

5 Things God's Children Don't Have To Worry About Pleasant Plains 4-22-2018PM NICK ANGEL

- ***READ Matthew 6:25-34*** As Jesus proclaims the great sermon on the mount (which we will be reading in our DBR next week), we see Him taking some time to remind the listeners of the importance of not allowing worry and anxiety to control their lives. According to the Anxiety and Depression Association of America, nearly a little over 18% of Americans suffer from clinical anxiety issues and yet only 37% ever seek out care for such issues. 20% of the population might not see like much, but I would venture to say that far more individuals suffer from everyday worry that might not reach the point of being clinically diagnosed.
- To many people, worry and anxiety are normal parts of life, but as we read just a moment ago here in **Matthew 6:25-34** and also what was read for us earlier from **Philippians 4:4-7**, our God doesn't want for His children to be a people who are constantly worried and facing anxiety. Instead, Paul's admonition is for the disciple to be one who is constantly rejoicing and finding the peace that God so greatly wants to give His children whom He loves so much.
- I'd like to suggest that we sometimes find ourselves worrying and being stressed out simply because we have forgotten some of the promises of God that He has extended to us through the Scriptures. This evening I would like to focus on a few of the areas in which we often find ourselves worrying and feeling anxious and simply remind us of what God has said on those subject so that we might not have to go through life overcome with worry. Here are five things that God's children don't have to worry about...the first being that we don't have to worry about God ever deserting us and leaving us alone where He cannot be found.

I. Being Alone (Hebrews 13:5, "*I will never desert you, nor will I forsake you.*")

- A. The fear of loneliness is one of the greatest causes of worry and anxiety, and there are many who disguise their loneliness and worry through materialism.
1. This verse doesn't seem as if it really fits together until we think about the fact that some of the wealthiest people we could ever meet are also some of the loneliest people we could ever meet. Far too many people mask their loneliness and the worry it causes by surrounding themselves with every good that this world might offer.
 2. However, they quickly find out that a love of money is no cure for loneliness. Instead they often find that their wealth only brings around those who are looking for a quick handout. They arrive with the money and wealth, and if that money and wealth ever goes away then they are gone almost just as quickly. We cannot allow for our fear of loneliness to take us to a place where we think it can be remedied through a love of money and wealth. Money is quite a lousy companion in this life.
- B. But God is the greatest companion, and He will never leave us nor forsake us if we are willing to follow Him wherever He might lead us.
1. The quotation in **Hebrews 13:5** is actually a reference back to **Deuteronomy 31:6-8** where God is imploring the people to be strong and courageous as they were about to go up into the land of promise. *"Do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the Lord your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you."*
 2. For these people, they were able to approach the next challenge and have success in it not because they themselves were wealthy or mighty or strong, but because God was with them and He was prepared to strengthen them wherever it was that He had commanded them to go.
 3. Sometimes we can find ourselves like Paul found himself having been forsaken by all other people, but His confidence was in the Lord, and he knew that God would always be there beside him to carry him through the storm. (**II Timothy 4:17**) Satan wants us to worry about being all alone, but God will always be with us if we will choose to put our full faith and trust in Him.

II. Feeling Useless (I Corinthians 12:12-31)

- A. We can easily be overcome with worry by thinking that we are not bearing fruit as well as the next person, and that God will punish us for such.
1. While it is true that God expects for us to be fruitful for His causes, we mustn't allow ourselves to become overcome with worry by comparing ourselves to others who are around us. While it might not be wrong to consider whether we are doing as much as we can do, we mustn't allow that to turn into worry that will eventually hinder us from bearing fruit all together.
 2. There will always be someone who is able to do more and bear more fruit than we can, and constantly comparing ourselves to those people will only paralyze us from being what we can be for God. I once heard Jordan Shouse say that *"comparison is a thief of joy."* How true that is! God expects for us to be a rejoicing people, yet we cannot do such if we become paralyzed with worry and anxiety concerning our fear of being useless.
- B. We can overcome those worries and fears by being reminded that we each have a part to play in God's kingdom.
1. There are truly no useless parts in the body made up of Christ's people. All of those who have been baptized into Christ have been baptized into one body, and we can all find our place in which we can be useful in the cause of Christ. **(I Corinthians 12:13-22)**
 2. Coming from different backgrounds and having different abilities and skills obviously creates a situation in which we are able to use our different talents in order to do something good for God and others. There is always something we can do, and we must not allow the joy of serving God and others to be taken from us simply because we want to compare ourselves to others. Whatever gift God has blessed us with, let's take full advantage of it and use it to His glory and for the benefit of others. Satan wants for us to feel useless and to have that feeling lead to our constant worry and anxiety, but God knows we can find joy in finding our part to serve in the body.

III. Bothering God With Prayer (I Peter 5:6,7 *"casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you."*)

- A. Sometimes we can allow ourselves to think that we bother God through our constant prayers and petitions that we offer up to Him in times of need.
1. I don't know if you have ever felt this way towards others, but I know the near shame that can be felt by thinking that we are bothering someone else by constantly going to them for advice, help, or aid in some regard. We can feel as if we are bothering them, and maybe even taking advantage of their kindness to aid us in times of need.
 2. Maybe we have been the person on the other side and we have actually felt annoyed when a particular person is constantly coming to us for help or aid when they find themselves in need. It might be that we begin to think that they should figure things out by now, and that they shouldn't any longer be in need of our help. As people interacting with other people these things are absolutely possible, but when it comes to our God He is constantly welcoming our request for help and guidance, and we shouldn't worry about bothering Him.
- B. Our constant prayers and petitions are seen as a welcome thing in the eyes of God.
1. Our continual reliance upon God is seen as a sign of maturity because asking for help demands a certainly level of humility and vulnerability on our part. *"Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you."*
 2. His love and care for us are always available if we will only humble ourselves to seek it out. We understand this from the perspective of parents and our children. There is just something heartwarming when Olivia comes to me asking that I help her with something, and if we feel that way towards our own children then how must God feel towards us when we do just as Jesus said and ask, seek, and knock. **(Matthew 7:7-11)** God isn't against our constant petitions. He invites them and wants us to truly be a people who pray without ceasing. **(I Thessalonians 5:17)**

IV. Feeling Unforgiven (I John 1:9 *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*)

- A. One of Satan's greatest tools is doubt that he plants seeds of doubt in our minds as to whether or not God has actually forgiven us of the wrongs we have committed against Him.
 - 1. Anytime I have ever felt this way I can look back and realize that those feelings of worry and anxiety were often accompanied by a continuation in that which I knew that I shouldn't have been doing. It is the awful cycle of sin that Satan loves for us to be caught in.
 - 2. We do something wrong. We recognize our mistake in what we have done. We ask God for forgiveness, but before we know it we have been suck right back into that which we have just gone to God concerning. Can there be any doubt as to why we might not feel forgiven? It is hard to feel forgiven when we still carry around the guilt of sin that we continue in.
- B. Yet if we are truly willing to repent and turn from sin then we can be confident in God's forgiveness.
 - 1. *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John 1:9)* We can have full confidence in and find true joy in the fact that God wants to forgive us of our sins if we will only turn to Him in righteousness.
 - 2. I find it not coincidental at all that this verse comes right on the heels of John focusing on our need to walk in the light just as He Himself is light. If we are willing to walk in the light, seek forgiveness when we stray, and get right back to where we need to be then we can be fully assured that He has forgiven us. There is no greater joy than knowing we are in fellowship with God through our submission to Him in all things.

V. The Future (Matthew 6:34 *"So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."*)

- A. If we are not careful, we can be so worried and focused on the future that we neglect the present.
 - 1. The present is always the most important thing because it is currently where we are and it is the only thing that is truly guaranteed. The past is gone and cannot be changed. The future is only there so much as we can imagine it, but the present is a reality. Any sort of worry or anxiety about the future will only hurt what we are able to do with what we currently have right here all around us.
 - 2. This isn't to say that we shouldn't care about the future at all. James doesn't tell us that we can't give any thought to the future, but he does cause us to pause and remember that the future will only become a reality if the Lord allows such to be the case. **(James 4:13-15)** If we are not careful then we will allow the present to slip right by us without us using it as we best can to the glory and praise of God.
- B. Jesus wants for us to use the present of the present to seek the will of God.
 - 1. *"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."* Jesus desires that we use each day blessed to us by God to seek His kingdom and will for our lives. Each day He wants for us to be righteous just as He is righteous.
 - 2. That pursuit of righteousness is made difficult enough from day to day as we seek to overcome the evil one, and Jesus wants for us to take things one day at a time. Each day has enough of the struggle on its own, and worrying about the future will only cause us problems now. May we find joy in this day given by God, and deal with tomorrow when and if it becomes today.

Certainly the devil is hard at work trying to cause God's children to be overcome with worry and anxiety to the point where we are overcome with this life. He wants for us to be useless to the cause of Christ because of our worry, but this does not have to be our reality. Instead, if we will lean upon the Lord. If we will face and take things one day at a time then we can overcome the temptations of Satan and find the joy of this life that God desires for us to find by living for Him. I'm so thankful that my God is mindful of me, and I'm sure all of us here can say the exact same thing. I'm so thankful that there is real joy that can be found in being His child each and every day. This world is full of worry and anxiety, but with my God true joy is possible and can be found.

PRAYER *Father we are so thankful for the joy that you provide in a world where worries and anxieties press in all around us. There are so many who struggle from day to day because they are trying to carry the weight of the world on their own shoulders, but we are thankful that you have lifted that burden from us Your children. We are thankful that your yoke is easy and light, and we are so thankful that You strengthen us to carry it day by day. Help us to show others the better way of faith in You, and may they also find joy in serving you. We with us as we go throughout this week, may we serve You with full hearts. In Jesus's most holy name we pray...amen.*