

## Worry, Fear and Withdrawal

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**Introduction:** We are in a constant battle for control of our minds.

A. A simple faith is powerful for an abundant life.

1. We can learn from our children! (Lk 18:17)

2. How would you teach someone who never knew God about how to trust Him?

B. It takes time to understand that we serve a God who sees, hears and knows everything in our lives. (Heb 11:6)

1. More importantly, I need to know that God cares for me!

2. Without faith and thanksgiving towards God we can become very arrogant. We also will piece ourselves “through with many sorrows.” (1 Tim 6:10)

### I. The power of worry

A. Worry has a place in our lives! What is worry?

**Worry** - Merimnao - μεριμνάω - take thought 11, care 5, be careful 2, have care ; 1) to be anxious 1a) to be troubled with cares 2) to care for, look out for (a thing)

1. The root idea is that of thoughts that produce burdens and trouble.

2. All responsible people have cares! Fools do not! “What, me worry?”

3. God allowed His people to be taken captive and to live in fear to bring about their repentance. (Deut 28:64-67)

4. Without faith in God, it is not possible to logically manage our cares. Jesus points out a simple but enormous truth for the believer! (Mt 10:29-32)

5. When we take on cares that God says to give to Him, we are lacking faith.

B. How can we manage the burdens that God does give us?

1. We first must understand what to pursue. We need God’s wisdom.

2. Some pursue riches that perish. Food and clothing is all that God promises!

3. Some want everyone to like them. Satan will enslave you this way!

4. Some want to have all things under their control! God is in control! (1 Pt 5:7)

5. Are we willing to trust God and take His yoke alone? (Mt 11:28-30)

6. Without trust in God, we tend to overthink things! We must find the off switch!

### II. The power of fear

A. There is a proper place for fear! What is fear?

**Fear** - φόβος - a state of severe distress, aroused by intense concern for impending pain, danger, evil, etc., or possibly by the illusion of such circumstances - 'fear.' Louw-Nida Lexicon

1. Fear looks to the consequences of actions. Each of us needs to have a fear that is guided by our faith. (2 Cor 7:5-6; 1 Cor 2:3)

2. We can see what to fear and what not to fear! (1 Pt 3:12-14)

3. This perspective can only come through a daily knowledge of God and a deliberate placing of our fears before Him.

B. Uncontrolled fear is a powerful weapon of Satan. Fear keeps men in darkness!

1. Why should fear of death bring someone into bondage? (Heb 2:14-15)

2. The uncertainty of *who holds the future* can greatly influence the path of men. What if I am unsure about eternal life? Satan will take advantage.
  3. A life of fear make you *unstable and unreliable*. You cannot act on principle!
  4. Fearful people *think others think like them*. It worked with the 10 spies! A church can develop a culture of fear. Fearful people *fight leadership*!
- “No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as fear.” - Edmund Burke
5. It *kept men from standing* on the truth about Jesus. **(Jn 9:20-23; 12:42-43)**
- C. Christians can *easily give into fear*.
1. Peter struggled with the fear of what Jewish Christians thought! **(Gal 2:11-13)**
  2. We need to love our brethren but *not become their slaves*.
  3. Fearful people can *sell you out*. Preachers learn this. **(Rev 21:8)**
- D. There is *an alternative to fear*! **(2 Tim 1:12; 1 Jn 4:17-18)**
1. Fear was used by the Gnostics *to divide brethren*.
  2. How many times did Jesus appeal to His disciples to *“fear not.”* **(Jn 14:27)**

### **III. The toxic consequences of withdrawal**

- A. Fear and worry *will exhaust you*! These needless burdens can lead to collapse and withdrawal! **(Mt 6:30, 34)**
1. Satan loves for you to be on a “treadmill to oblivion!” **(Mt 13:22)**
  2. When you become exhausted you likely can *become a coward*.
  3. How can you get out of a prison *you have built for yourself*? You have the key but with wisdom you must identify and use it. **(Prov 28:1; 1 Tim 6:10)**
- B. When you withdraw in worry and fear then you will only *make things worse*.
1. You will now have *more time to worry*!
  2. How did God help Elijah recover from his time of fear? **(1 Kgs 19:13-15, 18)**
- C. Some withdraw because of *a false “spirituality.”* **(Lk 7:39; 18:9, 19:7)**
1. In this heart men are “thrown away” because they are sinners.
  2. This *kind of pride* can be shared! Be wise in your associations.
- D. We need to know our tendencies such as *shyness and depression*.
1. For some it is much easier to withdraw. An overwhelmed spirit will do this. **(1 Kgs 18:9-10; Psa 142:4)**
  2. You can *quickly or slowly withdraw*. Look at the pattern of decisions you have made over the last year or 2.
  3. You can keep developing personal “rules” that *push others away*.
  4. Isolating doctrinal positions can be taken *because of the appealing result*.
  5. “Reading minds” and *magnifying faults* can give you “justification.”

### **IV. We need our brethren!**

- A. We must continue to major in *the fruit of the Spirit*. **(Gal 5:22-23)**
- B. Let us fight the temptation to conclude “I am not of the body!” **(1 Cor 12:14-16)**

**Conclusion:** Let us fight for a mind that *is at peace with God*! **(1 Pt 1:13; Phil 4:6-7)**