’t Do It – (v.25,31,34) – Not even with life’s most basic needs. I came to build a family of faith that will not lost time or sleep or heart over anything.
    - i. Philippians 4:6-7 – Same word. Let nothing weigh on you. Turn to God.
  - b. It is Disrespectful – (v.25, 30) – It questions God’s presence and oversight and ability to hold His people’s hands and lead them through any situation.
    - i. (v33) – Worry says to God, I can’t just seek your Kingdom and things work out. I have to figure out how to do this my own way. God’s worthy of more.
  - c. It is a Waste of Time – (v.27) – It won’t solve a problem or produce a good outcome. By definition it pulls away from God and brings our view inward. This can hurt us.
    - i. Ephesians 5:15-20 - When I’m mentally burdened and can’t focus on God, a lot of things start happening – like I lose an understanding of the Lord’s will for my day, maybe I escape into vices like alcohol, I miss worship, I fail to give thanks, and I just “can’t even” think about brethren right now. All of which is a waste of the precious time that God has provided.
  - d. It Robs us of God’s Gifts – (v32-34) – God knows what you need. God knows how and when to give it to you. God has the power to help you through this day. But worry robs us of the blessings of God. It keeps us from being passionate seekers and accessing blessings.
    - i. Luke 8:14 – God wants incredible things to grow in you by the promises of His word and the way it shapes you. God wants to prune your branches and create fruit that can nourish all in your presence. But worry robs us of that. It mires us in self doubt and worldly answers and we should want much more.

At this point, I need you to have come this far on today’s journey: you have personally identified the areas in your life where life is pulling your view from your walk with God. And you have acknowledged that that is not the life Jesus wants for you and not the way you want to live.

## II. What is God's Plan to Help You?

### a. Appreciate Your Fellowship with God

- i. There are too many Christians who wear the name, walk the walk, worship, read and believe, but who do not experience God's presence in their life.
- ii. So, we are a tormented group who know we SHOULD be able to handle things but we just lack the life-giving connection to God to feel that strength!
- iii. **Hebrews 12:22-24** – We are standing upon the mount of Zion, the kingdom of Christ, the rock that has covered the earth and extends to the heavens.
  1. **12:1-2** – From here we can see our King. We can lay aside every encumbrance and look at His life, His victory, His love.
  2. **12:7-8** – Tough things happen. Difficult times arise. But God is with us, allowing these things so we can be shaped and proven as His children, not so we can fret and fail and flee.
  3. **12:12,15** – And all around us are Christians, fellow partakers of the love of God, to strengthen us and support us, and keep roots of bitterness, and doubt out of our lives.
- iv. As we stand on this mountain – we look up to Jesus for inspiration, we look forward and coming challenges as a chance to reach new heights with God, and we look around at the people of God who walk with us - that's fellowship!

### b. Be Optimistic about God's Plans for You

- i. There is a direct connection between anxiety and pessimism. Neither suggest that there are NO good things going on, but both can't help but dwell on the things that aren't so good. They get the attention and they drive the emotions.
- ii. **Phil. 4:4-9** – “Be anxious for nothing” is right in the middle of this, but I want you to catch the TONE of this text. Here is a man in prison for his faith. He says – “*Rejoice. The Lord is Near. Be Anxious for nothing. Be Thankful. Receive God's peace. Dwell on the holy things around. Practice Godly things.*”
- iii. **Phil. 4:12-13** – I figured out the secret to life. To having concerns but being burdened by none of it. To rising above all problems. “Christ is Near. Christ is my King. Christ will strengthen and protect me.” Can you do that.
- iv. *I read a story in a book on this topic about a 92 year old man who was being moved into a retirement home after losing his wife of 70 years. Heading to the elevator the nurse began to describe his room. He said, “I like it very much” with a big smile. She noted that he hadn't even seen it yet. He responded, “Seeing it has nothing to do with it. Happiness is something I choose in advance. Whether or not I like the room does not depend on the furniture, or the décor – rather it depends on how I decide to see it. It is already decided in my mind that I like my room.” Man, that guy sounds like a child of God to me. Is that how you and I sound?*

Notice, we could have made a list like -- go to church regularly, read your Bible daily, pray 6 times each day, go out and serve others. All great advice. But those are fruitless unless we have faith at our core, Appreciation for God, and Optimism about His presence in our lives. But I will add this - Give these things a Voice. Sing them because you believe them. Quote scriptures for situations. Speak optimistically. Talk about God's

### c. Confess Your Sins and Let Those Burdens Go!

- i. So much anxiety is associated with other emotions *like guilt, shame, embarrassment, lack of self-worth, lack of hope*. And these are all buzz words in Satan's arsenal!
- ii. Now we feel detached from God, so when normal weights and anxieties come, we don't feel confident or worthy to go to God, since Sin is still around, and... well... we are buried.
- iii. **I John 5:13-15** - This is a terrific worry busting passage. I know where I am going. I know that He is with me and hears me and will provide for me. **(5:18)** – Kept by Jesus!
- iv. **I John 1:7-10** – Sin prevents me from walking with Him. When I confess them openly to Him, to my brethren, to any, I release it and continue to walk with Him. But to ignore the sin and hope for a united mind in God... foolishness.
- v. **I John 2:1-3** – But Jesus can carry that burden and with it our cares. But that begins with you and me keeping His commandments, i.e., purging our life of anxiety ridden sin. Today.

Conclusion: **Matthew 6:24-25** – this is a fact. We cannot serve God and ourselves, promoting His interests at time and our interests at other times and find a mind of faith. **6:33** – Seek first His kingdom and righteousness. **6:34** – Do this today. Do it each day. In prayer and study and conversation – C, B, A.